

Democratic and Legal Service Plan 2012/13

Service:	Head of Service:	Robin Pellow	
Democratic and Legal	Strategic Director:	Mary Orton	
	Portfolio Holder(s):	Cllr Robert Knowles (Democratic Services) Cllr Stephen Mulliner (Audit) Cllr Elizabeth Cable (Licensing)	

1. Introduction / Overview

Democratic and Legal Services

1. Democratic Services will continue to support Members in their development work, implement the revised Governance arrangements of the Localism Act and continue to provide an effective development process for both the new and experienced Council members.
2. To support the Council's democratic process and all Members by providing full, accurate and timely information for making decisions which are implemented effectively and to support individual members.
3. To provide a responsive legal service day to day to all departments and Councillors and support major corporate projects.
4. The Service will continue to pursue initiatives to involve the community and young people in particular in Waverley's decision- making and the implementation of Waverley's Democracy Plan.

Licensing

5. To protect the public by providing a responsive licensing service that works effectively with partner organisations.

Complaints

6. To support the corporate complaints service and ensure that managers respond to complaints, and learn lessons from them to improve services for customers and the community.

Audit

7. The objectives of Internal Audit are to review and assess the way Waverley runs its business and to identify opportunities to enhance the controls the Council has in place to prevent loss, waste or fraud. In so doing, it contributes to the Council's arrangements for securing value for money and reinforces the Council's Governance arrangements.

The service offers advice on risk management and design of appropriate controls and on the interpretation and application of Waverley's rules (e.g. Contract Procedure Rules). It also investigates reports of fraud and corruption (excluding Housing Benefits cases)

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2. Focus for the coming year – Action Plan

Desired outcome / Objective		Maintain high standards of governance and ethical standards				
Ref	Action(s)	Timescales / Deadlines	Lead Officer	Resource Implications	EqIA Needed? (Y/N/Done)	Success Criteria/Measures
D&L1	To offer a comprehensive member development programme.	From May 12	Emma McQuillan	Existing budget	Y	Member satisfaction survey Numbers attending training
D&L2	Implement new ethical Standards regime	July 12	Robin Pellow	Existing budget	Y	Review after a year-assess Member satisfaction by survey
D&L3	Implement electronic voting at meetings in the Council Chamber	July 12	Robin Pellow	Existing budget	Y	Quicker voting process at meetings

Desired outcome / Objective		Develop new audit service arrangements				
Ref	Action(s)	Timescales / Deadlines	Lead Officer	Resource Implications	EqIA Needed? (Y/N/Done)	Success Criteria/Measures
D&L4	Support new Audit contractor	May 12	Gail Beaton	Poss. £5k saving	N	Audit plan achieved , quality checks on reports
D&L5	Work with Finance on external audit contractor appointment	April 13	Graeme Clark/ Gail Beaton	?	N	Successful handover from Audit Commission

Desired outcome / Objective		Provide a responsive licensing service that contributes to community safety				
Ref	Action(s)	Timescales / Deadlines	Lead Officer	Resource Implications	EqIA Needed? (Y/N/Done)	Success Criteria/Measures
D&L6	Implement Licensing legislation changes	May 12	Paul Hughes	Existing budget- may offer income increase	Y	Survey Members and Partner organisations

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D&L7	Assess invest to save possibilities of on-line module for Licensing applications	Sept 12	Paul Hughes	Support from IT team, link to Channel Shift project	N	Sample typical licensing application admin. time
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Desired outcome / Objective							Develop a robust and resilient in- house legal team						
Ref	Action(s)	Timescales / Deadlines		Lead Officer	Resource Implications	EqlA Needed? (Y/N/Done)	Success Criteria/Measures						
D&L8	Set up robust work monitoring systems in strengthened in-house Legal team	Sept 12		Daniel Bainbridge	Reduce external spend to redeploy to in-house team	N	Customer satisfaction survey						
D&L9	Develop links with corporate projects and customer services	Sept 12		Daniel Bainbridge	Existing budgets	N	Update Foresight review customer assessment						
D&L10	Transfer property legal work to in-house team and support shared service project	Oct 12		Daniel Bainbridge	Link to Customer, IT and Offices service plan	N	Implement shared Property Service Improved legal support Improved transaction times						
D&L11	Monitor Land Charges position in light of housing market and legal position	Continuing		Daniel Bainbridge	Monitor income closely	N	Income and turn-round time monitoring						

3. Equalities & Diversity Checklist – Equality Impact Assessments (EqlAs)

Which EqlAs have been completed for your service since the last Service Plan?	
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3. Equalities & Diversity Checklist – Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs)

Please list all actions identified in these EqIAs :	May need new impact assessment for Licensing legislative changes – review once passed and guidance produced.
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Service EqIA last reviewed:		Next review due:	
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4. Staff Involvement Checklist

Is there evidence of staff involvement in process?	All team leaders involved in service plan and Star Chamber proposals
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5. Using Complaints for Service Improvement

Have you improved service delivery as a result of complaints received?	Improved administrative processes for Licensing variations, also role in managing corporate complaints process and encouraging learning from complaints across the Council.
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