

Appendix 1 – Action Plan

Page no.	Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Target Date for Completion	Comments	Progress to date
	Managing finances					
7	R1 Ensure there are clear links from charging policies to corporate policies, and that there is clear communication on how the Council's charges compare to those of other councils.	2	Asst Director – Finance and Corporate Svces.	31/3/10	Ensure fees and charges register is more widely used and communicated. Communicate corporately more information on comparisons.	<p>Fees and charges register is being finalised and will be put on the website by 1st April for charges in 2010/11.</p> <p>The Medium Term Financial Plan increases all non-government imposed fees and charges by inflation annually.</p> <p>Examples of benchmarking of fees carried out for car parking, pest control, Disabled Facility Grants (Housing Standards) and street trading (Licensing).</p>
7	R2 Continue to develop the use of sensitivity analysis in financial planning.	2	Asst Director – Finance and Corporate Svces	28/2/10	Will develop further for 2010/11 budget & MTFP	Further sensitivity analysis has been carried out for 2010/11 and includes information as to how/where the financial risks from that analysis have been managed.
7	R3 Complete equality impact assessments for all services and strategies and use the outcomes to inform service and financial planning.	2	Area West Services Manager	30/12/09 30/12/09 from 31/7/09	<p>Completion of 3 yearly schedule of Equality Impact Assessments for all services.</p> <p>New schedule of EIAs for services and key strategies/policies established.</p> <p>Outcomes monitored quarterly</p>	<p>Action on Target</p> <p>Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) have been completed for services. Work is ongoing to ensure that all strategies are impact assessed and that there is evidence to show that the outcomes of the EIAs are embedded in service planning.</p> <p>All budget savings must assess the impact of equalities as part of the budget process.</p> <p>Equalities impact now forms part of every Executive report.</p>

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7	R4 Engage effectively with key partners in the financial planning process.	2	Asst Director – Finance and Corporate Svces	31/10/09	Ensure Medium Term Financial Strategy /Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFS/MTFP) is reviewed at earlier stage & partners are engaged	MTFP was reviewed in Sept with a workshop for all members. Partnership discussions held in several areas Somerset Waste Partnership, South West Audit Partnership, etc. Savings in grants were discussed with partners eg the Citizens Advice Bureau for 2010/11.
7	R5 Continue to set and achieve challenging targets for collection and recovery of the key types of income and arrears.	3	Asst Director – Finance and Corporate Svces	31/3/10	Group to be set up September 09 to improve process & recovery corporately.	Post created within Revenues and Benefits to recover overpayments. Processes have been improved. The way that deposits are made for homelessness has changed to a bond scheme to ensure that less funding is paid that will need recovery in the future.
7	R6 The District Executive should self-assess its effectiveness in providing leadership on financial planning and financial management.	1	Asst Director – Finance and Corporate Svces	31/3/10	Will review with executive for MTFS/MTFP process – March 2010	Currently researching how best to approach the self assessment. MTFP process for 10/11 highly effective in finding the savings required where Portfolio Holders and officers worked together to find budget savings.
7	R7 Ensure there are clear links from the Carbon Reduction Strategy to proposals to reduce carbon emissions in service plans.	3	Assistant Directors	1/4/09	Draw in service planning guidance	Service plan updates for 10/11 being finalised. Impact assessment of recommendations now forms part of all Executive reports.
7	R8 Use information from benchmarking exercises to inform budget setting and performance targets.	2	Asst Director – Finance and Corporate Svces	Ongoing	Will continue to improve in this area. Some benchmarking is being done jointly with SPARSE (Sparsity Partnership for Authorities delivering Rural Services).	Lean has been utilised in the more comparatively expensive service areas e.g. revenues and Benefits and planning so far. This is likely to achieve over £500k in savings. Benchmarking also forms part of each service plan. SPARSE comparisons now being used as well as CIPFA Stats, and the Audit Commission Value For Money toolkit.

