

Corporate Governance Service Business Plan 2011 - 2016

Modernising Services

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1. Executive Summary

The Directorate of Corporate Governance (the Directorate) Business Plan covers a five year planning cycle from 2011-2016, with a focus on 2011/12, and will be subject to annual review and update in line with the development of the Corporate Business Plan.

The Directorate's Business Plan identifies factors which influence service needs, development and delivery. It outlines activities and initiatives which the Directorate will undertake in order to achieve the Council's key strategic objectives.

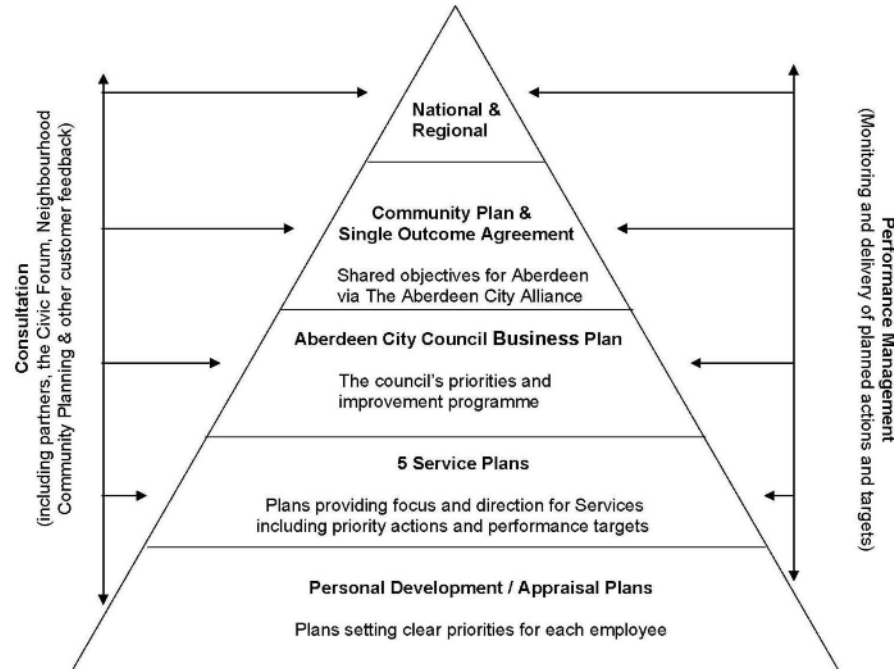


Fig 1.

The Action Plan contained within Section 6 expands upon our Directorate priorities and is supported by operational plans for

the service sectors of the Directorate. Regular reporting across all areas of the Directorate on progress against our key priorities is made to the Corporate Policy and Performance; Finance and Resources; and Audit and Risk Committees.

In 2010 we clearly set out the Directorate's Service Business Plan for the period 2010/11 and beyond. We have successfully delivered much of this Plan and our achievements are highlighted in Section 4.1 and Appendix A. There has been considerable change over the past year, not least in the development of the Council's 5 year Business Plan. This clearly states the Council's expectations for the Directorate and much of 2011/12 will be focused on delivering the key actions within this Plan, particularly the delivery of a range of Corporate Governance services using an alternative delivery model. We have also utilised the Employee Opinion Survey, Corporate Governance Customer Satisfaction Survey, risk register and internal audit to reflect on our performance and to set out our Plan for 2011/12 and beyond. 2011/12 will be a challenging and exciting year for all of us working in the public sector and we look forward to playing our part in delivering the wide range of Council services.



Stewart Carnith.

Director of Corporate Governance

2. Vision and Strategy

Aberdeen City Council's vision is for Aberdeen to be a vibrant, dynamic and forward looking city.

'An even better place to live and work, where people can expect high quality services that meet their needs'.

To support this, the Corporate Governance Service has a vision to support the modernisation of the Council's services by providing high quality, cost effective services which put the customer at the centre.

In order to achieve this we will require a highly skilled and motivated workforce, committed to a clear set of values:-

- Excellence
- Customer focused
- Teamwork
- Respecting others
- Openness and honesty
- Upholding the reputation of Aberdeen City Council

Strategy

This Plan encompasses the activities and initiatives which the Directorate will undertake in order to support the Council's strategic priorities expressed in the Corporate Business Plan 2011/12 – 2015/16.

The Directorate contributes most directly to the corporate strategic priority:-

"Ensure efficient and effective delivery of services by the Council and with its partners."

In delivering on this priority we will:

- Make best use of the financial resources available to us, delivering improvement in our service priorities in the most cost effective manner;
- Have a flexible, skilled and motivated workforce;
- Listen to, and be responsive to, our customers, shaping our services around their needs and focusing our resources where they are most needed; and
- Work closely with our partners, including local communities, to deliver a single set of outcomes for all the citizens of Aberdeen.

Our action and financial plans, in this year and beyond, are built on the delivery of these priorities. We will measure our performance in terms of our success in their achievement.

3. Service Overview

3.1 What Services Do We and Will We Deliver?

The Directorate employs over 700 staff working across the city delivering services across five sectors. It has an annual net budget of more than £28M which represents 6.7% of the Council's total expenditure.

- **Legal and Democratic Services** The team provides legal services to the Council and partners, including advice, information assurance and the statutory licensing functions. Additionally, registration, archives, committee administration and democratic services fall within the team's remit. The team provides the Council's elected members with support services. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services is also the Council's Monitoring Officer.
- **Human Resources and Organisational Development** The team is responsible for the provision of a range of HR services including: Training and Development; Personnel; Workforce Planning; Health, Safety and Wellbeing; Payroll and Organisational Development. The team also has responsibility for Corporate HR Strategy and operates a shared HR Service Centre to provide all HR transactional services.
- **Procurement** (shared with Aberdeenshire) The procurement team provide policy and advice to services and manage and develop the Council's procurement strategy. Management of suppliers and contracts and delivering benefits through effective business relationships are important functions. The team represents the Council's interests through the Scotland Excel North East Regional Hub.



- **Finance** Finance has responsibility for strategic and operational financial advice to the Council. The Corporate Accounting Team provides monthly revenue and capital monitoring, production of Annual Accounts, efficiencies monitoring and administration and monitoring of the Common Good Fund. The Service Accounting Teams are aligned to each of the Directorates and strive to support the Directors in delivery of effective and efficient service provision and consequently financial balance. The Finance function incorporates Revenues and Benefits encompassing collection of all local taxes and business rates, administration of council tax and benefits and administration and collection of all other sources of income to the Council. The Pensions Team sits within Finance and manages the Pensions for Aberdeen City Council and partner organisations. The Finance function also operates a central creditors team.



