

Individual Decision

The attached report will be taken as an
Individual Portfolio Member Decision on:

28 June 2007

Ref:	Title	Member	Page No.
ID1284	Community Services Directorate Plan	Joe Mooney/Marcus Franks	1

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	Community Services Directorate Plan		
Report to be considered by:	Cllr Joe Mooney	on:	28.6.07
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1284		

Purpose of Report:

To seek approval for the Community Services Directorate Plan, 2007 – 2011, as attached as an appendix

Recommended Action:

Formal agreement to the attached Directorate Plan

Reason for decision to be taken:

To endorse the overall strategic direction of the work of the Community Services Directorate, within the context of the overall WBC Council Plan, as previously agreed.

List of other options considered:

n/a

Key background documentation:

WBC Council Plan, 2007 -2011

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Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 The attached draft Community Services Directorate Plan has been written to summarise the outcomes and priorities for the Directorate over the next four years. It takes as its starting point the outcomes and direction already agreed in the overall Council Plan, and, in its turn, will be supplemented by Service Plans being developed by each specific Service Area.
- 1.2 This plan has been structured around four key priorities for the Community Services Directorate:
- Self determination – supporting people to take control and make choices and changes to improve their own lives
 - Preventative services – working with people to take action which prevents the need for more intensive help
 - Engagement with people to promote and develop cultural activity which strengthens the community and reduces isolation
 - Safeguarding adults – understanding the risks faced by vulnerable people, and having a robust system which keeps people feeling safe
- 1.3 The plan has also been structured to focus on the key outcomes required by central government, and builds on the detailed understanding of local needs undertaken across the Council and individual Community Services.

Appendices

Appendix A: "Outcomes which improve People's lives", Community Services Directorate Plan, 2007 - 2011

Implications

Policy:	This plan confirms and gives further detail to the agreed policy direction as set out in the Council Plan.
Financial:	The financial implications of this plan are covered within the Council's agreed Medium Term Financial Strategy, and Capital Programme.
Personnel:	As detailed in the Community Service Directorate Plan.
Legal:	As detailed in the Community Service Directorate Plan.
Environmental:	As detailed in the Community Service Directorate Plan.
Equalities:	The promotion of equality of opportunity, and in particular, ensuring that disadvantaged individuals and groups within society are included in the provision of services are key themes of the plan, covered in more detail in section 4.4 onwards (p17).
Partnering:	As detailed in the Community Service Directorate Plan.
Property:	As detailed in the Community Service Directorate Plan.
Risk Management:	As detailed in the Community Service Directorate Plan.

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Community Safety: As detailed in the Community Service Directorate Plan.

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council: Cllr Graham Jones
Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman: Cllr Brian Bedwell
Policy Development Commission Chairman: Cllr Pamela Bale
Ward Members: n/a
Opposition Spokesperson: Cllr Owen Jeffery, Cllr Julian Swift-Hook, Cllr Roger Hunneman
Local Stakeholders: Relevant stakeholders
Officers Consulted: Senior Management Team
Trade Union: n/a

Is this item subject to call-in.	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by OSC or associated Task Groups within preceding 6 months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>

West Berkshire Council

Community Services

Outcomes which improve people's lives

Directorate Plan, 2007 to 2011 June 2007

Being part of the group has improved my quality of life

I really enjoy the Visually Impaired Reader's Group at Newbury Library. The best thing is it provides an opportunity for us VIP's to get together and take part in a mainstream activity where the common theme is books, as opposed to our disability.

How Direct Payments changed my life

I did not want to have to go to bed at 7pm or have to fit my life around my carers, I wanted to be in charge of my care and organise it to meet my needs

I am so pleased that I choose Direct Payments because it works so well for me and allows me to lead the life I want to when I want to.

From abuse to education

Having fled violence from my partner I found myself in temporary accommodation feeling isolated and depressed. Floating support played a major part in helping me to make a new life with my girls in this area. We moved from temporary accommodation to permanent housing and my life is now on track with my girls settled in a new school and me attending college

Back to work

After a long period of illness which affected my confidence enormously, I felt ready to re-enter the work force but had little idea of how to go about it. Within 2 days of meeting with Pathways to Employment, they had established contact with an employer within my field of experience, a firm of solicitors, and an interview was arranged. I am now mid-way through an 8 week work placement which has proven to be stimulating, pleasant and above all it has given me the confidence to move my life forward with a sense of optimism for the future.

How having support and a place of my own helped me sort out my life

I was living with my daughter, and drinking around 8 pints of cider a day. I got help to apply to go on the Housing register, and support to reduce my drinking.

Walking our way to fitness

My family are a lot healthier and have made a lot of good friends and look forward to their Wednesday walk - usually in the mud - but still enjoyable.

I completed a Detox programme, and stayed in the hostel, and have now moved into my own flat. I even managed to get some help with furnishing the new flat.

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 - *Regional and partnership work*
 - *Working across the Council*
- 3 Where are we now: *Our Current Performance***
 - 3.1 How we measure our performance
 - 3.2 Key Achievements and Outcomes
- 4 Key Priorities**

Outcomes for individual people:

 - 4.1 Improving Health and Well Being
 - 4.2 Improving Quality of Life
 - 4.3 Ability to make a positive contribution
 - 4.4 Ability to exercise choice and control
 - 4.5 Freedom from discrimination and harassment
 - 4.6 Maintaining personal dignity
 - 4.7 Economic well being

Outcomes for the council:

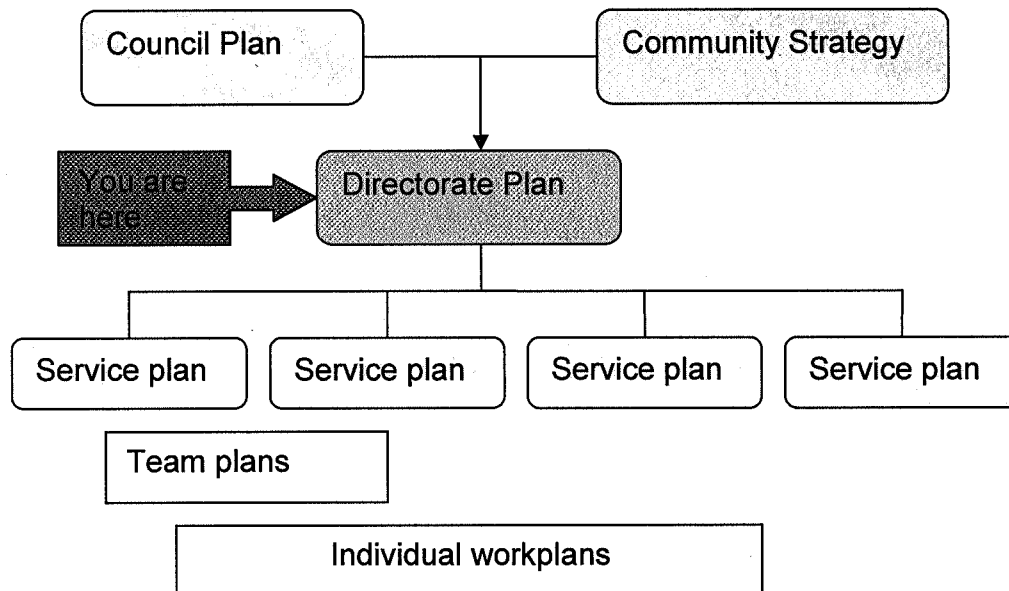
 - 4.8 Community Leadership
 - 4.9 Effective commissioning and use of resources
- 5 The resources we use**
- 6 Risks and Challenges**
- 7 Appendices**

1 Introduction – *Where does this plan fit?*

Welcome to the Community Services Directorate plan, which sets out the high level outcomes which we wish to achieve in the next four years (2007 to 2011). This plan does not sit in isolation. It relates directly to the wider Council Plan, and the Sustainable Community Strategy, brought together on behalf of the West Berkshire Partnership. These plans set out key themes and programmes for improving the economic, environmental and social well being of people in West Berkshire. Community Services has input to all 16 Council Plan themes, and is a major contributor to the work on:

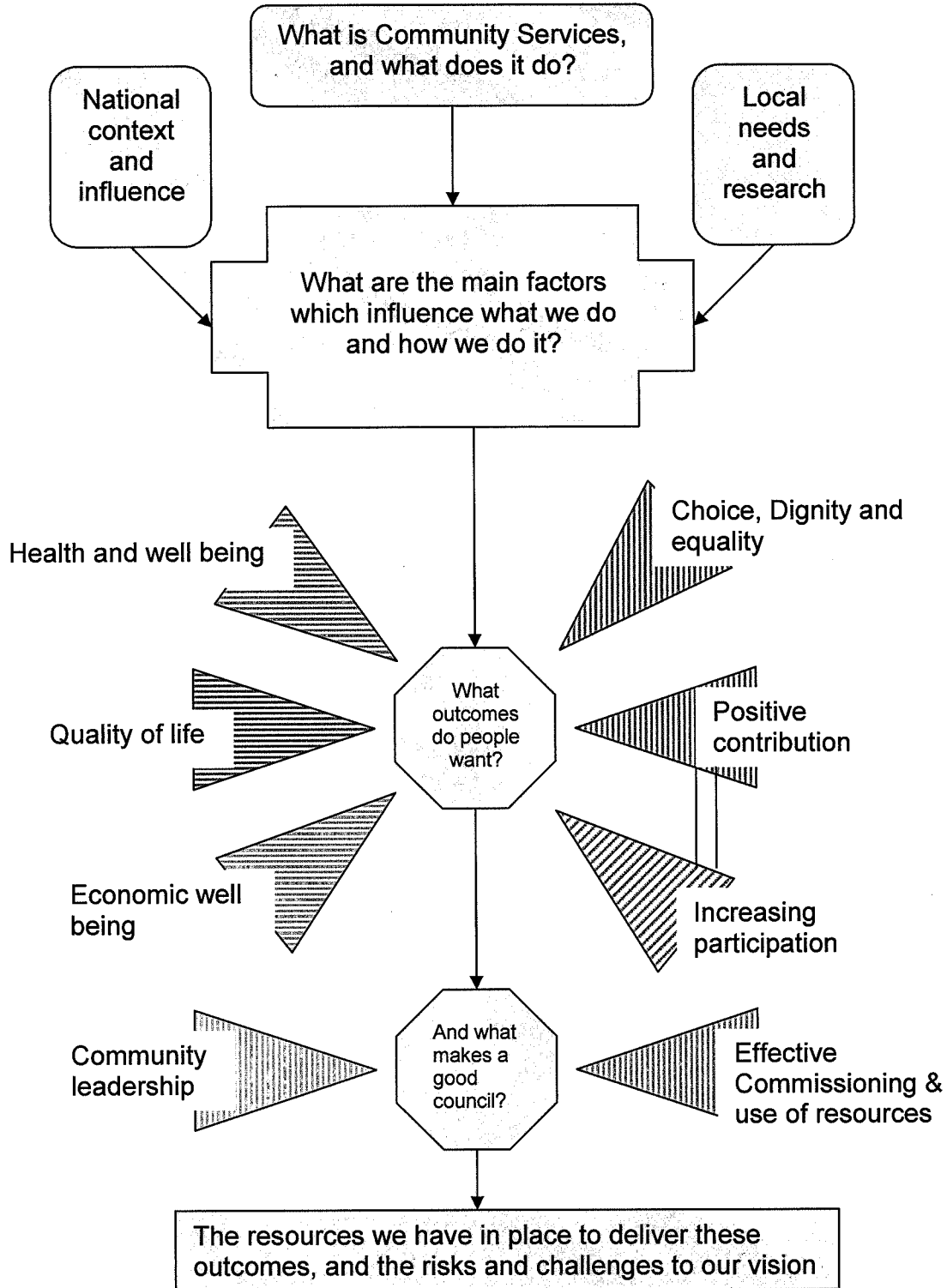
- Putting Customers First
- Including Everyone
- More Affordable Housing
- A Healthier Life
- Promoting Independence
- Protecting Vulnerable People

The detailed actions which we will take to achieve these council wide outcomes are not listed in this plan, but are covered in the individual service plans for each of our four service areas, which is where the overall action plans for each service are set out. Within each service, there are workplans for specific teams, and annual objectives for each individual, which is part of their appraisal and personal development.



