

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: Chief Executive

REPORT NO. CEX300

DATE: 10th October 2005

TITLE:	Aligning Council and LSP Priorities
COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	All
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	N/A
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	N/A

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As members will recall the CPA re-refresh identified that the Council's priorities were not aligned to the Community Strategy. This concern has recently been reinforced in a letter received from External Audit and commenting upon our direction of travel.
- 1.2 It is apparent from the draft CPA guidance for District Councils that the degree of alignment between the Council's priorities and those of the LSP, as expressed in the Community Strategy, will make a very significant contribution to the assessment of the District's CPA performance.
- 1.3 Progress in securing the required alignment (or "golden thread" as it is referred to in the CPA guidance) has been hampered by the lack of prioritisation in the previous Community Strategy and the time required to develop the capacity and understanding within the LSP to appreciate the importance of assessing the needs and priorities of the area based on objective data.

- 1.4 During the last few months, significant progress has been made and following a full area profiling of the district four new priorities have been agreed by the LSP. These are currently being reflected in a revised Community Strategy, which will be accompanied by a detailed action plan.
- 1.5 Determination of these priorities has enabled us to revise the service planning pro-forma to include reference to these within the corporate context.

2. LSP Priorities

- 2.1 As a leading member of the South Kesteven Local Strategic Partnership, the Council has worked closely with representatives of the business, voluntary and public sector to profile the needs of the area. This has resulted in the LSP adopting the following long-term vision:

“To ensure that by 2020 our residents live in one of the ten most desirable locations in the country and are proud that they have the skills necessary to participate in sustainable communities that are safe, healthy and economically vibrant”.

- 2.2 In order to translate this vision into action, the LSP has approved the following four priorities, which will guide the new Community Strategy currently being prepared:
 - a) Community safety.
 - b) Affordable housing.
 - c) Town centres and economic development
 - d) Improved transport and access.

3. Our current arrangements

SKDC – The Vision

- 3.1 The District Council's vision complements and supports the vision of the LSP it is:

‘To ensure that the residents of South Kesteven are proud of their district and their Council’
- 3.2 This concept of “Pride” is articulated as a series of five steps detailed in a series of leaflets:
 - a) Performance and Priorities
 - b) Respect and recognition for diversity
 - c) Informing and Involving
 - d) Developing Communities
 - e) Empowering and enabling

SKDC - Strategic Alignment

- 3.3 In making strategic choices regarding service delivery the Council has taken account of the shared priorities that have been agreed at national level between representatives from Local Government and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). These are:

Sustainable Communities and Transport
Safe and Strong Communities
Healthier Communities
Older People
Children and Young Persons

- 3.4 Both these shared aspirations, and the priorities of the LSP, are incorporated into the Council's four ambitions:

Economic Development
Community Safety
Healthy Environment
Community Engagement

SKDC – Operational Alignment

- 3.5 To ensure that all our services are assessed against, and reflect these ambitions the Council has undertaken a comprehensive service prioritisation exercise using a four-fold classification of service priorities.
- 3.6 The linkage between these new ambitions and our current priorities, which were reviewed in May 2005, is demonstrated in the following table:

<i>Proposed Ambition:</i>	Priorities that it incorporates		Shared national priorities that it reflects
	Category A	Category B	
Economic Development	Town-centre regeneration	Business Development Planning Car Parks	Sustainable Communities and Transport
Safer communities	Anti-social behaviour	Diversity. Vulnerable Persons Housing Management Affordable Housing	Safer and Stronger Communities
Healthier Environment	Street Sweeping Recycling	Public Toilets	Healthier Communities
Engagement	Access	Communications LSP and Community Strategy	Children and Young People Older People

4. Timetable for future reviews

- 4.1 Now that the LSP has determined its priorities it would be appropriate for SKDC to review its own priorities in the light of these. If this process is undertaken now it could not only influence the budget round but would also be able to use the outcomes from the gateway reviews of priorities which was reported to Council on the 8th of September. This year priorities were revised in the Spring following a residents survey conducted over the winter. In future the corporate calendar for the revision of priorities could be as follows:

Residents survey	February
Update of area profile	March
Gateway reviews by LSP and Council	April
Review of LSP Priorities	May
Review of Council Priorities	June
Approval of Service Planning pro-forma	July
Budget preparation	August to December

5. Issues to be considered in the review of Council priorities

- 5.1 The alignment between our current priorities and the LSPs is as follows:

LSP Priority	Council Priority	Comment
Community safety	Anti-social behaviour (A)	Strong alignment
Housing	Housing (B)	Weaker alignment because housing is a category B priority
Town-centres and Economic Development	Town-centre Development (A) Street scene (A) Business Development (B)	Strong alignment
Improved transport and access	Access (A)	Strong alignment on access but weaker on public transport.

- 5.2 The issues that arise from this exercise are:

- 1) Affordable housing and the findings of the strategic housing inspection, it would seem appropriate for affordable housing to become a category A priority.
- 2) Communications may also need to become a category A based on the growing recognition (which will probably be reinforced by the members forum) of the importance of communications to the Council.

- 5.3 At this stage it is considered too premature to relegate any of the current category A or B services until the outcome of 2006 gateway review is known. The increased management resources provided through the re-structuring should provide the required capacity to undertake this additional work.
- 5.4 In the light of these priorities it is also appropriate to review and prepare contingency plans in case greater savings are needed from non-priority areas. To this end, I have enclosed the full scores and the classification of services that was approved by Council so that members can see which of our category Y services scored lowest. As members may recall, the prioritisation process was done in two elements; firstly those services considered by the public to be of high importance were divided between priorities A and B and then all services were evaluated using a model that assessed how much they could contribute to these priorities.

Service	Category	Priority that it is primarily linked to
Street sweeping	A	Street scene
Waste Management	A	Recycling
Crime Disorder	A	Anti-social behaviour
Information Technology	A	Access
Economic Development	A	Town-centre development and business development
Benefits	B	Vulnerable persons
Care Services	B	Vulnerable persons
Communications	B	Communications and Consultation
Housing (Enabling)	B	Affordable housing
Development Control	B	Planning and affordable housing
Planning policy and conservation	B	Planning, conservation and affordable housing
Equalities	B	Diversity

Service	Priorities (10)	Targets (6)	Vision (8)	Improve (5)	Total	Proposed Category
LSP and Community Strategy Support	8	5	6	5	24	B
Council Tax Collection	5	6	6	3	20	B
Housing Management	8	0	6	5	19	B
Car Parks	8	0	6	3	17	B
Public Toilets	6	0	7	4	17	B
Asset Management	7	2	6	1	16	Y
Business Rates	5	6	3	2	16	Y
Financial services	6	1	5	3	15	Y
Licensing	8	0	5	1	14	Y
Business Management	8	1	2	2	13	Y
Markets	5	0	6	2	13	Y
Arts	5	0	5	2	12	Y
Housing Repairs	2	5	3	2	12	Y
Leisure	4	0	6	2	12	Y
Legal and Admin	6	0	4	2	12	Y
Human Resources	4	3	3	1	11	Y
Grounds Maintenance	5	0	5	1	11	Y
Emergency Planning (inc flooding)	3	0	5	3	11	Y
Environmental Health	3	2	3	1	9	Stat =Y Disc =Z
Tourism	3	0	3	1	7	Z
Public Transport	2	0	1	0	3	Stat =Y Disc =Z
Grants to voluntary bodies (inc CAB)	2	0	1	0	3	Z
Building Control	1	0	1	1	3	Y

5.5 It is proposed that contingency plans be prepared by the CMT to seek savings from:

Environmental Health non-statutory services, other than pest control (this is a category Z service).

Category Y service scoring 12 or less.

6. Recommendations

6.1 That the Cabinet recommends to Council:

- a) The adoption of the new corporate planning calendar as set out in section 4.1.
- b) That both Affordable Housing and Communications are promoted from category B to category A priorities.
- c) That contingency plans are prepared to secure savings, if required from category Y that scored less than 12 points.

Duncan Kerr
Chief Executive