



DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

PROPOSED INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR PERFORMANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

TOPIC – DEMOCRATIC SERVICES DIVISION BUSINESS PLAN 2010/11 ONWARDS

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director (Governance), the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Principal Scrutiny Committee and all Members of the relevant Scrutiny Panel (individual Ward Members are consulted separately where appropriate). In addition, all Members are notified.

Five or more of these consulted Members can require that the matter be referred to Cabinet for determination.

If you wish to make representation on this proposed Decision please contact the relevant Portfolio Holder and the following Committee Administrator by 5.00pm on Wednesday 7 April 2010.

Contact Officer:

Chris Ashcroft, Head of Democratic Services, Tel 01962 848 284,

Email: <mailto:cashcroft@winchester.gov.uk>

Committee Administrator:

Nancy Graham, Tel: 01962 848 235, Email: ngraham@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

Approval is sought to the detailed Business Plan for this Division. The Business Plan sets out the key actions that the Division will undertake over the coming five year period, with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Resourced and Timed) targets (both through actions and performance indicators) by which progress will be measured and monitored. The Plan also gives additional information about the role of the Division, the resources allocated to it (in terms of both staff and budgets) and the key risks that are being addressed through its work.

Key actions to be undertaken in this Division are:

- Administering the City Council Elections to be held on 6 May 2010 and the Parliamentary Election on a date to be announced.
- Work arising from possible changes in the Local Government Act 2007 to Executive (e.g. Leader's role) and consideration of Council electoral arrangements.
- Work arising from new measures included in the Local Democracy Bill including Councillor Call for Action, promotion of democracy, e-petitions, scrutiny changes etc.
- To support the Partnerships, Communications and Information Division re: Members and Parish Councils looking at improved forms of area working, community involvement etc.
- Administering the Homecoming March for 11 Brigade.
- Achieving Customer Service Excellence Standard.

The Head of Division is satisfied that the actions put forward in this Business Plan will work towards the Council's objectives, as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-14 and Corporate Business Plan or otherwise ensure that the Council meets the statutory obligations put on it by central Government. Other than where indicated, these actions can be achieved within the resources available. Plans are in place, or will be developed, to ensure that targets shown for key performance indicators can be achieved in the timescales shown

PROPOSED DECISION

That the Business Plan for the Democratic Services Division be approved as attached at Appendix A.

REASON FOR THE PROPOSED DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Business Plans form an important part of the Council's performance management process as they set out the key actions for the coming year. The Business Plan put forward for adoption sets out the actions that will best help the Council achieve the outcomes as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy and meet its statutory obligations within the resources available to it.

The Resources Scrutiny Panel has been consulted on the Business Plan and raised the following issues:

None.

**FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED
FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION
NOTICE**

N/A

**DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR
OFFICER CONSULTED**

None.

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

N/A

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision

**Councillor Stephen Godfrey - Portfolio Holder for Performance and
Organisational Development**

Democratic Services Division Business Plan 2010 - 2015

1. Brief Description of the Division and its Purpose

The main functions of the Democratic Services Division are:

- Committee Administration
- Member Support Services
- Electoral Registration and Elections
- Mayoralty and Civic Events
- Emergency Planning and Business Continuity (support to the Chief Executive)

The Division's purpose is:

“To achieve professional and operational excellence through the efficient provision of administrative services which are customer orientated, responsive and cost effective”.

The Division provides secretariat support to all other Divisions of the Council, to assist them in the achievement of their aims to improve the quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors alike. In addition, the Division performs direct work for the community through the carrying out of all its functions.

2. Links between the Council’s Sustainable Community Strategy and the Division’s Services

<i>Strategy Priorities</i>	<i>Divisional Responsibility</i>
All Priority Areas	The provision of efficient and effective administrative support services to assist Members and all other Divisions in achieving their objectives.
Economic Prosperity	To support the work of other Divisions in maintaining and improving the economic wellbeing of the District, including Business Continuity planning.
High Quality Environment	Contributing to the sustainable use of resources, customer focus, clear communication and modern working practices, by enhancing electronic access to Committee reports and other web-based information for Members, staff and the public – with the consequential benefit of reducing paper usage.
An Efficient and Effective Council	Through the provision of effective Member training and support to the Council’s decision-making processes, to contribute to the way in which the Council undertakes its community leadership role and to embrace modern working practices which improve overall efficiency. Electoral policies designed to encourage full registration and uphold the integrity of the postal and proxy voting system, together with convenient polling stations and robust election day practices, to maximise voter turnout and maintain overall confidence in the election process.
Safe and Strong Communities	Production of an effective Emergency Plan which is subject to frequent testing and review. Continuing to provide advice and support to Members and parish councils on codes of conduct, protocols and other relevant guidelines. Dealing with complaints about City and Parish Councillors.