We have taken as our model for this plan the outcomes which the government laid out in the White Paper, "Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: a new direction for community services", produced by the Department of Health early in 2006. This reflects the Government's requirement for a "personalised public service" which delivers the outcomes people want, as described in the "Building on Progress" report, March 2007.

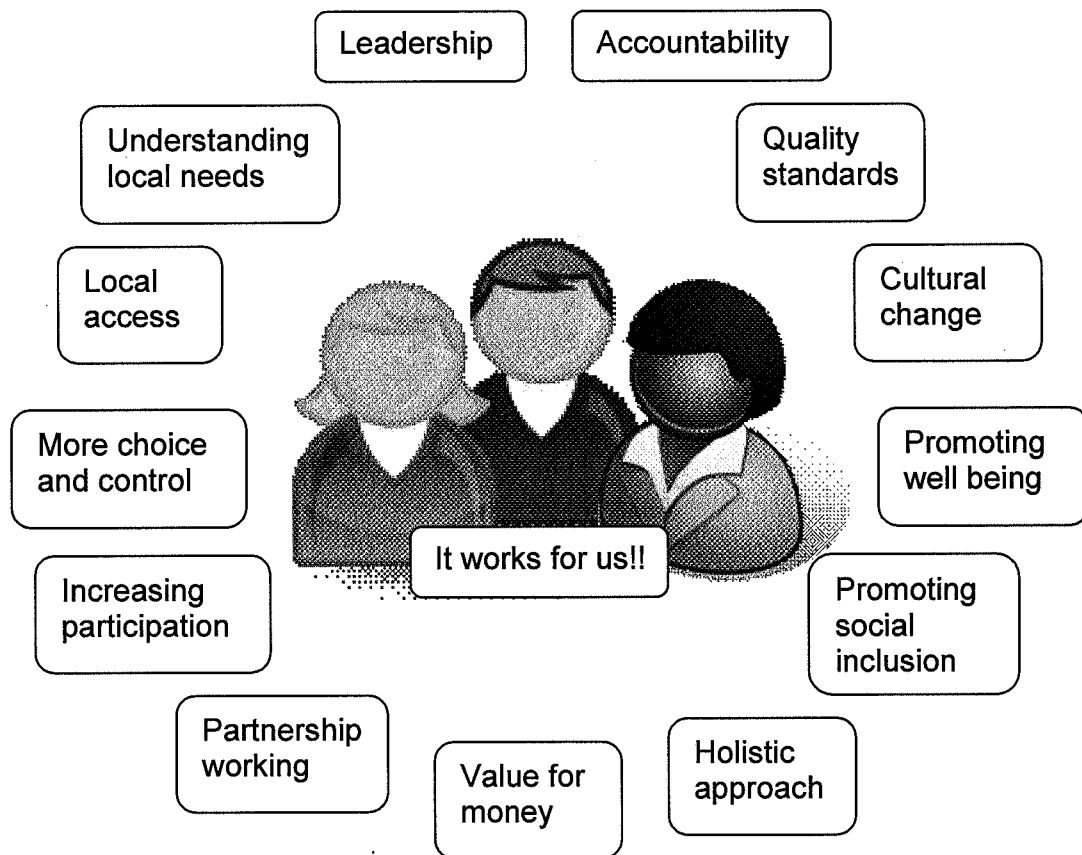
How this Directorate Plan is structured:



2 Overview of Community Services

This is the first plan produced by the new Community Services directorate, and is looking forward to a way of working with the emphasis firmly on how all people in West Berkshire can improve their health, well being and quality of life. We started this document with some stories from actual people, and how what we have done has changed their lives. Our focus is on what makes a difference for individuals, how our support can help people maximise their potential, grow their independence and engage with their local community. Central to this is making sure that each individual has choice and control over what we do, and listening to their verdict on whether it has improved their life.

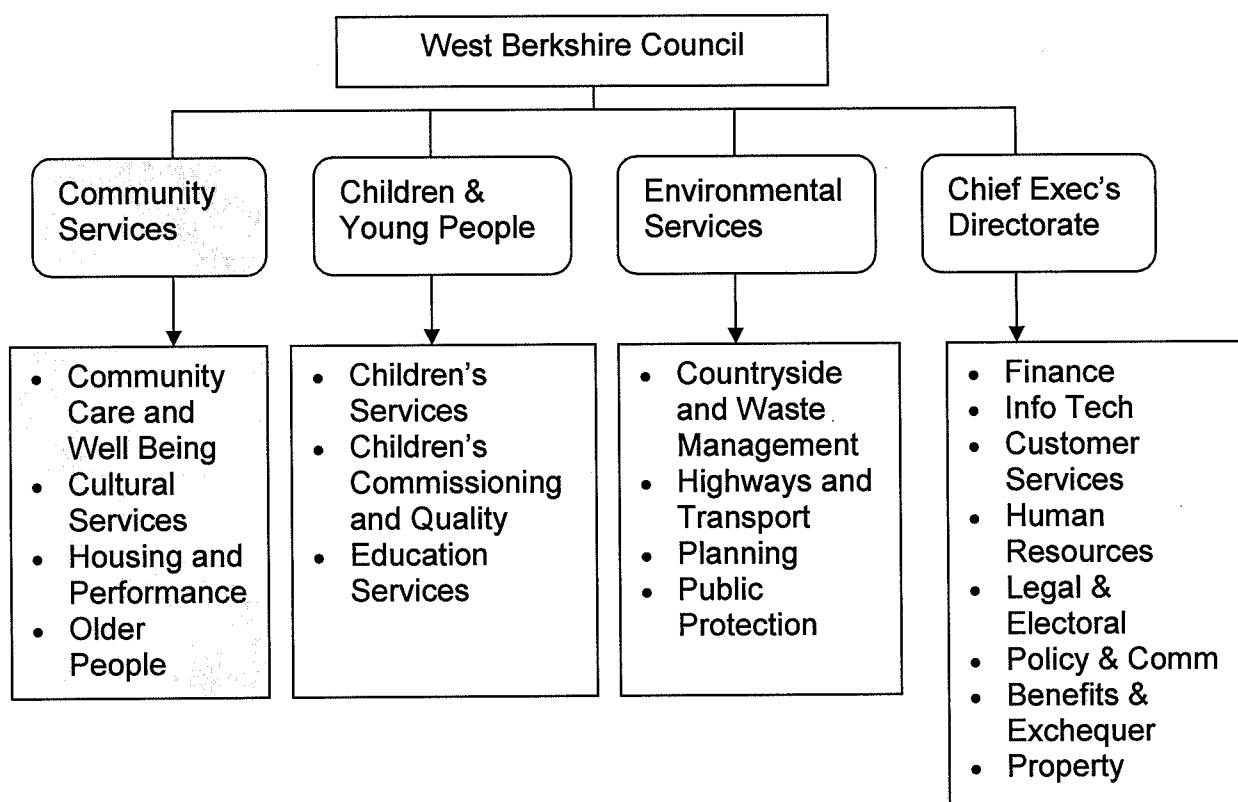
In simple form, the challenges facing Community Services might look like this:



