

SSDC Use of Resources Action Plan to achieve a “strong 3” in 2007

Requirement	Achieved in 2006	Timescale	Responsible Officer	Actions required
Financial Reporting	Y/N			
All additional requests from the auditor were responded to promptly in accordance with agreed deadlines (now must have KLOE)	Y	August 07 - Completed	AW	All deadlines were met.
The accounts were subject to robust member scrutiny/ discussion prior to approval.	Y	June 07 – Completed	DP/AW	Actions taken – training of all new members in finance and specific training for the Audit Committee. A further half day was set aside to go through the accounts in detail with 2 members of the Audit Committee with an accounting/ audit background.
The council publishes an annual report or similar document which includes summary accounts and an explanation of key financial information and technical terms designed to be understandable by members of the public (Level 4).	N/A	August 07 - Completed	MB	Have already provided pre-audited financial information for the Annual report published at the end of June 07. The Summary Statement of Accounts will form part of South Somerset News distributed to all households in November 07 as well as the usual leaflet that is available.
Financial Management				
<p>2.1.15 The corporate business projects forward at least three years and takes account of the following –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ external drivers, including funding variations and requirements to improve efficiency. ▪ capital investment plans and their revenue implications. ▪ risk assessments and financial contingency plans. ▪ sensitivity analysis. ▪ expected developments in service. 	N	<p>July 07 – Revised Approval Dec 07</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Completed</p>	MB/AH	<p>Work is almost complete on the workforce planning and IS strategies.</p> <p>MTFP report in October shows clear links to key partners and the approach to major strategies through service planning.</p> <p>A clear timetable has been agreed which clarifies to managers the links between service planning and budgeting.</p>
2.2.19 Progress in achieving planned savings and efficiency gains is regularly reported to senior management with developed action plans.	N	June 07- Completed	DP/JB	MTFP reported to MB in June 07. Outturn of planned and Gershon savings presented to MB which resulted in a meeting between procurement, ACE,

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				and Finance as an action.
2.3.12 The council makes investment and disposal decisions based on thorough option appraisal and whole life costing.	Y	June 07 - Completed	RS/DP	Projects can now demonstrate that new methodology is being followed including Whole Life Costing.
Financial Standing				
3.1.8 Set and monitor targets for all material categories of income collection and recovery based on age profile of debt (now must have KLOE)	Y	May 07 - Completed	BB/IP	This has been completed for Business Rates and Council Tax. Quarterly targets now in place
3.1.11 Monitoring information is available that evaluates the effectiveness of recovery actions, associated costs, and the cost of not recovering debt promptly.	N	May 07 – Revised Dec 07	BB/IP/MH	To reach a “strong 3” need to form working group between finance and Revenues and Benefits. MH to review the costs of recovery at each stage – this work is in progress but not yet completed.
Internal Control				
4.1.9 The members with specific responsibility for risk management have received risk management awareness training.	Y	June 07 – Completed Nov 07	GR	Audit Committee received training on the 23 rd August 2007 this had been delayed due to the volume of training required post elections. All members will receive training over the next few months.
4.1.10 Members with responsibility for corporate risk management receives reports on a regular basis and take appropriate action to ensure that corporate business risks are being actively managed, including reporting to full council as appropriate.	N	April 07 – Completed October 07	GR	Specific reports appear regularly on the agenda e.g. the SIC action plan. They also have received specific reports on various service area risks as a follow up to SWAP reports e.g. HR, Payroll, Homelessness and Stores. The committee have also actively monitored the compliance of all managers to complete their Operational Risk Assessments. Regular reporting arrangements still need to be included within the forward plan of the Audit Committee.
4.2.12 The Council has identified its significant partnership	N	June 07 – Revised	AK	‘Key Partnerships’ document to be completed in September