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7	R9 Take effective action in service areas where performance and/or user satisfaction is relatively poor.	2	Strategic Directors/ Assistant Directors	Ongoing	Will continue to action with Assistant Directors	Several areas reviewed this year including Benefits and S106's. Benefits performance has improved from 48 days in May to process a new claim to 24 days in December. This has been done through actively monitoring the workforce requirements through lean. S106's a new post has been created from some of the lean savings in planning to monitor and manage this. Software will be in place in April 2010.
7	R10 Continue to identify the savings needed to close budget gaps.	3	Asst Director – Finance and Corporate Svces	Ongoing	This is reviewed regularly & MTFP updated	This has been monitored and amended as we have gone through the budget setting process. We have also done some scenario analysis of possible future government cuts in grant. Will be working in partnership with East Devon District Council in providing joint savings.
7	R11 Make greater use of cost analysis, such as unit costs, in financial reports.	2	Asst Director – Finance and Corporate Svces	Ongoing	Improvements will be made during 2009/10 & 2010/11	Example is the Review and Demonstration of Value for Money of the Homelessness Prevention Fund. There is also some detailed information on costs for members on the introduction of Sort It+.
7	R12 Consult regularly with report users on the frequency, timeliness and format of reports.	1	Asst Director – Finance and Corporate Svces	30/6/10	Already done for 2009/10. Will consult again in 2010/11	Budget monitoring report changed after consultation with managers. Currently working with procurement to provide improved reports on spend in the authority to assist with procurement decisions.
8	R13 Consult regularly with external stakeholders about what information they want to see in external reports.	2	Management Board	Ongoing	Will continue to do through panel and other methods	Feedback is received regularly on SSDCs summary accounts. Audit Committee provide a check and also feedback is requested in the report sent to every household in South Somerset.
Governing the business						
8	R14 Deliver the key objectives in the new procurement strategy.	2	Procurement and Risk Manager	30/11/09	The key objectives in the new strategy have now all been applied and completed. A new strategy has been	Procurement strategy action plan is on target

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					produced for 2009 –14 with a new action plan that will further embed procurement objectives. (Currently awaiting approval and adoption)	
8	R15 Use information on public satisfaction with services, and how this varies across different groups, to support improvement.	2	Management Board	Ongoing	Will continue to review through Management Board and the Performance Team	Customer satisfaction surveys carried out for Building Control, Handyman Scheme, Pest Control and business satisfaction.
8	R16 Build on progress already made in understanding how existing and potential future providers can respond to the Council's commissioning needs.	2	Procurement and Risk Manager	1/1/10	Develop further training and analysis via the procurement board. Use spend analysis to determine areas of potential commissioning needs	Finance currently working with procurement to provide improved reports on spend in the authority to assist with procurement decisions. Spike's Cavell being used for analysis.
9	R17 Review the format of the central contracts database to see if additional data, such as insurance details, would support effective procurement.	1	Procurement and Risk Manager	5/11/09	A review of the central contracts database will take place in Nov, to see if this should be augmented with additional data	The Central contracts database is held on the intranet under the Procurement and support services section. Its has been broken down by service area. Support service circulated a 2 monthly reminder to service procurement leads that they need to complete a contract update form (or nil return). The central contracts database is therefore reviewed by all the services on a real time basis and this is backed up by half years review at the procurement board meetings.
9	R18 Ensure that the Somerset information sharing protocol includes health partners and provides adequate focus on data quality.	1	Performance and Communications Manager	31/3/10		Assessment of current consultation practices in progress

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9	R19 Complete the action plan from last year's Data Quality report.	2	Assistant Director – Legal and Corporate Services	31/3/10	Outstanding actions to be reviewed and prioritised. Monitoring arrangements also to be established.	Currently under review
9	R20 Strengthen the links between financial and performance reports.	2	Asst Director – Finance and Corporate Svces/ Strategic Director (Place and Performance)	31/3/10	Performance information has already been included in the 2008/09 budget outturn report. Will explore how the new performance management system can facilitate this for future reports	We are still exploring how to best do this for reporting in 2010/11. Will continue to report performance achieved as part of the outturn report and Statement of Accounts.
9	R21 Make greater use of quartile information in performance reports.	2	Performance and Communications Manager	31/3/10	Will be included in reports when available. Top quartile data has always been included in reports and analysed annually.	Awaiting national comparative data. Is included in reports where available. Best Value Performance Indicators data has always been included in reports and analysed annually. Comparative sickness data now collected from nearest neighbours and Somerset Local Authorities and included in reports.
9	R22 Ensure that the performance management process gives adequate consideration to the Council's performance across the full range of national indicators.	2	Performance and Communications Manager	Completed	The Performance system allows full transparency of performance across all National Indicators and retained Best Value Performance Indicators All NIs reported to Management Board quarterly	Completed