2.1 What is Community Services and what does it do?

The Community Services directorate of the Council has been created in the past year, and brings together a group of services which focus on improving the well being of the people in West Berkshire, and in increasing participation in activities which improve their quality of life. Although much of our work centres on services to improve social

well being, we also make significant contributions to the economic and environmental well being of people within the district. The Community Services directorate sits alongside three other Council directorates: Children & Young People; Environmental Services; and the Chief Executive's directorate.



Within Community Services, we provide and arrange social care services for adults (including older people), provide housing services, library services, arts and leisure services, heritage and tourism services, and specialist youth services. [See Appendix 1: Community Services Organisational Structure Chart]

Bringing together such a wide range of services as a single Community Services directorate has already led to improvements in communications between services. It also allows specialist services, such as adults social care, to look beyond their immediate client group, towards the wider public, who are already engaging with universal services, such as libraries. This fits well with the need to move towards the promotion of "preventative" services – assisting and signposting people to a range of low level community-based ways of maintaining their independence, thus reducing dependence on formal intervention by statutory services.

The 4 key priorities for Community Services are:

- *self determination – supporting people to take control and make choices and changes to improve their own lives, including developing the diversity of opportunities required to allow for informed choice*
- *preventative services – working with people to take action which prevents the need for more intensive help, including recognising the role played by family and informal carers*
- *engagement – working with people to promote and develop cultural activity which strengthens the community and reduces isolation*
- *safeguarding adults – understanding the risks faced by vulnerable people, and having a robust system which keeps people feeling safe in the community*

2.2 The context of our work

We need to be both responsive to local needs, coming from the individuals and communities we work with, and take opportunities to learn from best practice and external influences. Central government gives clear direction, through legislation, guidance, and recommendations to councils on what we are expected to deliver, often using regulatory inspectorates to re-inforce and monitor this, although some discretionary services receive less central direction. Additionally, we are encouraged to work in partnership by initiatives such as the Local Area Agreement, which has set targets for local joint work on many areas of government priority.

Local needs and research

The District Profile is the Council's key research document, which brings together a picture of the local area, and begins to analyse the implications for services of demographics and other information. It is updated annually, and available as a reference tool via the Council's website. In addition, within Community Services, several specific pieces of research are undertaken.

The Housing Market Assessment (HMA) sets housing need in the wider context of Berkshire as a county and examines house prices, affordability and the drivers of the market including, economic growth and demographic change. Use of the HMA is supported by a Housing Needs Assessment that relates to specifically to West Berkshire and offers lines of enquiry for the authority to consider for the future delivery of affordable housing provision in the district

Cultural activity has been used to develop innovative methods of engaging with local communities [such as the Big Buzz Challenge, and Gener8 in Greenham] and thus allow the consultation process to commence.

We use surveys of the public and users of our services as an important source of detailed information on how well services are performing, and the users' perception of

the quality of services. Specific surveys carried out include a Home Care User's Survey; a Carers' Survey, and the Tourist Information Centre's mystery shopper scheme. We have a range of consultation events, standing groups and forum meetings, which also contribute to our research and engagement with our public.

The Active People survey has provided for the first time robust statistical information on the participation rates in sport and physical activity.

National Legislation, and government priorities

Our services are covered by a wide range of legislation, with key Acts including:

- NHS and Community Care Act, 1990
- Mental Health Act, 1983
- Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act, 1995
- Housing Act, 2004
- Homeless Act, 2002

The government's vision is a shift towards putting people at the centre of services, and offering a "personalised" service, which is judged by how well it can deliver the outcomes which individuals need and want, and show the flexibility to include everyone, not simply provide a limited range of services for one section of the community. This is coupled with a steer towards "preventative" services, with an expectation that investment is made in early low level and universal services which support people, preventing a decline into the need for more intensive support. Best examples of the success of the prevention agenda can be found in the Supporting People programme, which has been in operation since 2003 and brought a significant level of funding to West Berkshire to deliver tenancy support services, across a wide range of client groups.

Prevention is a key theme in managing homelessness, with a move away from crisis management to strategic response based on early intervention and support services to help those who have been re-housed sustain their new homes.

The Department of Health has been at the forefront of defining what the key outcomes are for people, and the framework which started in the "**Every Child Matters**" report is referenced in "**Our Health, Our Care, Our Say: a new direction for community services**" (Jan 2006); and the Green Paper on social care which preceded it, "**Independence, Well-being and Choice: our Vision for the future of social care for adults in England**" (Apr 2005). This described seven outcomes for people, which we believe can be applied across the whole of Community Services.

The seven outcomes for individuals are:

1. Improved health and well being

2. Improved quality of life
3. Ability to make a positive contribution
4. Ability to exercise choice and control
5. Freedom from discrimination or harassment
6. Economic well being
7. Maintaining personal dignity

To these seven, the government has added a further two outcomes, which focus on what makes a good Council:

8. Community leadership
9. Effective commissioning and use of resources

This list of outcomes now forms the framework for how government assesses the performance of councils, particularly in relation to community services and social care, so we have used these outcomes later in this plan to form the framework for our future priorities.