- **Customer Services and Performance** The team's remit covers the management and implementation of the Council's Customer Service Strategy along with delivering operational customer service via the contact centre, planned customer service centre at the new corporate headquarters. The provision of ICT falls within the team as does business improvement. The performance, audit and risk function covers public performance reporting, the corporate commitment to Best Value, risk management, continuous improvement and the provision of the internal audit service. The team also has responsibility for maintaining and developing the Council's community planning commitments and the Single Outcome Agreement for the delivery of the Council's goals. The Council's research and information staff are based within the team. The Programme Management Office signals development of projects led by the Council's business requirements and provides assurance and governance.



The delivery of these services is based on the six following principles:

- **Customer Services Management** - Consistent, high quality customer experience through a range of chosen access channels that are tailored to the needs of our different customer groups in order to embrace a council-wide customer service culture.
- **Intelligence-Led Organisation** - Efficient and consistent gathering and sharing of knowledge and information across the organisation to inform strategic decision making.
- **Partnership Working** - Working with our partners to deliver a range of corporate and transactional services.
- **Workforce Planning and Development** - Developing high performing employees through a joint commitment to development between employees and employer.
- **Financial Management** - Challenge our ways of working to ensure we deliver value for money by exploring ways in which new methods of working and organisational arrangements will further improve services and reduce costs.
- **Business Processes** - Streamline and standardise high volume processes in order to fully integrate back office functions and to increase efficiency and effectiveness in the way the council operates.



3.2 How Will We Deliver?

Delivery Model

It is highly likely that over the next three years the delivery of the services within the Directorate will change significantly. As we respond to the changing demands of other services, increasing financial constraints, a greater understanding of customer requirements and emerging technological advances, the type, level and shape of service will be altered to meet these demands.

The Directorate is at the forefront of a move towards the external delivery of support services, driven by a desire to improve quality and meet the financial constraints faced by the Council, now and in the future. The business case for the external delivery of Corporate Governance services was completed during 2010/11 and a project team is now in place to manage this. This will focus particularly, though not exclusively, on transactional services in Human Resources and Organisational Development, Finance, ICT and Customer Services.

External delivery will bring investment in technology, give opportunities for transferred staff to build their skills and develop their careers, provide access to tried and tested processes, expertise and know-how for the council and lay the foundation for a broad base of potential customer growth in the public sector for other providers. The timeline for this work will see the Council make decisions on final negotiation and contract award around October 2012 with operational commencement of any transition and contract mobilisation towards the end of 2012.

This approach is not without risk and the role of the staff retained within Corporate Governance will have an important part to play in managing the interface between the rest of the Council and the externalised elements.

The other Services across the Council are changing too and this will impact directly on the type and scale of services provided by Corporate Governance. It is possible that in future other services could decide to commission support services from other organisations and this will drive a greater focus on customer service, price and quality of the service delivered.

In addition, we will develop a framework agreement for legal services and aim to share legal and democratic services with other public sector organisations. There are many other opportunities to work together within the public sector. However the pace and scale of change requires to be increased particularly against a background of public sector reform and financial challenges. Community planning will also have a key role to play in bringing partners together and there is the need for a greater emphasis on how to deliver more effective delivery which requires all key partners to understand and make best use of the combined resource of partners.

Delivering Business As Usual

Whilst these changes are being driven forward, we will simultaneously continue to deliver “business as usual” services. We recognise that this places demands on the Directorate. In order to deliver this, we will continue to review our structures and our team’s capacity and capability through

workforce planning, to ensure that future service delivery objectives are properly resourced (See 3.3. below). Service Level Agreements will be established between Corporate Governance and other services to manage demand, provide clarity and enable performance to be measured.

The move to external delivery provides a powerful reason for continuing the review and improvement of our internal processes, which was a focus during 2010/11, notably with the establishment of Service Centres for both Finance and HR. It is important that, as far as possible, the Council makes any gains on eradicating inefficiency.

In addition, the establishment during 2010/11 of the Programme Management Office will support Corporate Governance, and other services, with support from external providers if there is a gap in capacity or capability which is impinging on our ability to deliver.

Employee Engagement

The successful delivery of this Business Plan is dependent on our employees and we recognise that the changes anticipated will have a major impact on both transferred and retained staff. This means that communication and engagement with staff will be highly important over the period. With this in mind, the Directorate established a Communications Group for the Service during 2010/11. We will continue to put in place systematic engagement with staff in order that they are informed and involved in the design, development and delivery of services. This will include:

- Mechanisms for employees to feedback views, suggestions and innovations
- Consultation and involvement, where this is possible, information where it is not and clarity of which is being offered;
- Ongoing and regular monitoring of employee engagement through a range of means including focus groups, briefings and technology.

The Directorate is also committed to building on the results of the **2010 Employee Opinion Survey** by taking action to address areas where the need for improvement has been highlighted. These include:-

- How we communicate, particularly between senior managers and their teams;
- How we manage workloads; and
- How we foster good morale and motivation.

