

**HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**CORPORATE PLAN**  
**2009/10 – 2011/12**  
**PART III**

*A) 2008/09 Retrospective review of Targets & Milestones*

## Section A

### Retrospective Report-Back on 2008/09 Targets and Milestones

The following section reports back on achievements against the targets set out in the Part II of the Corporate Plan 2008/09 – 20010/11  
Status of targets at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008 is described as either:

- A** = Achieved
- C** = Change
- S** = Shortfall

#### **Community Well-Being**

Personnel and Organisational Development

#### **Corporate Resources**

Financial Services  
Internal Audit, Investigations & Procurement  
Legal and Democratic Services  
Information Technology  
Policy and Performance

## Community Well-being Directorate

### Personnel and Organisational Development

2008/09 Targets/Milestones	Status	Comment
1. Agree and implement a single equalities scheme combining all equalities plans, and work towards moving from Level 3 to level 4 of the Equalities Standard for Local Government in subsequent years.	Shortfall <b>S</b>	Single equalities scheme drafted. Scheduled to self assess as 'Achieving' in Autumn 2009, following a change in the Equalities Standard.
2. Continue to review policies and procedures to take account of all existing and emerging equalities legislation.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Examples include:  Introduced Sickness absence toolkit and flexible retirement policy.  Developed smarter working, restructuring, redeployment and retirement toolkits.  Change agreed to pay protection arrangements.
3. Continue to work with Directorates and external partners to deliver on the disability and gender action plans.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Disability Working Group reviewed and amended targets set in the Disability Equalities Scheme and identified three priorities for the disability work plan for 2009/10.  Successfully launched a Reference Group - one of our key means of engaging people with disabilities.  Doubled accredited training opportunity places and female take up of these places from 2007/08. Increased by 10 percent the number of women in management taking up training opportunities.
4. Review and amend the Race Equality action plan after consultation with Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), Black and	Change	Drafted single equalities scheme and incorporated outstanding actions from race, disability and gender schemes. Consultation

Minority Ethnic (BME) groups and staff.	C	on draft scheme is being planned with Members, Local Strategic Partnership and local people. Consultation with local people scheduled.
5. Implement a management competency framework for Senior Managers to define what management skills and behaviours we need as an organisation to manage staff and services effectively.	Achieved A	Management competency framework implemented. Produced a draft framework due to be extended to all staff following amendments and further consultation. This was a key aspect of the tougher Investors in People (IiP) Standard. We successfully achieved re-accreditation in November 2008.
6. Continue to implement organisational changes, resulting from the review of our administration procedures and public contact arrangements, to improve the quality of customer experience.	Achieved A	Examples include:  Appointed a project officer to take forward this work in conjunction with accommodation moves and smarter working policy.  Completed a bespoke recruitment exercise for Revenues and Benefits Assessors, using learning to inform future recruitment practice.
7. Continue to address stress and stress-related problems experienced by Council staff, develop and implement a Stress Action Plan, and undertake a staff survey.	Achieved A	Health and Safety Executive endorsed Health and Wellbeing action plan as being in accordance with their stress management standard. The training element of the plan is scheduled as part of 09/10 corporate training plan. Completed staff survey in July 2008 addressing Equalities, Health, Wellbeing and general work issues.

## Corporate Resources Directorate

### Financial Services

2008/09 Targets/Milestones	Status	Comment
1. Produce a balanced budget for 2009/10 that takes account of evolving priorities and known financial pressures.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Balanced budget achieved against a background of lower investment returns, reduced income, reduced asset sales and the impact of higher Concessionary Fare costs. Council Tax increase limited to 3.5% for the 3rd consecutive year.
2. Work with partners to upgrade Agresso software and prepare for further automation of procurement activities.	Achieved <b>A</b>	The Council commissioned a report from an independent consultant which has now given the impetus for other partners to accept that an upgrade of the system is required.
3. Achieve annual accounts and budget timetables.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Annual Accounts received an unqualified audit opinion. All timescales achieved.
4. Consolidate our Use of Resources Assessment position.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Overall score of 3 out of a possible 4 achieved. This constitutes a 'performing strongly' opinion. The Council improved its individual score in Financial Reporting (up to 3 from 2 previously). The Council's Financial Standing, Financial Management and Value for Money scores all achieved a score of 3
5. Continue to improve Council tax and business rates collection.	Shortfall <b>S</b>	Council Tax Collection rate improved throughout the year until March 2009. This was against a background of recession, increased economic uncertainty and job losses.  Council Tax - 95.7% collected against 96.06% in 2007/8
6. Continue to monitor and meet Benefits performance targets	Achieved	Days to process new claims decreased to 23.38 days from

in respect of new claims and change of circumstances.	A	23.79 days previously. Days to process changes of circumstances improved to 9.99 days from previous year's average of 10.19 days. This is against the background of an increasing caseload. March 2008 saw 584 new claims compared with 1,035 in March 2009. Further details in Performance Indicator section.
7. Ensure the successful implementation of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Housing Benefits Scheme to support private tenants on low incomes renting from private landlords.	Achieved A	Successfully introduced in full compliance with Government guidance.
8. Improve the telephone service to Revenues customers by monitoring staff performance, identifying and providing for training needs and conducting customer satisfaction surveys during the year.	Achieved A	Performance improved with 96% of calls in March 2009 answered within 10 minutes. This aspect of customer service performance can still be improved upon, albeit against a background of increasing numbers of claims and enquiries.