Other key legislative drivers include the recently published **Heritage Protection** White Paper (Mar 07), which gives a requirement to ensure that opportunities for public participation, inclusion and involvement are maximised, but which also clarifies the need for the historic environment to be at the heart of the local authority planning system.

For public libraries, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport's "Framework for the Future" report, 2003, set out the government's long term strategic vision, focusing on three areas of activity which should be at the heart of libraries' modern mission:

- The promoting of reading and informal learning
- Access to digital skills and services including e-government
- Measures to tackle social exclusion, build community identity and develop citizenship.

Our focus on affordable housing and reducing homelessness also reflects national drivers, including the requirement in the **Housing** Green Paper, 'Quality and Choice: A Decent Home For All', (April 2000), which set out the Government's policies in relation to housing, with the aim of offering "*everyone the opportunity of a decent home and so promote social cohesion, well-being and self dependence.*"

Regional and partnership work:

a) The Local Strategic Partnership and the Local Area Agreement

The Council is a key player in West Berkshire's Local Area Agreement which runs from April 2006 to March 2009, and includes a series of challenging targets to improve performance in areas which are key government priorities. This document includes a "Healthier Communities and Older People" block, which covers many aspects of

Community Services work. The agreement was negotiated with the Government office of the South East, who regularly monitor progress against the agreed targets.

The Local Area Agreement is a major part of the work of the West Berkshire Partnership, and to develop the work within the Healthier Communities and Older People's block, a specialist sub-group, the Health and Well being Partnership, was established. Community Services managers have played a key role in forming, developing and extending the Health and Well Being Partnership. The Partnership brings together relevant council services, as well as health colleagues, a large representation from the voluntary sector, and business sector colleagues as well. It therefore has a major role to play in ensuring that we are working together effectively to support the needs and aspirations of the community.

Community Services housing managers also make a significant contribution to the Housing and Environment sub-groups of the West Berkshire Partnership, and have also contributed to the work of the Safer and Stronger Communities and Children & Young People's sub-groups as well.

The government's White Paper on the future of local government – **Strong and Prosperous Communities** (Oct 2006) also details a significant development of Local Area Agreements in the future, seeing them as the central tool with which central government can assess the performance of local government.

b) Partnerships in commissioning and delivering services

Much of our work is done through partnerships, whether at the level of joining with partners such as health in designing and commissioning services which meet a range of local needs, or at the level of working with partners to deliver services on our behalf. Many of the direct services which people receive are not delivered by our staff, but by companies, agents, and voluntary organisations on our behalf, and to our specifications. This involves us in a very different role to ensure that a high quality of service is maintained, and also that public money is spent effectively. We may not have direct management control over all the staff who provide services on our behalf, but this doesn't lessen our overall accountability to the people for whom the services are provided, and the need to ensure that they get the outcomes from the service they expect and deserve.

The recently formed Registered Social Landlord (RSL) Development Partnership has brought together five RSLs to work alongside the council in delivering strategic aims and objectives for the district; for the provision of good quality affordable housing and the creation of sustainable communities. Housing Strategy had a key role to play in the regional housing arena ensuring that all opportunities for funding are drawn down into the district.

We also have a role, particularly within Cultural services, to enable communities to organise and deliver services themselves. Support is provided to ensure that

appropriate standards are in place and maintained. Our role is to build on the local infrastructure and networks, to ensure support is present and that new activity is sustainable.

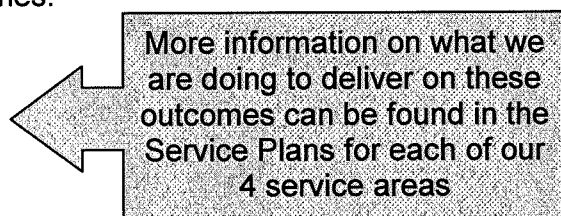
Working across the Council

a) The Council Plan

In April 2007, West Berkshire Council published its latest four year Council Plan. This document is arranged as a series of outcomes for the people of West Berkshire, and Community Services will play a major part in delivering the specific targets against most, if not all, of the 16 outcomes described.

In particular, Community Services has been given a lead role in delivering specific targets in respect of 5 of the 16 outcomes:

- Including Everyone
- More Affordable Housing
- A Healthier Life
- Promoting Independence
- Protecting Vulnerable People



The additional outcome "Putting Customers First", although not led by community services, is at the heart of all our work, and is an area which all our services will contribute to.

The Council plan also identified 3 key priorities for the council as a whole:

- A Cleaner and Greener West Berkshire
- Safer Communities
- Successful primary schools

Within Community Services, we will be contributing to the Cleaner and Greener agenda by examining our transport needs, our use of energy, and our ability to recycle waste materials. Individual services have taken initiatives such as the "return to any branch" policy within Libraries; sustainable management of all SSSI's by the Countryside service; leisure centres working with schools to tackle the issues of the "school run" as partners in the Go Kinetic project; and conserving the historic environment through giving appropriate advice to farmers and land managers.

We are working closely with the Safer and Stronger Communities sub-group of the West Berkshire Partnership, particularly in relation to areas such as drug and alcohol services, and developing awareness of adult protection issues. In addition, we are contributing to the delivery of safer communities through the development of positive activities, particularly within Arts and Leisure services, including a three year project in partnership with NACRO.

Our focus on affordable housing and homelessness services will support parents with young children, improving the well being of primary school pupils. Cultural activity also plays a major role in supporting and expanding the educational experience of pupils, and can be linked to the wider community and provide engagement for pupils who are disengaged with the formal educational process.

b) Contributing to improving the whole Council

In addition to the focused work within specific parts of the Council Plan, we also contribute to a wide range of work which demonstrates our commitment to improving the effectiveness of the council as a whole. Our specialist knowledge is called on to contribute to many development themes, whether this is through assisting the development of transport policy, by commenting on the needs of groups such as older people; through driving forward work on including people with disabilities; through explaining the added demands or issues caused by new planning developments; through giving a formal structured approach to measuring performance and assessing quality; or through adding our expertise to the customer focus and public information work of the council.