3. Summary of Progress in 2009/10

The Democratic Services Division has achieved its principal aims for 2009/10 and the following key areas are highlighted:-

Decision Making Structures – the past year has again seen good use of the Portfolio Holders decision making system, which accords strongly with the ‘modern government’ ethos. The four Scrutiny Panels have also maintained a busy workload, not least through the investigations carried out by their ad hoc Informal Scrutiny Groups into various Council activities. Despite this work, the 2009 Members Survey revealed that some Members still consider that Scrutiny Panels and the scrutiny function generally could be improved; work will continue to address these concerns. The Winchester Town Forum has also been active and meetings of the Cabinet (Local Development Framework) Committee continue to generate relatively high public attendances.

A key decision during the year was to remove from the establishment the post of Democratic and Member Services Officer, which meant that the Division had to cease servicing a number of informal groups. This caused initial concern amongst some Members and senior officers, but there is now a general understanding about which meetings clearly require DSO support and which do not.

Other ‘modernising’ during the year included the creation of a procedure to introduce the new ‘Councillor Call for Action’ and the early distribution of Cabinet reports by e mail, with restricted paper copies being made available later. Work was deferred on the consultation and decision about the future electoral arrangements for the Council (principally a decision between elections by thirds or ‘all out’), but this will begin in the next few months and must be completed by May 2011.

Probity and Ethics – 2009/10 was the first full year of the Council dealing with complaints, following the decision of Standards for England to delegate the hearing of all complaints made under the District or Parish Codes of Conduct to local authorities. Only the most serious complaints are now referred to Standards for England for determination, with councils deciding all other cases. Following a quiet start, four cases have been heard under the new system, with two being referred for investigation (currently ongoing), both involving Parish Councillors. The terms of office of the four Independent Members and four Parish Representatives who serve on the Standards Committee expired on 30 April 2009 and new appointments were made for the next two year term.

Member Services and Training – the Annual Member Training Policy and Programme was agreed in May 2009 and the year has again been busy, with good feedback overall about the training provided. A Members Survey was undertaken during the year and this will now become an annual event. Responses to those questions which affect the Division’s work were very encouraging and the Division achieved first place for efficiency when compared to the 17 other Divisions. Whether this performance can be maintained in the light of the staff reduction mentioned above remains to be seen. The Division is currently undertaking the assessment for Customer Service Excellence and is hopeful of gaining accreditation in the next few weeks.

Elections and Electoral Registration – the combined European and County Council elections held on 4 June 2009 went well, despite the tight timescale for postal vote procedures and the large European ballot paper causing problems; the turnout for the elections was 48%. The canvass for the 2009/10 Register of Electors was again successful, achieving a 97.88% return rate, with no particular issues arising.

Government grant aid has again been used to replace those ballot boxes, polling screens and count material which were in poor condition. The Council is now well placed to take on the challenge of a combined Parliamentary and City Council Election on 6 May 2010, which seems the most likely date. The need to administer two new constituencies (Winchester and Meon Valley) which include certain areas within Eastleigh, East Hampshire and Havant Councils, means a considerable increase in complexity and will place further demands on the Electoral Services Unit.

Abbey House and the Mayoralty – The planned major works for the House, which will include re-roofing, fire separation and re-decoration, were scheduled to take place between February and July 2010. However, the Council's budgetary position has meant that these works have been deferred, probably for 12 months. Due to the extent of the renovation, the House will need to be closed and the Mayoralty will operate from the Guildhall, but the works will be timed to ensure that one Mayor will not have to experience all the disruption occurring in his/her term of office. A new entry phone system has been fitted, which replaces the 25 year old system and allows far better scrutiny of visitors, thus improving security for staff and the House.