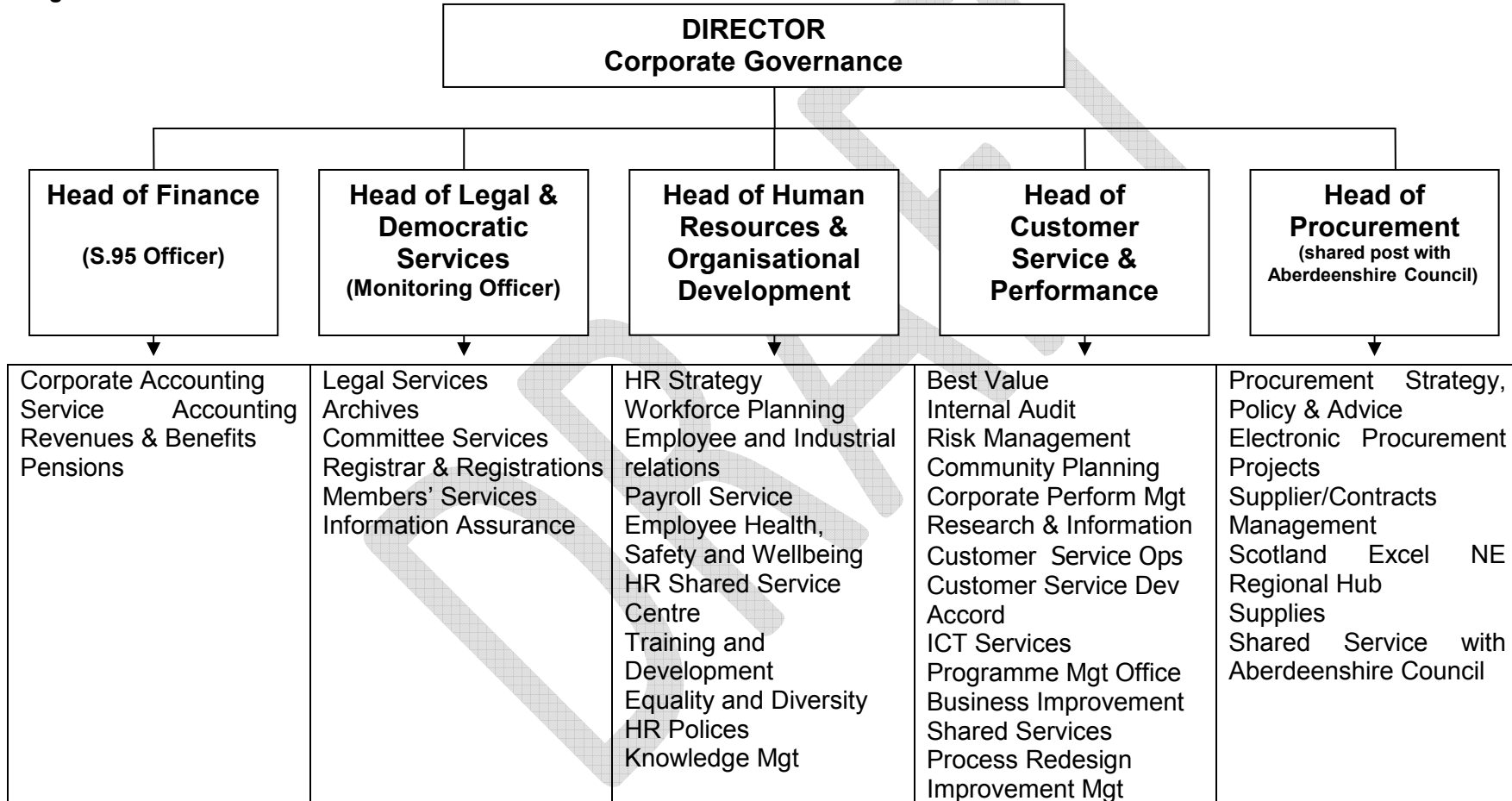
Actions to improve our approach to these issues are included within this Service Business Plan. A more detailed set of improvement and development actions stemming from the Survey will be agreed following discussion with staff.

Other stakeholders too will require to be engaged on the way ahead and an engagement plan for Corporate Governance will be developed for all our stakeholders including partners, trades unions, and other services.

3.3 The Team to Deliver

Our vision sets out the need for a highly skilled and motivated workforce which will deliver high quality, cost effective and customer centric services. Building on the knowledge and ability which we already demonstrate, we are committed to learning from others and developing our skills further. The Directorate will take a lead on workforce planning and will apply this across the Directorate. The management structure of the Directorate is shown in Fig 2. below together with areas of responsibility.

Fig 2.



3.4 Our Values into Action

Our values, as set out in section 2 of this Plan, will lie at the core of what we do and will define how we relate to each other and how we deliver our services.

In striving for **excellence** we will place an emphasis on both personal and professional development through ensuring that each employee has clarity on what is expected of them, has at least one annual performance review and has a personal development plan which focuses on meeting individual and organisational needs.

We will also ensure that both corporate and service training opportunities are continually reviewed and kept up to date to meet current development requirements and anticipate future needs.

We acknowledge that the challenging vision and targets set out in this plan can only be achieved with the commitment and participation of all members of Corporate Governance. This requirement for **teamwork** will be underpinned by our values of **respect** and **openness** and **honesty**. This will be evidenced through a systematic communication programme managed by the Corporate Governance Communications Group which will ensure regular communications with all Corporate Governance employees through a range of means. This will include opportunities to hear directly from and feed back to the management team. This programme of communication will be supplemented, wherever it is possible and appropriate to do so, with opportunities for employees to contribute to and participate in shaping future services.

Recognising the importance of valuing staff, we will monitor the views of our employees and levels of engagement through both informal and formal channels, including the Employee Opinion Survey, seeking year on year positive percentage rises in motivation and morale.

Supporting this focus on raising morale, over the period of this Plan we will be more active, through a range of available awards schemes, in seeking external recognition of the many excellent and innovative services we deliver.

4. Corporate Governance Performance and Sector Analysis

4.1 Business Plan Implementation 2010/11

This Business Plan is a rolling 3 year plan which was first approved in 2010/11. The Directorate has made significant progress in implementing the actions which were committed to within the first year of the Plan. A full analysis of the progress we have made in implementing agreed actions in 2010/11 is shown in Appendix A. Specific highlights, shown under the 6 principles to which the Directorate is committed, include:

Customer Services Management

- We improved our customer **call handling**, consistently raising performance against our service standards;
- We undertook planning to deliver an improved and expanded **customer service centre** at the Council's new corporate headquarters;
- We established roles of **Business Partners** for the HR and Finance functions, to manage the relationship with our internal customers and partners;
- We improved performance against our service standards for the resolution of **ICT Helpdesk** calls;
- We maintained the high accessibility of the **Council's website**, ranking consistently in the top 10 of 430 UK websites. We also became the first Scottish Council to include "open data" on our website, which allows the wider community to share our information for their own ICT applications;

- We developed the **online catalogue** of Council managed archives and increased availability through digitization;
- The Central Procurement Unit has been successful in each of the last 2 years in "Team of the Year" category in the **National Procurement Awards** and will be entering again in 2011/12.

Intelligence-Led Organisation

- **Financial reporting** was significantly improved with more regular, accurate and current information presented to managers;
- We have improved existing, and developed new, key **indicators to manage our performance**. We also improved access to, and use of, performance data through the creation of a single portal for performance "dashboards";
- A **Programme Management Office** has been established to better support the planning, completion and benefits realisation of the Council's strategic priorities. Feedback from our Internal Auditors reflects significant positive progress to date;
- We further developed and improved our **risk management** arrangements through the updating of procedures, review of registers and mobilisation of a corporate risk officer group;

- We successfully moved the **internal audit** function to an external provider, simultaneously reducing costs, modernising our approach and giving access to unprecedented subject expertise;
- We received external validation through a positive **Shared Risk Assessment** from our Local Area Network, whilst also developing our working relationships with inspection and regulation bodies.

Partnership Working

- We facilitated the review of existing **community planning arrangements**, which refocuses the efforts of partners on providing clear strategic leadership and added value to service planning and delivery;
- We have progressed discussions with Grampian Police on the establishment of a **shared customer contact centre**;
- We improved the **engagement** with our internal customers, external customers and our partners. In particular, significant engagement was undertaken as part of the development of the 5 year Corporate Business Plan, and we directly heard the views of over 900 internal customers through our customer survey. Their feedback is embedded within this Business Plan and shapes the services we deliver;
- We improved arrangements for the management of **contracts and supplier performance** through the establishment of a Supply Chain Manager and a vendor management capability;
- We have progressed development of a policy on **community benefits through procurement** with the aim of having at

least one live project in place by September 2011. This is aligned to ongoing work on our supplier development programme;

- We supported **Grampian Police Board** throughout a Best Value Audit which resulted in a very positive report for the Board's operation;
- We continued to work with our North East partners to develop opportunities for **collaboration between organisations** including, mentoring, job shadowing and leadership programmes. The successful projects have resulted in cost savings and increased partnership working for the partners involved.