3 Where are we now: *Our current performance*

This is the first directorate plan written for the whole of the newly established Community Services directorate.

Both Cultural Services and Housing were judged to be two star services in the CPA scoring for 2006.

Housing CPA is comprised of a number of indicators, some of which are not directly controlled by Housing Services. Good results in homelessness prevention are a constant strength to our rating, work to specifically target a number of areas to improve performance is planned for 2007/08.

The council's Adult Social Care services have been awarded a three star rating by the Commission for Social Care Inspection, based on performance during the financial year April 2005 to March 2006. This is the second year that we have achieved a three star rating, the highest category. We are described in the annual assessment as "serving most people well", with "excellent capacity to improve services".

3.1 How we measure our performance

Within Community Services, we have developed regular performance monitoring systems, which track our performance against key performance indicators, which are reported both nationally and locally.

In services such as adult social care, an internal monitoring system was designed for the performance indicators which make up the Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) which is used by the Commission for Social Care Inspection towards the star rating for social care. A monthly "Green Book" was developed, to which was added analysis of the PI's against nationally agreed measures of good practice, and also added background explanations and locally agreed targets.

The model of the Green Book for social care was copied to develop a "Blue Book" for Housing services, and an "Orange Book" for Cultural services. This has given us a consistent format for monitoring performance in each of the main service areas within Community Services.

We are now developing a simple scoring system to give a rating of the value for money of services, by combining on the same graph the information about the quality and volume of our services, and their cost, in comparison to other organisations. Refining and developing this value for money matrix will be the focus of further work later in 2007.

We have also developed a Quality Framework to examine and quality assure services. This provides a systematic method of checking progress, and developing an action plan for improvement, covering key areas including:

- Customer focus
- Information requirements
- Service planning
- Resource management
- Learning and benchmarking
- Partnership Working and governance

By working through this framework toolkit, we can identify the priorities for action and improvement across the services, and use the results to feed into the service planning process. Within Community Services, we have been heavily involved in developing and training others in this tool, which has put us in a strong position to understand the evidence base for our planning, and prioritise areas for development.

[See Appendix 2: Detailed performance reports]

3.2 Key Achievements and Outcomes

These are a few quick examples of the volume of activity within Community Services:

- 2,000 older people helped to live at home each year
- 130 older people admitted to permanent residential or nursing homes each year
- 900 people getting home care services every week
- 100 people receiving direct payments towards their care needs
- 400 adults (aged between 18 & 64) with a physical disability helped to live at home
- 240 adults (aged between 18 & 64) with a learning disability helped to live at home

- 300 adults (aged between 18 & 64) with mental health problems helped to live at home
- Over 1.6 million visits to West Berkshire Council operated or funded Cultural facilities in the last year
- Over 26,000 West Berkshire adults participating in sport and physical activity at the Government's recommended level of 3 x 30 minutes moderate activity each week
- nearly 585,000 visits to libraries
- over 900,000 items borrowed from libraries
- Over 130 units of affordable housing developed each year
- Over 170 households where homelessness was prevented by housing advice
- Only 70 units of temporary accommodation used per year
- Delivery of disabled facilities grants to 135 people

New developments over the past year include:

- Opening new Wash Common library
- Opening Birchwood, a new purpose built home for older people with dementia
- Opening Shaw House, a restored Elizabethan manor house as the venue for a variety of uses including Register office and training centre
- Entered procurement process for new contract to operate the Council's Sports and Leisure Centres
- Implementation of the electronic case management system for adult social care
- Implementation of Choice Based Lettings

The individual service plans hold more detail on the on-going service delivery priorities for each service.

4 Priority Outcomes

We are determined to build on the success of our achievements so far, recognising both the strength of the services we have already developed, and the need to continuously improve, to deliver the quality of outcomes people expect and demand, and to make sure that we reach out to all sections of the community and give everyone the opportunity to improve their life and engage in their local community.

We are using the 7 outcomes for individuals, and the 2 additional outcomes of a good council, to describe our priorities:

4.1 Improving Health and Well Being

Improving health and well being is the key purpose of all the functions of the Directorate and the Directorate take a lead on this for the Council (as described in the council plan outcome: A Healthier Life). The other outcomes people want all flow out of and contribute to achieving this overarching goal of improved health and emotional well being

Our priorities are:

- The promotion of good health, rather than a focus on improving poor health
- The value of preventative intervention

Our key tasks will be:

- To adopt a standard or measure of positive well being, against which the achievement of universal, specific and intensive targets can be measured
- Communicating and promoting what is available from the directorate more effectively
- Developing innovative partnerships and project involving communities in improving health and well being.

4.2 Improving quality of life

Our key tasks will be:

- To work with customers, service users and the wider West Berkshire community in defining what comprises a good quality of life
- Improving people's quality of life through delivery of Community Services, both directly, and in partnership with the wider communities
- Identifying gaps and considering whether and exploring the most appropriate methods available to deal with them

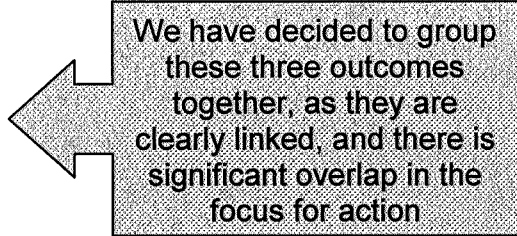
4.3 Ability to make a positive contribution

People need to participate, and they value services which welcome their input, and ownership. Every service needs to **engage** with the people who use it (and also those who choose *not* to use it) to learn what people want, how they want it delivered, and how we can improve to meet their expectations. This has the twin goals of improving how people rate our services, and inspiring people to get involved and change their communities for the better, improving their own lives and cultural and leisure opportunities in the process.