The House was again opened for public access on 12 occasions during the year, with Blue Badge Guides escorting limited number groups and explaining the history of the House and its artefacts. Judging by attendance figures, it would appear that this level of access is still sufficient to satisfy public demand. The number of internal meetings using the House has been maintained. In September 2009, the contract for the Mayoral Car and Chauffeur was re-tendered, resulting in the same company winning the contract with a very competitive price. Through good planning and the co-operation of the Mayor, the contract is being run very economically, whilst still achieving an appropriate level of service.

4. Business Plan Actions 2010/11 onwards

A) Key Service Priorities 2010/11 onwards

Priority	Code	What will we do	Why are we doing this?	Planned Start Date	Milestones	Milestones Due Date	Action Due Date	Expected Outcome	Who's Accountable
1	CSC/PROJ/001h	Customer Service Excellence - Democratic Services	Corporate Outcome - Building in Customer Excellence	25 Jan 2010	Initial CSE meeting	25 Jan 2010	31 Mar 2010	Improved customer service	Paul Wood
					Begin preparation of self-assessment	26 Jan 2010			
					Submit self-assessment document	26 Feb 2010			
					CSE Assessment	31 Mar 2010			
2	SEC/ELU/002	Administering the Parliamentary and City Council Elections	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Feb 2010	Nomination deadline	08 Apr 2010	30 May 2010	Smooth conduct of the elections	Chris Ashcroft; Frances Cleland; Stephen Whetnall
					Postal votes issue deadline	23 Apr 2010			
3	SEC/SEC/002	Local Govt Act 07 - work arising from possible changes to Executive (e.g. Leader's role) & consideration of Council electoral arrangements	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Mar 2010	Initial Council decision	21 Jul 2010	05 Apr 2011	Smooth introduction of any change with minimal confusion	Chris Ashcroft
					Public consultation	01 Sep 2010			
					Final Council decision	04 Nov 2010			

PHD 285
APPENDIX A

Priority	Code	What will we do	Why are we doing this?	Planned Start Date	Milestones	Milestones Due Date	Action Due Date	Expected Outcome	Who's Accountable
4	SEC/SEC/012	11 Light Brigade Homecoming Parade		01 Dec 2009	Event Plan to Safety Advisory Group	30 Mar 2010	23 Jun 2010	Positive feedback received after the event Successful event held without any issues arising	Chris Ashcroft
					Final agreement of detailed arrangements	30 Apr 2010			
5	SEC/SEC/003	Local Democracy Act - work arising from new measures including Councillor Call for Action, promotion of democracy, e-petitions, scrutiny changes etc	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Apr 2010	Review of measures and incorporation into Constitution, where agreed		31 Mar 2011	Effective procedures in place to meet new demands	Chris Ashcroft
6	SEC/SEC/010	Reconvene Members' Allowances Independent Remuneration Panel	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Sep 2010	Council appointment of Panel members	04 Nov 2010	31 May 2011	Revised Members' Allowance Scheme	Chris Ashcroft
					Council consideration of final reports	12 Jan 2011			
7	IMT/PROJ/003k	Implementation of Retriever across Committees to incorporate electronic workflow, filing and storage.	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Jun 2010	Set Up Committee Minutes on Retriever	30 Jul 2010	30 Jul 2010	Use of electronic workflow and storage of documents in Retriever	Chris Ashcroft Colin Veal Katherine Pryor
8	IMT/PROJ/003r	Implementation of Retriever across Elections to incorporate electronic workflow, filing and storage.	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Jun 2010	Complete Roll Out	31 Jul 2010	31 Jul 2010	Use of electronic workflow and storage of documents in Retriever	Chris Ashcroft Colin Veal Katherine Pryor
9	IMT/PROJ/003t	Implementation of Retriever for Mayoralty to incorporate electronic workflow, filing and storage.	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Jun 2010	Complete Roll Out	01 Aug 2010	01 Aug 2010	Use of electronic workflow and storage of documents in Retriever	Chris Ashcroft Colin Veal Katherine Pryor