Workforce Planning and Development

- We completed, and had approved by Council, a business case for the **market testing** of our services. The business case was also one strand of our work to improve the benchmarking of our services against best in class across a range of sectors;
- We supported a **planned workforce reduction** across the organisation of around 300, whilst avoiding compulsory redundancies;
- We planned, supported and delivered **improved training** to colleagues in all Services, matching our resources to identified needs. We have increased flexibility in training through online interactive learning. Our support and delivery of training has had a tangible impact on performance of across the Council;

- We revised corporate policies and procedures for the **management of staff absences**. Within the Service this contributed to a 12 month reduction in absence from 13.1 days per person to 10.3 days;
- Recognising the importance of effective communication and engagement with staff over the period of this Plan, we established a Corporate Governance **communications group** comprising staff representatives from each section;
- We implemented an employee benefits portal called '**ACC My Benefits**' that offers a range of voluntary and salary sacrifice benefits for staff. We will continue to develop this portal to expand the range of offers and salary sacrifice schemes available as well as continuing to improve the capability of the platform towards a full flexible benefits and total reward system.

Financial Management

- We developed and implemented a **Priority Based approach** to budgeting and planning across the whole Council. This included a detailed appraisal of all options for service delivery which, in turn, allowed the production of a costed 5 year Corporate Business Plan. This project involved an unprecedented level of engagement and consultation with service users, staff and other stakeholders;
- Linked to the priority based budgeting approach, we improved our **Service Business Planning**. We have aligned the feedback we get from our customers, with our priorities, the action we will take and the data we use to measure our performance;

Business Processes

- We improved our **accounting practices** to ensure better control and analysis of expenditure;
- We began the modernisation of our corporate **ICT infrastructure** through the external management of our data centre and are piloting a virtual desktop environment;
- We continued to deliver increased efficiencies from effective **procurement** through revised processes proportionate to risk and value of requirements;
- We established **shared service centres** for both Human Resources and Finance with significant cost reductions achieved and continuing work to map and increase the efficiency of processes;
- We centralized the **accounts payable** process, investing in an electronic document management system to improve performance, which by the end of the year was in the top quartile of Scottish Councils;
- We improved **procurement and contract management** across the Council, by revising our procedures and delivering substantial awareness raising and training;
- The Central Procurement Unit was rated 2nd and 3rd across the 32 Scottish councils, after the two most recent **procurement capability audits**. We introduced revised procurement processes with standard terms and conditions and this will further boost our scoring for the 2012 audit;
- We implemented modern.gov, an electronic solution for the **management of Committee** papers, which has allowed us

to significantly reduce our costs whilst improving the service for users. In addition, we now operate a committee alert system, which lets officers know when items are being considered at Committee, reducing unproductive time;

- Throughout the extensive changes highlighted above, we **maintained critical services** to a high standard, including Council Tax and Benefits Administration, payroll year end processes, ICT Helpdesk and effective management of key relationships.

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4.2 Sector Analysis

Figure 3. below shows a high level analysis of issues which will impact on Aberdeen City Council and the Directorate throughout the period of this Plan.

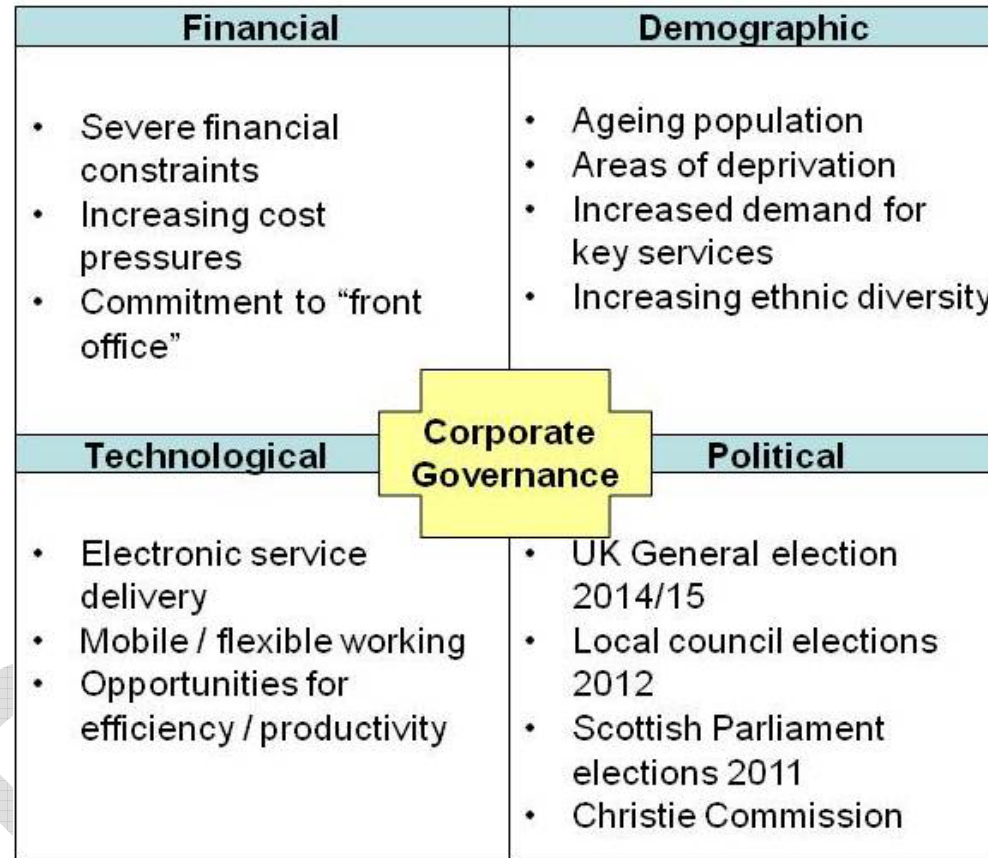


Fig 3.

The Directorate has a key role in meeting each of these challenges. In terms of the financial environment, as well as managing our direct costs, the Directorate will continue to support prioritised budgeting across the Council and will work with colleagues to improve our processes, projects and procurement. We will take a strategic lead on the use of new technologies which support both efficiency and customer focused services. We will also tackle the differing needs of customers and communities both at a local level, through local planning and delivery with our partners, and for communities of interest.