## Internal Audit and Investigations

2008/09 Targets/Milestones	Status	Comment
1. Provide a shared Fraud Investigation service to Rother District Council meeting their service requirements and generating savings for Hastings Borough Council.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Shared Fraud Investigation service went live on 1st September 2008. Number of successful prosecutions and sanctions per thousand caseload (combined) exceeded target and operations completed within budget generating savings for the Council.
2. Embed our risk management processes and develop identification and recording throughout the organisation of significant partnership and opportunity risks.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Our risk management processes have been further embedded throughout the council, e.g. development of the Corporate Risk Register (GRACE) and this has been supported by a positive external strategic review of our risk management arrangements. Our significant partnerships (Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and Sea Space) risk profiles are recorded in the Corporate Risk Register as are a number of operational partnerships. The Risk Register has been used to identify opportunities that have arisen and risk assessment of same. Despite modest improvements, we acknowledge that we still have some way to go to fully embed our risk management processes.
3. Continue to deliver the Audit Plan and report outcomes to the Audit Committee.	Shortfall <b>S</b>	Delivery against the Audit Plan was not achieved due to unanticipated injected work which included strengthening controls over contract management in response to the recommendations made by external audit. The non-completed work will be accomplished by end of the first quarter 2009/10.
4. Continue to review our procurement arrangements and, working in collaboration with other local authorities and the South East Centre of Excellence, put in place improved arrangements for supplies and service contracts.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Examples include: Developed a spend analysis profile for the Council through participation in Sussex Improvement Partnership on shared services and cross boundary working for procurement. Supported development of a new cash collection contract and energy procurement arrangement via Local Authorities South

		<p>East Region buying consortium. Developed new sustainable procurement policy with East Sussex County Council Lead on the joint procurement and renewal of the building cleaning contract with neighbouring authorities. Provided comprehensive procurement training seminars.</p>
--	--	---



## Legal and Democratic Services

2008/09 Targets/Milestones	Status	Comment
1. Continue discussions and negotiations with the Foreshore Trustees and the Charity Commission to seek a satisfactory conclusion to Sea Front issues.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Signed settlement agreement on the breach of trust claim. Work is progressing to agree possible transfers of land to the Trust. Draft Scheme agreed with the Charity Commission for public consultation.
2. Work with other local authorities towards a shared legal service.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Some limited progress has been made. Examples include: EU procurement of a framework agreement for external legal services Joint procurement of books, shared extranet and online research resources. Information sharing towards agreed fee levels, where one authority's legal team is undertaking work on behalf of another.
3. Undertake regular review of Council Constitution to enable further improvements to the decision-making process.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Several amendments to the Constitution were agreed by the Council over the year.
4. Enable elected councillors to undertake a comprehensive work programme of scrutiny reviews and policy development work.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Councillors completed detailed reviews of Sickness Absence, Climate Change Policy, Joint Working with other Local Authorities and Trading our Services, Effectiveness of CCTV as a Crime Deterrent, Car Parking Provision and the Seafront Strategy.
5. Provide a comprehensive training programme for councillors including induction for new councillors, undertaking scrutiny and regulatory functions and responsibilities arising from equalities legislation.	Achieved <b>A</b>	370 hours of training for members on all regulatory issues provided including: Code of Conduct, equalities, overview and scrutiny and a range of detailed briefings on specific issues including Housing Stock and area co-ordination.
6. Ensure that the Councillor Call for Action Regulations are implemented and issues raised under these powers are reported to Overview and Scrutiny.	Change	The legislation was considerably redrafted and implementation date delayed by government. We await release of the government's implementation regulations expected autumn

	<b>C</b>	2009.
7. Review the advantages obtained from the costs attached to membership of the East Sussex County Council health scrutiny committee.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Discussions held between the East Sussex authorities on the costs of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with no consensus reached on reviewing funding.
8. Support the Council's democratic processes by the timely organisation and management of meetings and production and distribution of agendas and minutes.	Achieved <b>A</b>	All meetings of Full Council, Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny and the regulatory and other committees fully supported and administered in line with all constitutional and legal requirements.
9. Take proper measures to organise the 1st May 2008 Borough Elections efficiently and in accordance with all legal requirements.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Elections successfully organised and fully supported by the Electoral Commission.