Our priorities are:

- Taking opportunities to encourage service users and carers to feedback their experiences in order to improve services
- Building capacity within community and voluntary organisations with training, support and investment, to promote active citizenship and community engagement

- 4.4 Ability to exercise choice and control**
- 4.5 Freedom from discrimination or harassment**
- 4.6 Maintaining personal dignity**



We have decided to group these three outcomes together, as they are clearly linked, and there is significant overlap in the focus for action

Our priorities are the development of a customer focus and self directed services:

Customer Focus

- Effective consultation and involvement of service users, including capturing and using information on assessment outcomes and anecdotal feedback
- Consulting with the community around specific service plans
- Promoting outreach to non service users, and excluded groups
- Engaging with other service providers across the broadest spectrum to develop a knowledge base of what is available

Self Directed Services

- Shifting the emphasis from customers receiving services from a set range, to consumers choosing the mode of delivery of a service with the Directorate facilitating new possibilities
- Offering range and flexibility while preserving quality and safety
- Ensuring a robust system to safeguard vulnerable children and adults

In order to deliver more self directed services, we will need to:

- Assess the manner of service delivery and engagement with users, and change this where it is not appropriate
- Support our personnel to develop both the skills and motivation to deliver a self directed approach
- Ensure this shift in ethos and practice is explicit in the Workforce Strategy and reflected in recruitment and staff and volunteer training and development.
- Ensure this shift in expectations is reflected when commissioning services and working with partners.

We also need to promote inclusion, through:

- Ensuring all have an equal voice
- Ensuring that our services are accessible and universal

We will promote equality, through engaging with service users to identify and address examples of old style, well intentioned but paternalistic service provision, whether evident in individuals (including Members), staff groups or service models. We will also engage with non-users, to identify any barriers facing them, or perceptions of inequality within services.

- Improve equality through regular equality impact assessments of services, and key developments.

4.7 Economic well being

The Directorate promotes economic well being at two distinct levels:

The Economic well being of individuals, where our priorities are:

- Supporting opportunities for employment
- Maximising benefits and allowances claimed
- Developing more affordable housing
- Developing homelessness prevention services
- Providing supporting people services
- Providing training opportunities, improving employability

We also support the wider economic well being of the community, where our priorities are:

- Promoting tourism and visitors to heritage sites
- Develop good services which people value as high quality, to attract further investment in the area as a good place to live and work.
- The development of quality cultural activity and events to create a positive image for our towns and make them an attractive place for business investment and as a place to live and work
- Using our assets, such as libraries and museum, as community resources
- Providing facilities for self directed learning and especially access to IT in libraries for all, which has been demonstrated nationally to improve educational standards and employment chances
- Ensuring growth in the local economy is supported through the provision of appropriate affordable housing options, that are reflective of the market.

4.8 Community Leadership

The directorate has an important role in leading the wider community's understanding, ownership and development of community services.

Our priorities are:

- Leading the development of a strong local partnership capable of delivering improving health and well being
- Ensuring greater clarity on what can be expected from leaders within the Directorate is communicated
- Publishing criteria which demonstrate why a given development is a priority
- Ensuring that, as an employer, we encourage our staff to engage in healthy lifestyle options, and develop the health and well being of our workforce
- Leading by example in setting and operation high standards of service provision
- Working at all levels to support and enhance the infrastructures in place to ensure strong community engagement and ownership

4.9 Effective Commissioning and use of resources

Each service area has its own detailed commissioning plan, which forms a key part of the individual service plans. Here, we focus on over-riding themes which are applicable across the directorate. Community Services holds an asset portfolio that is second in size only to Education and requires a co-ordinated strategic plan to ensure best use is made of the opportunities property assets offer. A new directorate asset plan for 2007, will detail the content of the portfolio, potential development requirements and how all associated issues will be managed by the directorate.

Our priorities are:

- Transparency, so that we ensure the rationale behind financial decision making about priorities is clear and available to managers, staff and service users
- Openness, so that the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Asset Management Plan are accessible to managers
- Maximising the benefits of the new directorate, through efficient use of our resources across service areas

The key challenge is to commission for the demographic changes we know are happening, and to continue to deliver effective value for money within a changing market, which is responding to different expectations and demands. This commissioning will increasingly be done in partnership with other agencies.

Major programmes of development work, 2007/08

- New Hungerford library
- New library management system in partnership with a number of other library authorities
- New Home Care contracts
- New Leisure Centre Management contract
- Opening of the Phoenix Centre
- Opening Shaw House as a visitor attraction
- New Home Improvement Agency
- New Health and social care Mental Health IT system

5 The resources we use

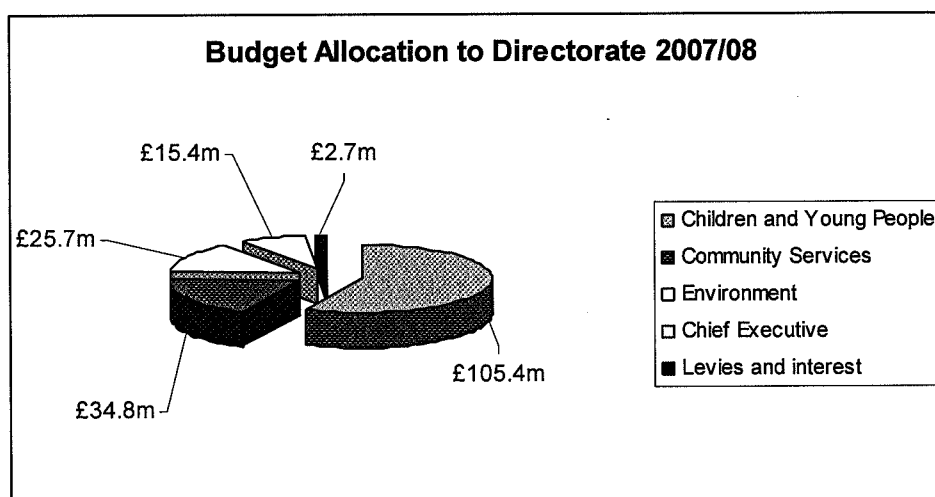
5.1 Financial Resources

The Medium Term Financial Strategy looks forward three years to estimate the funding required to finance the Council's objectives over that time. Leading from this Strategy, a Revenue Budget and Capital Programme are set annually, and agreed in March of each year in order that the Council Tax for the Authority is established.