5. The Voice of the Customer

5.1 What do users think of our services?

Customer Feedback

During 2010/11 we conducted an extensive survey of internal customers, receiving 912 responses. Results are shown opposite¹ and are compared with a self-evaluation carried out in 2010. The comparison shows customers have a much more even view across the themes than was assessed in 2010.

Respondents were also invited to rate their experience of each of the Service's departments, as well as making any relevant comments. An overall satisfaction rating of 67% was given. Whilst this is promising, there are clearly opportunities to improve our services and meet customer expectations.

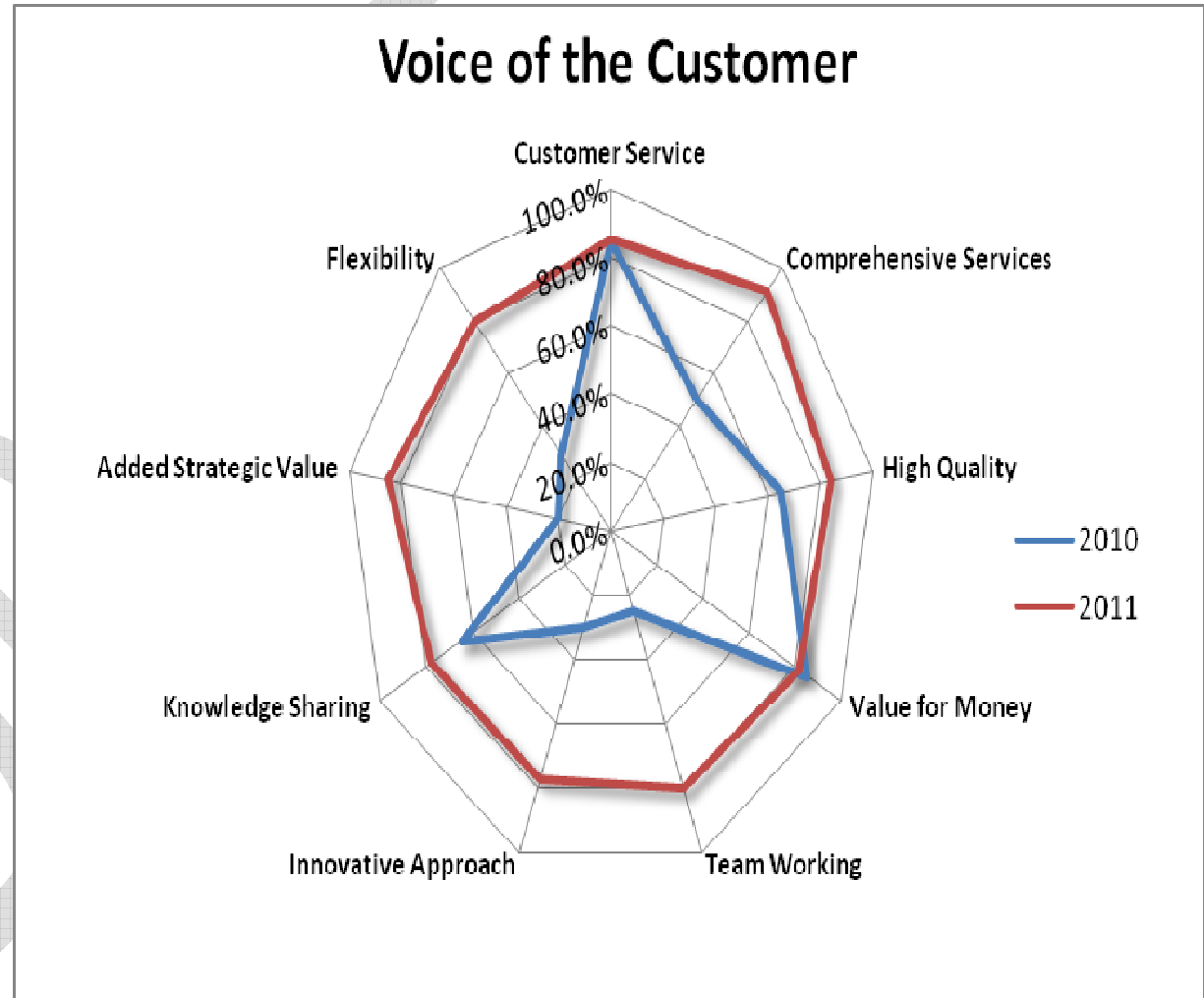
The results have provided us with invaluable feedback on which the future planning and delivery of our services are, and will be, based.

A further survey of our partners will be conducted during 2011/12 and we continue to engage with and listen to the views of our external customers through a variety of additional means.

Areas for improvement, including strategic value, innovative approach and working with teams are reflected in the Action Plan.

¹ The 2011 figures exclude "Neither Agree / Disagree" to make them comparable with the 2010 self-evaluation.

Fig 4.



5.2 Who Are Our Customers?

The Directorate provides a service to a broad range of internal and external customers. Fig 5. below shows the nature of relationships with our customers.