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significant partnership arrangements and has appropriate governance arrangements in place for each of them (now must have KLOE 2006)		Revised Sept 07 May 07 - Completed July 07 – Revised Dec 07	JB DP	including assessment of corporate partnerships into key, significant, and minor. The document will outline governance, reporting, and monitoring arrangements. Governance arrangements have been collected through finance and governance arrangements are being reviewed as part of partnership assessments. Financial Procedure Rules re financial governance of partnerships to be strengthened. Revised approval date of October for Audit Committee and December Council.
4.3.10 The council is proactive in raising the standards of ethical conduct amongst members and staff, including the provision of ethics training and counter fraud work is adequately resourced (new must have KLOE 2006)	N	May 07	IC	Anti Money Laundering Policy approved through Audit Committee and DX. A presentation on Code of Conduct was made to members at Council in July 07. Governance is now included as part of induction and a Keep it Simple Leaflet is available. Anti Fraud and Corruption Policy has been reviewed.
4.3.15 The council can demonstrate that counter fraud and corruption work is adequately resourced (also inc within VFM)	N	June 07	IP/AC	Review resources and also document success.
4.3.17 The whistleblowing policy is publicised within the council and demonstrates the council's commitment to providing support to whistleblowers	N	April 07	IB	This has been reviewed for 2007 and will be approved by the Audit Committee in October 2007.
4.3.18 The council has effectively identified the key NFI data matches for review from all levels of reports (high medium and low)	N	May 07	IB/AC/IP	Review whether to match key data from low as well as high and medium are matched. Regular meetings are held between SWAP and Benefits Fraud team. The Audit Commission have also been asked to approve an improved approach by the Benefits Team.

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4.3.20 Weaknesses revealed by instances of proven fraud and corruption, including NFI data matches, are reviewed to ensure that appropriate action is taken to strengthen internal control arrangements.	N	June 07	AC/IB/IP	Closed investigations are quality control checked and records whether there are any procedural, legislative or training issues identified by the case.
Value for Money				
Ensure that value for money is being achieved from improving services, in particular planning and street cleaning		Sept 07	MB	Ensure that further benchmarking is carried out on cost, quality, and performance in these areas. Further VFM data has been compiled in these areas.
Develop benchmarking further to demonstrate value for money		June 07 - Ongoing	MB	Further information has been given to managers of comparative information compared to our family group.
Ensure strategic planning and internal arrangements consistently demonstrate impact e.g. workforce planning		June 07	MB	Ensure that strategies identify the organisational impact of their implementation and the associated costs.
Ensure internal processes are as simple as possible and demonstrate VFM		June 07 - Completed	MB	Review of staff appraisal process now completed.
Develop further local indicators for cost effectiveness, and VFM for each service and project		June 07	MB	Review for service planning
Embed risk management at a service level and throughout all appropriate project and change management arrangements.		May 07	MB	Demonstrate where risk is being well managed and as a result better outcomes are being achieved.
Improve the evaluation of less formal partnerships and grants		June 07 – Revised Sept 07	AK	Incorporated within overall key partnership document

Key To initials

MB – Management Board

RS – Rina Singh – Assistant Chief Executive

DP – Donna Parham – Head of Finance

IC – Ian Clarke – Head of Legal and Democratic Services

GR – Gary Russ – Procurement Manager

BT – Brian Tufton – Head of Property and Engineering

AH – Anne Harland – Head of IT and E:Government

JB – Jayne Beevor – Principal Accountant Revenue Budgets

BB – Bob Brimley – Financial Systems Support Manager

LW – Laurence Willis – Head of Environmental Health

AW – Andrew Weston – Senior Accountant

MH – Margaret Hammond – Senior Accounting Technician
AK – Alice Knight – Voluntary Sector Development Officer
AC – Alison Creagh – Senior Investigation Officer
IP – Ian Potter – Head of Revenues & Benefits
IB – Ian Baker – Group Auditor SWAP

KLOE – Key Line of Enquiry, VFM – Value for Money