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9	R23 Use the local Code of Governance actively to support improvements in governance arrangements.	2	Asst Director – Finance and Corporate Svces	Completed	Already being done through South West Audit Partnership audits. Local code also updated August 2009	Completed
9	R24 The Standards Committee should be proactive in promoting the ethical agenda.	2	Asst Director – Legal and Corporate Svces	Phase 1 30/12/09 and ongoing	The results of a recent Ethical Governance survey will feed into a Development Plan for this committee that will include details for further promoting the work of the committee	On target.
9	R25 Consider placing the registers of interests on-line.	2	Asst Director – Legal and Corporate Svces	30/11/09	It already has been considered as during the most recent update of the Register entries member were advised that this would be happening and asking for any objections. There haven't been any so it will now be implemented.	Will be commenced during annual review.
9	R26 Establish arrangements for monitoring standards of conduct when working in partnerships.	2	Asst Director – Legal and Corporate Svces/ Partnerships Manager	30/09/10 30/4/10	Third Sector & Partnerships Manager to work with Legal Services Manager) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Code of Conduct for partnerships; • Develop minimum standards for governance 	Work now started on enhancing the partnership assessment framework.

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				Ongoing	<p>arrangements for all partnerships; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Partnership Register is maintained and reviewed on annual basis. 	Partnership register is on Insite and being updated for 1/4/10.
9	R27 Review the format of the regular risk management reports to the Audit Committee to ensure they provide members with a clear summary of how the Council's major risks are being managed.	2	Procurement and Risk Manager	Completed	This is already done via a review of specific risk register to the audit committee. Members are provided with a risk profile and the details on the controls and actions for each risk	Completed – Audit Committee requested two reports each year.
9	R28 Consider how the on-line risk management training module can be best used to support training for officers and councillors.	2	Procurement and Risk Manager	Completed	Considering changes to the format to make it more relevant to SSDC staff and members	<p>The changes have been made to the risk awareness module and the test amended to reflect the District council dimension. Additional training session will be conducted by the risk manager over the spring to catch new managers and appointees.</p> <p>The new training and awareness module being rolled out again by way of a refresher.</p>
9	R29 Improve staff awareness of the Council's anti-fraud and whistle blowing policies.	2	Asst Director – Legal and Corporate Svces	30/12/09 and ongoing	This will be one of the first tasks to be undertaken by the new Fraud and Data Manager in collaboration with the HR Manager. Multi media approach to be adopted and two “events” per year.	Policies are widely available through Insite.

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9	R30 Address the weaknesses in recruitment procedures identified by Internal Audit.	2	HR Manager	28/2/10	Actions identified by audit being addressed	On target
9	R31 Review resources available for anti-fraud work, particularly benefit fraud.	2	Asst Director – Legal and Corporate Svces	31/3/10 and ongoing	The new post of Fraud & Data Manger will provide additional resource in this area and will be tasked to undertake a review of current arrangements and resources.	Review has began but as there is no anti-fraud strategy in place this needs to be developed now that a resource has been identified for delivery of the strategy.
Workforce planning						
10	R32 Demonstrate improvement in recruiting to hard to fill areas.	1	HR Manager		This may be difficult to demonstrate in short / medium term because of recruitment freeze and downsizing.	This is not an issue at South Somerset at the present time.
10	R33 Include an analysis of staff satisfaction and morale in the workforce plan.	2	HR Manager	31/12/09	Data already available will be included in workforce plan.	Analysis of staff satisfaction using data from last staff survey now in workforce plan.
10	R34 Monitor the effectiveness of the Talent Management policy.	2	HR Manager	30/6/10	Devise scheme to monitor effectiveness and outcomes.	On target
10	R35 Collect and analyse staff satisfaction with "Sounding Board" and similar meetings.	2	HR Manager	30/11/09	Introduce collection of data and analyse	Communication survey completed November 2009 including data and analysis of staff satisfaction with Sounding Board and other communication methods. Will be reviewed annually.
10	R36 Ensure appropriate equality details are included in people management records, such as those relating to capability, grievance and disciplinary cases.	2	HR Manager	Completed	Data already being collected for age, ethnic origin, gender and disability.	Completed

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10	R37 Ensure all councillors have personal development plans and complete appraisals.	2	Asst Director – Legal and Corporate Svces	30/12/09 and ongoing	Currently there are personal development plans for members but no formal appraisal mechanism for all members. There is a “member profile” that identifies what is expected from each member and it is intended that this could be the starting point for an appraisal process. A feasibility assessment of the way forward will be the first step.	On-going – Personal Development Plans not available in electronic format and are relatively sensitive to the individual but Lyn will be able to show you samples when you meet.