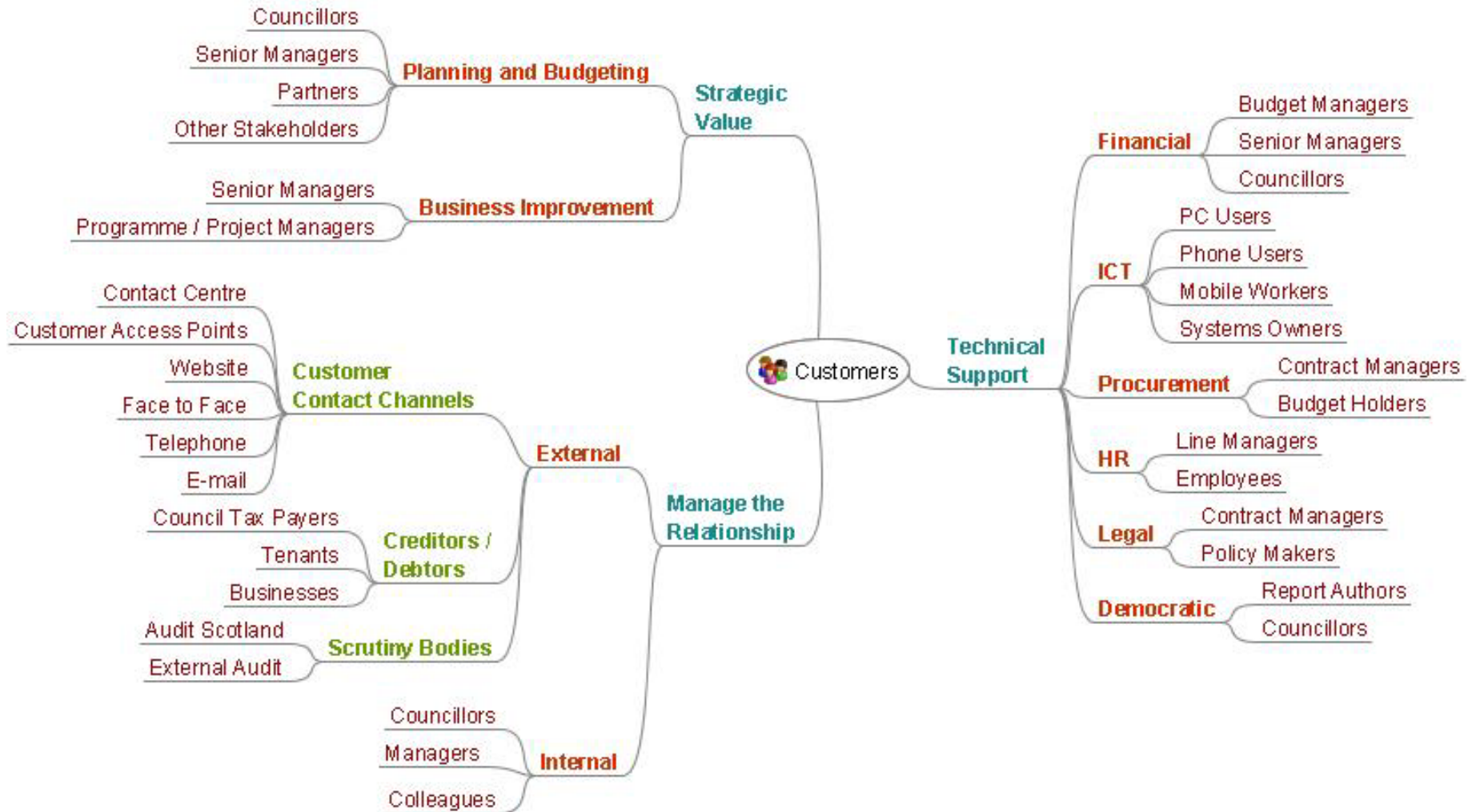


Fig 5.

5.3 Partnership Working

We are working towards increasing partnership working and moving towards partner delivery of our services where this represents the greatest value for our customers. We will continue to consult with partners and service users to work with them to develop how we deliver our services in the future. Fig 6. below shows a representation of our external partner. The Directorate, of course, works in partnership with each of the other Council Directorates.

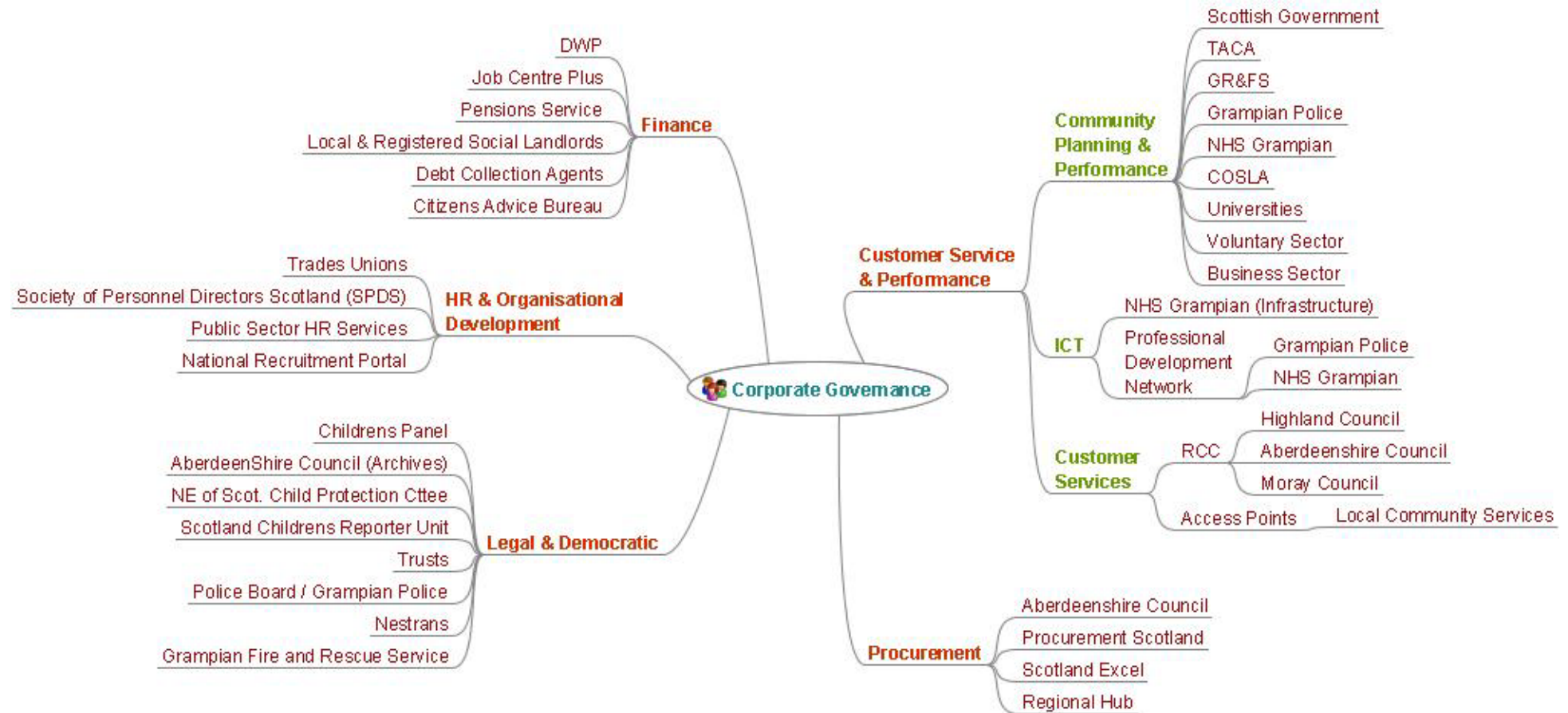


Fig 6.