## Information Technology

2008/09 Targets/Milestones	Status	Comment
1. Agree and implement a new Information Strategy to provide a framework for dealing with records management, information security and data quality.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Formally adopted Information Strategy, associated Information Security Policies and Standards. Additionally, became one of the first local authorities to be accepted in the GovConnect secure data transfer scheme.
2. Improve our environmental performance by reducing our collective server power energy consumption.	Shortfall <b>S</b>	Work to establish baseline of server and storage utilisation was completed, ready for the virtualisation project. The main virtualisation and storage area networks project will commence in Q1 2009/10. This delay resulted from slower than anticipated progress of the accommodation strategy. Space for a new server room only made available in Jan 2009. The target has been rolled forward into next year's corporate plan.
3. Continue to maintain the Council's IT network, facilitate office moves and provide IT support to enable the smooth running of the Council.	Achieved <b>A</b>	95.38% of 5546 helpdesk calls closed within target time, and network availability was 99.85%. Successfully completed a large number (13) of office moves.
4. Enable the work life balance of employees to be met and rationalise our use of office accommodation by using technology to enable flexible working for staff.	Achieved <b>A</b>	Examples include: Planning officers able to access their systems from the field, utilising laptops connected by mobile data cards. Trialled field work access to the Environmental Health system with Environmental Health and Housing colleagues. Enabled Revenues and Benefits system access via Terminal Services. Implemented a Terminal Services solution enabling all departmental systems and desktop applications to office, home and field workers. Increased number of staff utilising phone devices to access office email and calendar facilities. Increased staff equipped to work from home.

<p>5. Continue to work with Access East Sussex on the development of shared services.</p>	<p>Achieved <b>A</b></p>	<p>Examples include: Continue to investigate feasibility of jointly procuring PC and laptops with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) resulting in further potential discounts. Shared with ESCC common network links for the Highways Service. Revised the presentation of shared web kiosks to improve customer experience. Met to share knowledge and experiences in the GovConnect Code of Connection process. Partnership bid submitted to analyse data flows and security requirements between two tier councils.</p>
<p>6. Develop and implement plans to improve the quality of customer contacts across the Council.</p>	<p>Achieved <b>A</b></p>	<p>Overview and Scrutiny report on Public Contact completed and recommendations accepted. Customer Relationship Management system updated and enhanced to implement user suggestions for better supporting the local elections. Work underway exploring how handling customer queries best practice in Hastings Information Centre can be replicated for telephone customers. Call-handling of customer telephone queries significantly improved over the year, and continues to be an area of focus.</p>

## Policy and Performance

2008/09 Targets/Milestones	Status	Comment
1. Continue to respond to external assessments and to demonstrate the Council is achieving 'Value for Money' and improving efficiency, together with quality of service delivery and responding to local needs.	Achieved <b>A</b>	The Council's Annual Audit Inspection Letter confirmed that we have maintained our score of 3 out of 4 for both our overall Use of Resources and the specific Value for Money assessment against an increasingly harder test.
2. Embed changes in council practice arising from the Climate Change Bill, the Sustainable Energy Act 2005 and other policy developments.	Achieved <b>A</b>	<p>The Climate Change Act adopted in October 2008 set a legally binding 80% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction target by 2050 for the UK and a 34% reduction target by 2020. Further local authority guidance is expected in 2009.</p> <p>The key policy development during 2008/09 was the publication of the new performance management framework for local government which included 3 climate change related National Indicators (NIs).</p> <p>Examples of climate change activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>§ Raising awareness of the implications of the NIs with our contractors</li> <li>§ Working with partners in East Sussex to identify the impact of extreme weather events on our communities and services</li> <li>§ Base lining CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from Council buildings.</li> <li>§ Successfully secured European funding for a Climate Change Adaptation project in partnership with Seaspace and SEERA.</li> <li>§ Explored the opportunities both in CO<sub>2</sub> and financial savings through lowering the voltage in our buildings</li> </ul>
3. Work with partners across East Sussex to agree and implement a new three-year Local Area Agreement as the key delivery plan for improving outcomes for local people.	Achieved <b>A</b>	The LAA was agreed in June 2008, with a number of number of indicators which were identified as Placeholders (i.e. awaiting further clarification of definitions, awaiting data e.g. Place Survey data etc,) these targets were all agreed during the

		<p>refresh in March 2009. A number of targets, particularly house building ones are still subject to review pending the depth and length of time of the recession.</p> <p>The LAA is monitored by the East Sussex Strategic Partnership and the year-end performance data will not be available until July 2009.</p>
<p>4. Work with the Local Strategic Partnership to revise the Hastings and St Leonard's Community Strategy 2003 – 2013, ensuring compatibility with the Local Development Framework, thereby meeting the requirements of the Sustainable Community Act 2007.</p>	<p>Shortfall</p> <p><b>S</b></p>	<p>The LSP decided to delay finalising the refreshed Community Strategy in order to take account of the information from the Place Survey (was expected in March 2009) and the Town Conference (held on 2nd April 2009) which reviewed our regeneration progress and considered the impact of the economic recession on the shorter term milestones to be included in the Strategy.</p> <p>The refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy will be presented to the 15th June Cabinet and the 29th June Local Strategic Partnership.</p>