PHD 285
APPENDIX A

Priority	Code	What will we do	Why are we doing this?	Planned Start Date	Milestones	Milestones Due Date	Action Due Date	Expected Outcome	Who's Accountable
10	SEC/SEC/013	Appointment of independent Members and Parish representatives to the Standards Committee	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Jan 2011	Public advertisement Special Sub-Committee to recommend to Council Council to confirm appointments	01 Feb 2011 15 Mar 2011 06 Apr 2011	01 May 2011	Representatives appointed in accordance with procedures	Chris Ashcroft
11	SEC/SEC/007	Abbey House Refurbishment – continuation of internal and external decoration and repairs	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Apr 2010	Consideration of deferred programme	01 Oct 2010	31 Jul 2012	Completion on time, within budget & minimal disruption	Chris Ashcroft
12	SEC/SEC/004	Support to Partnerships, LSP, Scrutiny and community working	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Apr 2010	Review of level of support provided by Division	01 Oct 2010	31 Mar 2011	Member and community satisfaction with proposals	Chris Ashcroft; Dave Shaw
13	SEC/SEC/011	Preparation for Winchester and Segensworth BID voting	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Feb 2012	Preparation of voting list and ballot papers	01 Jun 2012	24 Jun 2012	Smooth conduct of elections	Chris Ashcroft

B) Other Services we aim to deliver 2010/11 onwards

Priority	Code	What will we do	Why are we doing this?	Planned Start Date	Milestones	Milestones Due Date	Action Due Date	Expected Outcome	Who's Accountable
1	SEC/SEC/014	Member Training - Annual Programme 2010/11	Efficient and Effective Council	01 May 2010	Feedback from Group Leaders	17 May 2010	31 May 2010	Successful events that are well attended by members	Chris Ashcroft
2	SEC/SEC/015	Filtering and determination of complaints by Standards Committee	Efficient and Effective Council	01 May 2010	Half yearly review	1 Oct 2010	31 Mar 2011	Cases dealt with in reasonable timescale	Chris Ashcroft
3	SEC/SEC/016	Emergency Plan - ongoing implementation of Civil Contingencies Act and support to Business Continuity process	Safe and Strong Communities	01 May 2010	Half yearly review	1 Oct 2010	31 Mar 2011	Satisfactory response to emergencies	Chris Ashcroft
4	SEC/SEC/017	Local Democracy - in conjunction with PCI division, to support citizenship and related initiatives	Efficient and Effective Council	01 May 2010	Half yearly review	1 Oct 2010	31 Mar 2011	Support with planning and presenting events	Chris Ashcroft
5	SEC/SEC/018	Computerise Register of Electors (CORE) - participation in national based on-line Register of Electors	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Sep 2011	Half yearly review	1 Oct 2010	31 Mar 2011	Timely response to any Government proposals	Chris Ashcroft
6	SEC/SEC/019	Examination of Member Services to identify any further scope for savings or better service for the same cost	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Sep 2010	Half yearly review	1 Oct 2010	31 Mar 2011	Identify potential for savings and more efficient service Increased member satisfaction with the service	Chris Ashcroft
7	SEC/SEC/020	Individual Voter Registration - now reactivated by Government. Personal identifiers to be collected from 2010 - initially voluntary, but compulsory by 2015	Efficient and Effective Council	01 Jan 2011	Review of pilot authorities experience	1 Dec 2010	31 Dec 2011	Pilot will reveal practicalities and problems of Government system	Chris Ashcroft
8	SEC/SEC/021	Review of Constitution to update content, improve clarity etc.	Efficient and Effective Council	01 May 2011	Half yearly review	1 Oct 2010	31 Mar 2011	Fully updated Constitution	Chris Ashcroft

5. **Resource Implications**

A) **Financial**

Divisional Summary

<i>Subjective Analysis</i>		<i>Actual 08-09</i>	<i>Original 09-10</i>	<i>Revised 09-10</i>	<i>Budget 10-11</i>
Expenditure	Employees	449,108	430,597	428,321	488,172
	Premises	96,863	68,733	98,733	102,486
	Transport	52,005	57,111	55,537	56,036
	Supplies & Services	587,980	607,058	594,141	584,293
	Third party payments	20,445	23,000	23,000	23,503
	Depreciation & Impairment Losses	15,357	39,439	22,483	16,317
	Expenditure Total	1,221,756	1,225,938	1,222,215	1,270,808
Income	Income	(8,212)	(6,024)	(6,024)	(6,024)
	Income (Internal)	(7,818)	(16,360)	0	0
	Income Total	(16,030)	(22,384)	(6,024)	(6,024)
Support Services		1,396,398	1,333,448	1,432,549	1,432,549
Democratic Services Total		2,602,124	2,537,002	2,648,740	2,697,333