The revenue budget for the Council for 2007/08 is £184 million. The funding of the revenue budget comes from three main sources:

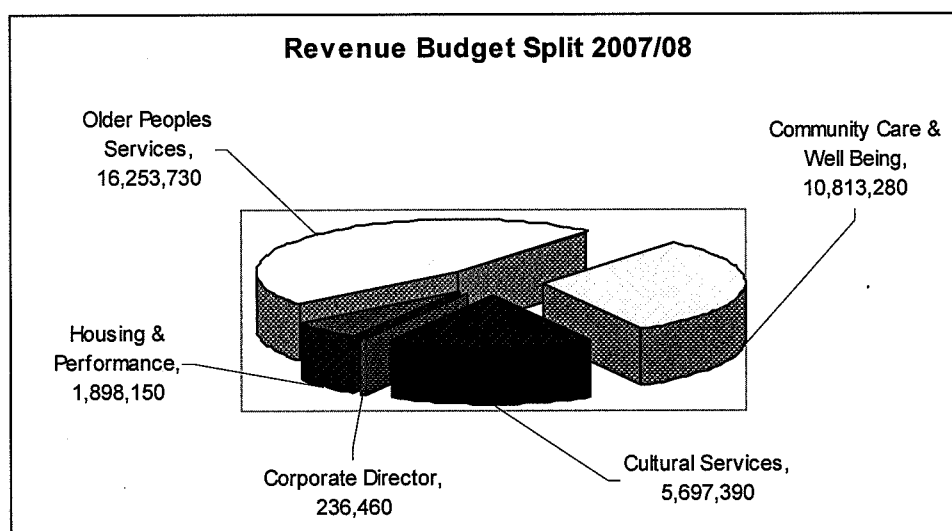
- Central government grant;
- National non domestic rates and;
- Council tax.

The allocation of the budget between service directorates illustrated below shows that the Community Services Directorate holds 19% of the total budget of the Council.



The revenue budget is used to fund day to day expenditure, for example staff salaries and utilities. The table below shows how the total revenue budget of £34.8 million is allocated between the different services within the Directorate. The capital programme generally finances items of expenditure that are expected to have a life in excess of 12 months.

Compared to the previous financial year the revenue budget for the Directorate has grown by 9.32%. This is as a result of an increase in service need particularly for older people services, mental health and learning disability clients. Trends within the West Berkshire area show that client numbers are growing significantly together with the complexity and therefore cost of care packages for these clients. These trends are expected to continue over the foreseeable future and are reflected in the Authority's Medium Term Financial Strategy. Through providing evidence on the growth of need for services, increased levels of investment were allocated in 2008/09, particularly for older people's services (£600,000), and learning disability services (£1.75m). Additional capital resources of £661,000 were allocated to adaptations to enable people with disabilities to live at home.



The Capital Programme

The capital programme is funded through Government grant and borrowing. The total capital programme for 2007/08 is £37.8 million, of which £5.6 million has been allocated to the Community Services Directorate. In addition, sums allocated in previous years for capital works continue to be available for projects which have already received agreement to proceed.

5.2 Human Resources

The Community Services directorate employs a total of 705 individuals, who together account for just over 655 whole time equivalent posts.

The community services directorate will use its Workforce Strategy to prioritise actions enhance recruitment, and reduce turnover from the current level of around 12% per year.

The Directorate produces an annual Social Care Learning and Development Plan covering both adults and children's work, and open to the private and voluntary sectors. This comprehensive training programme, based on an analysis of the development priorities, agreed competencies and identified development needs, brings together the needs captured through the service plans, team plans, and individual personal development plans. In addition the Social Care Training team has recently taken on the management of core training for staff across the Council.

5.3 Buildings and Premises

Maximising use of buildings and premises across the directorate is seen as a key priority to ensure effective use of resources. We are currently developing

an Asset Management Plan to ensure a strategic approach is taken to the management of the large asset portfolio held by the new directorate in line with increasing understanding of the potential future requirements for the district.

6 Risks and Challenges

Risk is managed through a systematic risk assessment at both directorate and service level, and the Directorate's Risk Register is reviewed annually. [See Appendix 3: Risk Register]

The directorate also needs to review its risks and challenges in the light of changes, both externally and within the council. We have identified the following areas as requiring close monitoring:

- The impact of new legislation and central government initiatives
- The effects of reorganisation within other major partners (eg: Health)
- Changes in the predicted increase in demographic growth, leading to increased demand for services and subsequent financial impact
- The potential for a change in political administration of the council
- The rising expectations of the community
- The Changing ethnic and cultural mix in the local population
- The changed role of the council, from provider to commissioner, partner and enabler – requiring a different set of competencies from staff
- Potential staff skill gap
- Our ability to plan within uncertainty.
- The nature of our partnership arrangements
- The diverse geography of our area
- Poor communication within the council and with partners resulting in wasteful duplication of resources, both human and financial
- Vulnerability of service users

We recognise that, in producing our plans, we have made a series of key starting assumptions, which are the dependencies on which our plans are built. We have identified the following dependencies, which again require close monitoring:

- Support services remain committed to the same priorities, and are able to deliver the necessary quality of service
- Buy in to our priorities across the wider council.
- Partners and service providers need to keep up with the vision
- Staff engage with the cultural shift within the directorate and the authority
- We can continue to maintain the timeliness of service delivery
- We have capacity to take time out to work on development and innovation
- We have capacity to focus on strategic view, not just on crisis management
- Resources (such as staff skills and funding) continue to be allocated for the above

7 Appendices

Further detailed information about the Directorate can be found in the following documents, which can be seen as Appendices to this overall Plan:

7.1 Community Services Organisational Structure Chart

7.2 Detailed performance reports

- **Green book**
- **Blue book**
- **Orange book**

7.3 Risk Register

7.4 Learning and Development Plan

7.5 Related Plans and Strategies

- **Cultural Services Strategy**
- **Health and Well Being Strategy**
- **Social Inclusion Strategy**

7.6 Capital Programme

Strategies which are specific to one service (eg: Older people's Commissioning Strategy) are referenced in the Service Plans for each service.