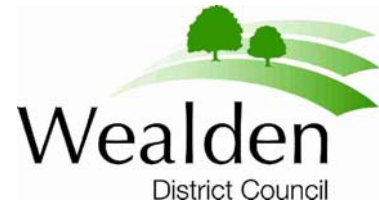


Planning Policy and Environment

Service Plan 2010/11



The role of the service

Planning Policy

- Prepare a planning policy framework for delivery of development through preparation of Local Development Documents in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement and timescales set out in the adopted Local Development Scheme.
- Provide planning policy guidance in relation to matters which are likely to impact on Wealden District Council or on the Wealden District area as a whole including significant development proposals and Government consultation papers.
- To ensure coherence between the Core Strategy/LDF documents and the Council's approved sustainability strategy and climate change policy
- To ensure that the Core Strategy has regard to the Council's approved Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement.
- To respond to Government and other consultation exercises on planning policy matters

Economic Development and Tourism

- Develop, co-ordinate and promote economic development and tourism initiatives through strategic partnerships and proactive support in accordance with the Council's agreed priorities for the service.
- To review and seek adoption of a tourism strategy for Wealden.
- Promote the implementation of Rural Development Programme England (RDPE) through our WARR partnership to support local farming and forestry and related rural businesses.
- To engage with and support local business including through the principles of the Accord with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)
- Provide economic development and tourism development and market towns regeneration advice and input to the Local Development framework

Landscape and Arboriculture/ Conservation and Design

- Provide specialist advice and guidance on arboriculture and conservation and design matters in respect of policy formulation and development management matters/planning consultations.
- Fulfill statutory duties and obligations in respect of the built and natural environment.
- To respond to Government and other consultation exercises on matters relating to the service.

The service is planning to achieve the following outcomes by March 2011:

- Strive to meet NI 154 and NI159 targets in line with LAA agreement (new residential units delivered and maintenance of 5 yr supply of housing land)
- To submit our Core Strategy to the Planning Inspectorate for representations prior to its examination-in-public. (October 2010)

- Publication of our Infrastructure Delivery Plan to sit alongside our Core Strategy. (October 2010)
- Submission (and acceptance by GOSE) of a revised Local Development Scheme (LDS). (April 2010)
- Publication of our Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). (March 2010)
- Completion of consultancy studies for LDF evidence base to meet South East Plan Climate Change Targets (Ref C7 and C8 WDC Climate Change Action Plan) (June 2010)
- Completion of studies on Strategic Flood Risk Assessment to inform our Core Strategy (Ref P1,P2 and O7-O9 WDC Climate Change Action Plan) (April 2010)
- Use of Wealden Design Guide SPD in consideration of development proposals (Ref P9 WDC Climate Change Action Plan) (On-going)
- Review and re-structure of Specialist Planning Services (Landscape and Arboriculture and Conservation and Design). (September 2010)
- Provision of Specialist Planning input to any agreed pre-application or development team approach (On-going)
- Successful grant applications for 25 schemes across the District supported from WARR/RDPE Funds. (March 2011)
- Adoption of a Tourism Strategy for Wealden (June 2010)
- Adoption of criteria for Lists of Buildings of Local Importance (February 2010)
- Identification of the key risks and opportunities to service delivery and infrastructure associated with current and future weather and climate events (September 2010)
- Identification and incorporation of appropriate adaptation actions into a Council wide Adaptation Action Plan and service specific strategic planning (March 2011)

What have we achieved in 2009/10?

Putting People First

Providing Quality Services
Health, Prosperity and Community Safety

- Successful consultation on possible spatial development options for Core Strategy with high degree of stakeholder engagement through media releases, leaflet drop to all households, Member workshops, LSP/ LDF events , drop in sessions and exhibitions .Analysis and reporting of outcomes to LDF Sub Committee.
- Successful implementation of WARR project officer post with a high success rate in nurturing deserving bids through the grant application process.
- Briefings for Town and Parish Councils on LDF and Core Strategy.
- Provision of business breakfasts, retail clinics to support local business.
- Signing of accord with Federation of Small Businesses.
- Joint credit crunch initiatives with WDC Community Services
- Provision of Town Guides maps through partnership with each of the Town Councils.
- Member workshops and briefings on emerging Core Strategy.