Budget Book Line Summary

<i>Budget Book Line</i>	<i>Actual 08-09</i>	<i>Original 09-10</i>	<i>Revised 09-10</i>	<i>Budget 10-11</i>
Civic and Mayoral & Abbey House	185,124	172,120	179,746	182,658
Secretariat	46,735	49,943	25,376	13,285
Council & Committee Business	2,040,018	2,028,064	2,171,165	2,164,044
Electoral Registration	171,723	185,477	184,542	191,235
Boundary Reviews	4,314	4,457	6,631	6,631
Elections	154,210	96,941	81,280	139,480
Democratic Services Total	2,602,124	2,537,002	2,648,740	2,697,333

B) Workforce

KEY EXTERNAL DRIVERS	KEY INTERNAL DRIVERS
<p>Parliamentary and City Council Elections Impact of Local Gov.& Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 Postal Vote and other electoral process changes Possible Change to Electoral Cycle Standards Complaints Civil Contingencies Act Partnership Working</p>	<p>Introduction of EDRMS. Council Budget. Organisational Development Continued Scrutiny work Flexible working arrangements for staff Vacancy Management Policy</p>
WORKFORCE IMPLICATIONS	
<p>Combined elections will have significant impact on small core team. Postal Voting - current system will again place demands on electoral staff. Increasing Standards complaints workload - resources kept under review and balanced with costs of outsourcing. Support to Local Strategic Partnership – reallocation of committee work to accommodate placement. Loss of one Democratic Services Officer post has restricted ability to cover some meetings and scrutiny work. EDRMS – resource required to oversee successful transition. CORE – resource required to oversee successful transition.</p>	

6. Key Performance Indicators

Code	Description	Managed By	How frequently is data gathered	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10		2010/11	2011/12
				Value	Value	Estimate	Target	Target	Target
LPI067	Annual number of meetings services per staff fte	Chris Ashcroft;	Monthly	49	43	46	43	43	43
LPI0068	Number of members of the public participating at member meetings	Chris Ashcroft;	Quarterly	827	1,263	825	800	800	1,000
LPI0070	% member training sessions which achieve an average satisfaction rating of 4(v good) or above	Chris Ashcroft;	Quarterly	72.30%	93.00%	83.30%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%
LPI0072	% turnout at local elections	Chris Ashcroft;	Annually	46.82%	45.89%	48.14%	55.00%	55.00%	55.00%
LPI0073	% electoral form "A"s returned	Chris Ashcroft;	Annually	98.5%	97.05%	97.88%	98.00%	98.00%	98.00%
LPI0074	% polling stations with disabled access	Chris Ashcroft;	Annually	88%	92%	92%	85%	98%	98%
LPI0076	Secretariat payment of undisputed invoices within 15 days of receipt	Chris Ashcroft;	Quarterly	88%	95%	88.5%	100%	100%	100%
LPI0682	Annual no. of meetings serviced	Chris Ashcroft	Quarterly	180	162	142	150	150	150
LPI0683	% Rating by Members of member support services as either good or excellent	Chris Ashcroft;	Annually	98.00%	No Survey This year	98.00%	95.00%	95.00%	95.00%

7. Key elements of risk management

Risk Number	Short Name	Risk Ownership	Cause	Consequence	Current Risk Matrix	Target Risk Matrix	Linked Strategic Risk
OP0043	Standards Committee - processing of complaints	Chris Ashcroft	Resource issue with increased delegation from Standards for England and rising level of complaints to be dealt with	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Difficult to plan resources for unpredictable demand. 2. Financial impact. 3. Citizen criticism and reduced confidence if not handled well. 			SR0016
OP0044	Review of decision making structures and processes	Chris Ashcroft	National or local change in political control might require review of decision making structure.	Inability to respond to demands of a new administration.			SR0012
OP0046	Security of Abbey House	Chris Ashcroft	Loss of/damage to building caused by fire/theft/vandalism.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loss of irreplaceable items. 2. Damage to civic prestige. 3. Need to relocate Mayoralty. 			SR0014
OP0047	Efficient conduct of elections	Chris Ashcroft	Fraudulent practice/staff negligence generates an election petition resulting in a re-run of election.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council forced into temporary status pending new elections. 2. Loss of confidence in local democracy. 			SR