6. Strategic Priorities and Outcomes – Action Plan

PRIORITY 1: We make best use of the financial resources available to us, delivering improvement in our service priorities in the most cost effective manner

| Action | Performance Measures | Timescale | Lead |
|--|--|-----------|--|
| a. We will continue to support a priority based approach to budgeting and planning. | Recorded annual efficiency savings; Preparation and approval of 2012/13 annual budget. | 2011/12 | Head of Finance |
| b. We will improve cost and quality of services through external delivery where this represents best value | Customer Satisfaction; Service delivery performance. | 2011/12 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |
| c. We will further develop benchmarking of our services against best in class across a range of sectors. | Sector benchmarks; | 2011/12 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |
| c. We will embed the benefits of our programme management office. | Optimal delivery of business benefits through the programme. | 2011/12 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |
| d. We will work with our partners and users to identify and deliver efficiencies from effective procurement. | Value of efficiencies and savings from improved procurement (Cashable and non-cashable). | 2011/12 | Head of Procurement |
| e. We will implement and embed a model of self-evaluation across the Council to improve understanding of our business and to co-ordinate our effort for external inspection. | Improvement of rating in “How Good is Our Council?”. | 2011/12 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |
| f. We will improve our corporate ICT infrastructure to support the business in cost effective ways. | % customer satisfaction; Unit cost per workstation; % of suitable users enabled for mobile | 2011/12 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |

PRIORITY 1: We make best use of the financial resources available to us, delivering improvement in our service priorities in the most cost effective manner

| Action | Performance Measures | Timescale | Lead |
|---|--|-----------|------------------------------|
| | working. | | |
| g. We will continue to develop the HR Service Centre to meet the needs of the customer. | Metrics from Service Centre database; Customer satisfaction surveys. | 2011/12 | Head of HR & OD |
| h. We will develop improved tracking and recording systems to better control the Council's agreed establishment. | Fast accurate reporting of vacancies. | 2011/12 | Head of HR & OD |
| i. We will implement a Finance shared service centre. | Productivity measures; Customer satisfaction; The service will be developed in 2011/12 with performance measures further developed; Payment performance will continue to meet or exceed second quartile levels. | 2011/12 | Head of Finance |
| j. We will maintain strong governance and ensure the probity of all actions taken by the Council. | Unsuccessful legal challenges | 2011/14 | Head of Legal and Democratic |
| k. We will engage with other local authorities and public sector agencies to maximise efficiency and income generation. | Recorded annual efficiency savings; Income generation. | 2011/14 | All Heads of Service |
| l. We will review business processes to support delivery to the council's customers. | Reduction in support costs % of net council spend; % of stakeholders agreeing they are satisfied with the services provided by the Corporate Governance Service. | 2010/11 | All Heads of Service |

PRIORITY 2: We have a flexible, skilled and motivated workforce

| Action | Performance Measures | Timescale | Lead |
|--|---|-----------|--|
| a. We will develop and implement a strategy to raise motivation and commitment to the organisation | Employee Opinion Survey. | 2011/12 | Head of HR&OD |
| b. We will develop new remuneration and reward systems which recognise and promote high performance and is linked to Council objectives. | Staff turnover; Employee Opinion Survey. | 2012/13 | Head of HR&OD |
| c. We will work with Service Managers to ensure that workforce planning is undertaken so that the future service delivery objectives are properly resourced. | Recruitment costs; No. of redeployments. | 2011/12 | Head of HR&OD |
| d. We will ensure that all HR policies and procedures are effective in the management of its human resources in a modern, safe and appropriate way. | No. of accidents/Incidents; No. of Employment Tribunal claims; Satisfaction with HR – Line Managers | 2011/12 | Head of HR&OD |
| e. We will develop and implement a flexible Customer Services Model to enable efficient and high quality service delivery, ensuring skilled and motivated employees. | A performance management and evaluation framework will be implemented to support the model' | 2011/12 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |
| f. We will improve knowledge management and sharing within the Directorate and with our partners. | Metrics for knowledge sharing strategic indicator to be developed. | 2011/12 | Head of HR&OD |
| g. We will explore approaches which support and promote positive behaviours of employees. | To be completed | 2011/12 | Head of HR&OD |

PRIORITY 2: We have a flexible, skilled and motivated workforce

| Action | Performance Measures | Timescale | Lead |
|--------|----------------------|-----------|------|
|--------|----------------------|-----------|------|

PRIORITY 3: We listen to, and are responsive to, our customers, shaping our services around their needs and focusing our resources where they are most needed

| Action | | | |
|--|---|---------|--|
| a. We will systematically engage internal customers, external customers and our partners, embedding their feedback to shape the services we deliver. | % of residents feeling they have some influence over the issues that concern them in their local area; Various customer surveys. | 2011/12 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |
| b. We will develop a channel management strategy, to route customer facing services through the most appropriate customer contact channels to demonstrate enhanced customer service and improved efficiency. | To be completed | 2011/12 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |
| c. We will manage contracts and supplier performance to ensure we maximize value and efficiency in the goods and services we procure whilst ensuring they meet the needs of our customers and services. | Contract management balanced scorecard to measure Quality, Price, Time and Service. | 2011/12 | Head of Procurement |

PRIORITY 2: We have a flexible, skilled and motivated workforce

| Action | Performance Measures | Timescale | Lead |
|--|--|-----------|--|
| d. We will engage with our supplier base to effectively manage relationships so that the Council is perceived as an attractive business partner. | Feedback from surveys; Statistics on number of suppliers responding to tender notices and submitting actual bids. | 2011/12 | Head of Procurement |
| e. We will deliver a positive customer experience through an improved customer service centre at the new corporate headquarters. | Customer satisfaction surveying. | 2011/12 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |

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PRIORITY 4: We work closely with our partners, including local communities, to deliver a single set of outcomes for all the citizens of Aberdeen

| Action | Performance Measures | Timescale | Lead |
|---|---|-----------|--|
| a. We will actively engage with existing community planning partners and build new relationships, to develop an innovative service planning and delivery model based on the Total Place movement. | Successful delivery and review of "Total Place" pilots Survey of partners | 2011/12 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |
| b. We will implement our Single Equalities Scheme, embedding equalities in all the services we deliver. | % of residents agreeing that they are fairly treated in their contact with the Council (+ no replies) | 2011/13 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |
| c. We will engage with other authorities to investigate the possibility of shared legal and democratic services. | To be completed | 2011/12 | Head of Legal and Democratic |
| d. We will network with professionals in other public and private bodies to share professional research and benchmarking. | To be completed | 2011/12 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |
| e. We will include, where suitable, appropriate Community Benefit Clauses within procurement contracts, maximising economic and social benefits for residents and businesses within the City. | No. of contracts concluded with a Community Benefit Clause | 2011/12 | Head of Procurement |
| f. We will explore and apply, where appropriate, a Social Return on Investment methodology to option appraisal and decision making. | No. of projects with a Social Return on Investment options appraisal conducted | 2011/12 | Head of Customer Service and Performance |

7. Financial Plan 2011/12 to 2015/16

It is highly likely that there will be significant strain on public finances and it is clear that public spending will be subject to a period of significant constraint in the years ahead. UK, Scottish Government and Aberdeen City Council budgets will be significantly affected by these pressures throughout the period of this Plan.