Pride Of Place

Sustainability
Place Shaping

- Successful consultation on possible spatial development options for Core Strategy with high degree of stakeholder engagement through work on town masterplans media releases, leaflet drop to all households, Member workshops, LSP/ LDF events

, drop in sessions and exhibitions in all Wealden towns . Analysis and reporting of outcomes of consultation to LDF Sub Committee

- Specialist planning input to development management consultations.
- Implementation of Wealden Design Guide training for Members, Development Management staff and Planning Agents Panel.
- Stakeholder workshop with Tourism businesses to inform emerging tourism strategy.
- Collation and coordination of Town and Parish support for retention of red telephone kiosks.
- Assessment of requests for the making of Tree Preservation Orders.
- Submission of bid to CLG for rural market town masterplanning
- Adoption of Local Lists (buildings of local importance) criteria

Purpose Through Partnership

Improving Performance and Efficiency
Strong Community Leadership

- Jointly commissioned LDF evidence studies with ESCC, Eastbourne Borough and Council, Mid-Sussex District Council.
- Joint commissioning with housing on studies relating to housing needs survey and Gypsy and Traveller site finding criteria.
- Support for and attendance at Joint LSP/LDF events, regular updates on LDF and joint infrastructure (physical, social and green) workshops.
- Continued support for work of High Weald AONB Unit, Conservators of Ashdown Forest, Sussex Biological Records Centre.
- Member and officer representation on WARR board and executive.
- Representation on the Member and officer working groups for the South Downs National Park (Establishment Team).
- Attendance by officers on housing delivery working groups.
- Provision of Town Guides maps through partnership with each of the Town Councils.
- Publication of Enjoy Sussex Guide with adjoining Local Authorities.
- Provision of business support through EDEAL.
- Financial and officer support for Town Master Planning initiatives.

What we plan to improve

The five key issues for 2010-2013 identified within the Corporate Plan are

- Efficiencies and Budget (Transformation)
- Local Development Framework
- Community Support
- Recycling and Waste Minimisation
- Sustainability

The targets below show what we intend to achieve under each of the three Corporate Objectives including any specific links to the five key issues above.

Target for 2010/11	What will be achieved	When it will be done	Who will do it
Putting People First			
Pre-Submission Core Strategy	To PINS	October 2010	HPPE
Refresh of Council's Tourism Strategy	Approval of Strategy	June 2010	HPPE/EC Dev Manager
Green Infrastructure input to Core Strategy	Input as necessary	By July 2010	HPPE
Input to ESCC new Economic Assessment duty	WDC Input	April 2010	HPPE/EC Dev Manager
25 successful Leader applications in Wealden	Grant approval	March 2011	Ec Dev Manager/Project Officer
Evidence gathering for strategic sites and sites allocations DPDs	Significant progress	October 2010	HPPE/ Asst Planning Policy manager
Pride Of Place			
Pre-Submission Core Strategy	To PINS	October 2010	HPPE
Sustainability appraisals for above document	To PINS	October 2010	HPPE
Continued work on Town Master Plans	Integration with LDF	Through approved LDS	HPPE/Asst Planning Policy Manager
Completion of evidence on Appropriate Assessment (AA)	AA for Core Strategy	June 2010	HPPE/Asst Planning Policy Manager
Continued support for our Market Towns	Integration with LDF and Community Strategy	Through LDS	HPPE/Asst Planning Policy Manager
Purpose through Partnership			
Continued dialogue with infrastructure providers on LDF/Core Strategy	Production of Infrastructure Delivery Plan and sustainable growth	Throughout LDS	Chief Executive HPPE/Asst Planning Policy Manager
Continued joint LSP/LDF engagement	Integration with Sustainable Community Strategy	Throughout LDS	Planning Policy and Policy Review Teams
Support for the Development of Parish audits of facilities	Integration with Sustainable Community Strategy	On-going	HPEP
Continuation of support for WARR Partnership	Support for rural business within Wealden	Throughout current RDPE programme	HPEP/EC Dev Manager
Engagement with South Downs Establishment Team in preparation for National Park Authority	Successful partnership working with new NPA	On-going	HPEP/HPBC
Continued support for High Weald AONB unit and South Downs Joint Committee	Discharge of statutory duty re: AONB Management Plans and success partnership working	Through an agreed SLA	HPEP
Implementation of savings and efficiencies identified	Budgetary savings and	Some current savings and	HPEP