The financial impact on Aberdeen City Council is reflected within the Medium Term Financial Plan which is based on currently available economic, government and contractual guidance. As well as forecasting significant additional cost pressures and reductions in income, the Plan assumes a fall in General Revenue Grant as follows:

| 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 2.5% | 2% | 1% | static |

The Council approved its 2011/12 General Fund Revenue Budget in February 2011 which set the budget for that financial year and agreed the implementation of a number of service options to achieve the level of efficiencies and budget reductions required over the following 5 financial years. Service options with a total cost reduction of £71.6M were approved with further options totalling £62.6M to be considered further.

The following Revenue Budget spend and service saving options have been approved for the Corporate Governance Service:

| Committee Report | Year 1 2011/12 £'000 | Year 2 2012/13 £'000 | Year 3 2013/14 £'000 | Year 4 2014/15 £'000 | Year 5 2015/16 £'000 |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| CG Revenue Budgets per Committee Report | 28,580 | 29,009 | 29,444 | 29,885 | 30,334 |
| Savings | (1,856) | (7,529) | (8,863) | (9,227) | (9,991) |
| Other Budget Adjustments eg externalisation and redundancy costs, and council wide savings | 234 | 1,866 | 1,866 | 1,866 | 1,866 |
| CG Revenue Budgets inclusive of savings | 26,958 | 23,346 | 22,447 | 22,524 | 22,209 |

The following model shows the route map the Directorate is taking to achieve the necessary cost reductions whilst maintaining support services and improving quality for customers.

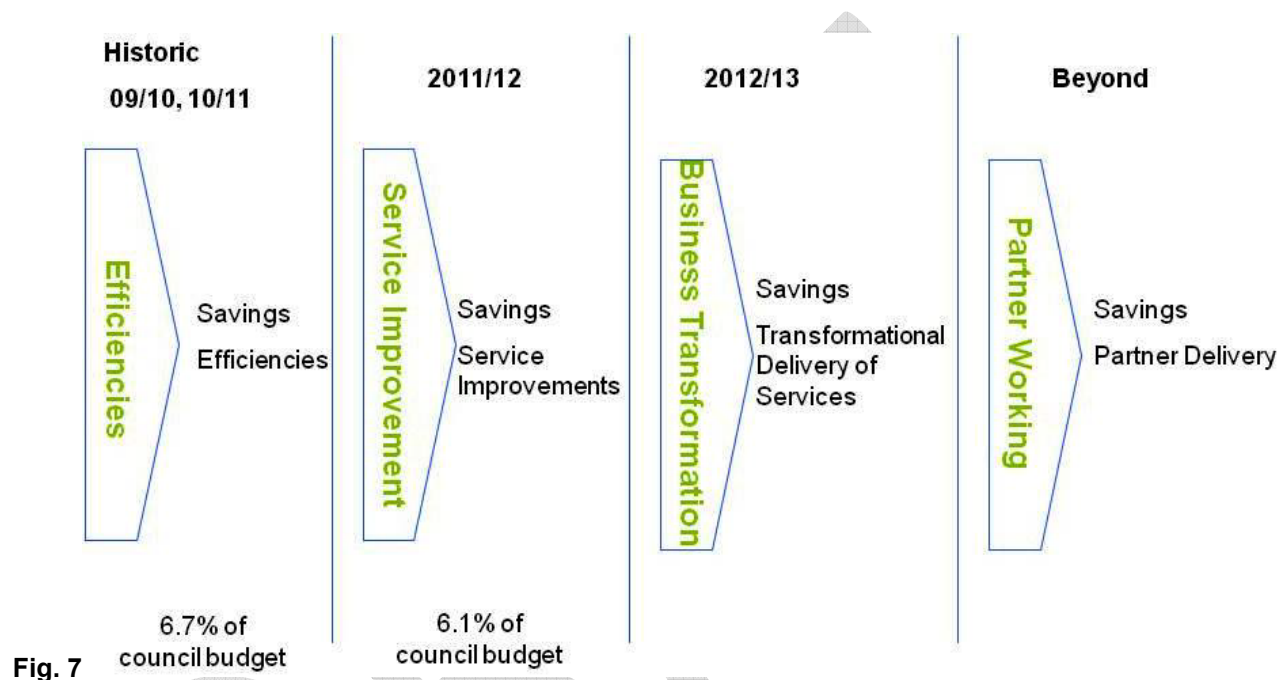


Fig. 7

The journey along this route map will change the services we will deliver, our interaction with customers and the arrangement of staffing resources to deliver the services. In line with our vision to support the modernisation of the Council's services by providing high quality, cost effective services which put the customer at the centre, our Action Plan commits to:-

- Continue to market test our services to ensure we deliver best value;
- improving processes, including investing in technology, to increase efficiency and improve services to customers;
- implementing a workforce strategy and developing our skills; and
- building new relationships with our partners which support joint planning and delivery.

The outcome of these actions will be a concentration of resource on those services which are priorities for our customers, an increasing focus on customer service and a mixed model of staffing which reduces the number of employees and uses additional / specialist resources in a way which demonstrates best value.

Capital Expenditure

Figure 10 below sets out the agreed planned capital investment for the Corporate Governance Service in 2011/12. The nature of these projects demonstrate that the investment of capital is directed towards improving access to customer centred services whilst increasing the efficiency of the processes which support those services.

| | Estimated 2011/12 Budget £m |
|---|--|
| Data Centre Move | 1,111 |
| Customer First Programme - Frederick Street | 749 |
| ICT Investment Programme | 676 |
| Police - Capital Grant | 1,451 |
| Total | 3,987 |

Fig 8.

8. How We Will Measure Our Performance?

The implementation of this Business Plan and the impact of its delivery will be measured in the following ways:

1. Performance Reporting of Actions and Metrics

Section 6 above identifies the key actions to which the Directorate is committed and shows these actions with corresponding metrics which will be used to indicate the impact these have. Progress, performance and analysis of these actions and metrics will be reported on a quarterly basis to the Corporate Policy and Performance; Finance and Resources; and Audit and Risk Committees.

2. Self-evaluation

The Council has begun, and is developing, a programme of self-evaluation using the model 'How Good is Our Council?' As well as being an important tool to manage improvement, self-evaluation by councils is a requirement of phase two of Audit Scotland's arrangements for The Audit of Best Value and Community Planning (BV2). The Corporate Governance Service will undertake a Directorate wide self-evaluation during 2011/12. Improvement actions identified through this exercise will be included within this Business Plan as appropriate.

9. Risk Management

Risk management is central to the Directorate's planning and operational delivery. As with any plan, there are current, and

there will be future, risks which impact on the delivery of this Business Plan. An assessment of the risk environment has been undertaken and the Directorate has prepared a register of service risks, their impact and the mitigating actions agreed. This register has been taken into account in the development of this Business Plan and will be regularly monitored and reviewed.