Target for 2010/11	What will be achieved	When it will be done	Who will do it
in Transformation Programme.	business process efficiencies	completion by September 2010	

Risk

The approved LDS will identify the nature and level of specific risks to the achievement of the targets and milestones for our Local development Scheme / Local Development Framework.

Customer Satisfaction

Widespread Consultation carried out as part of the LDF process, including exit surveys from eg Parish Planning conferences, LSP events, provides feedback on the service. Regular questionnaire surveys are used in respect of the planning specialists(Conservation & Arboriculture) and the economic development and tourism service to inform the delivery and improvement of services .

Customer Involvement

We undertake very wide consultation with our residents , Town and Parish Councils and very many formal consultees on all of our LDS publications - this is in line with the Council's approved SCI. Stakeholder events are held with tourism providers and businesses(eg Business breakfasts) to elicit views and inform work priorities. Results of questionnaires and of LDF consultations are placed on the Council's website. Electronic consultation and communication is encouraged where possible to support the Council's wider sustainability objectives.

Access to Services

Our services are provided to a very wide range of customers- to residents, other Directorates, Town and Parish Councils, LSP and Members. Work priorities are set through service plans and through individual team work programmes. Prioritisation is also provide to statutory functions and where input is needed within specific timeframes (development consultations , pre application meeting requests).Information on all of our services and upon work in progress is regularly updated on our web pages .

Reporting, as appropriate, to Full Council, to Cabinet, LDF Sub Committee, and Scrutiny Committees and also via PFH decisions and reports.

Value for Money

Recent vacant posts have not been filled pending final agreement on streamlining and re-structuring those parts of the service identified under the Transformation Programme. Within Planning Policy and Economic Development and Tourism, use of short term contracts help to meet short-term resource needs.

Provision of specialist advice to Development Management is now given through informal surgeries to meet client wishes.

Workforce Priorities

The Council's revised LDS will set a 3 year work programme for Planning Policy and detail the necessary resources to meet this timetable. Proposed re-structure of planning specialists will necessitate identification of agreed work priorities.

Learning & Development

Regular CPD events are held internally and officers are encouraged to look at appropriate CPD events externally where appropriate.

Equalities and Diversity

Equality is embedded in all aspects of the service. We strive to be fair and transparent in the way that we provide our services and ensure that they are accessible to all in our communities. This is reflected in our Customer Charters and in the Council's Statement of Values. Our Action Plan is the outcome of our Equality Impact Assessment. These issues are also covered in our approved Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in respect of our Local development framework and the production of documents.

Equal access to and wide engagement in the way that these services are provided and develop their strategic and policy base is ensured through the design of our communications, production of consultation documents , the holding of consultation events and stakeholder meetings and through use of questionnaires , consultation panels etc .

Sustainability

It is a requirement that all Development Plan Documents (DPDs) produced as part of our Local Development Framework are subject to formal sustainability appraisal.

Rural impact

The Council's emerging Core Strategy will be placing weight upon the needs of rural communities in considering distribution of growth to maximise sustainability and accessibility issues. This work will also take into account Parish Plans and Templates that have identified particular issues.

Communication

LDF documents are produced in accordance with our agreed Statement of Community Involvement. Regular updates are made to our web pages on LDF, Economic Development and Tourism matters. We also utilise media releases, Members Bulletin articles and questionnaires to test our customer needs and reactions to the service provided.

Health and safety

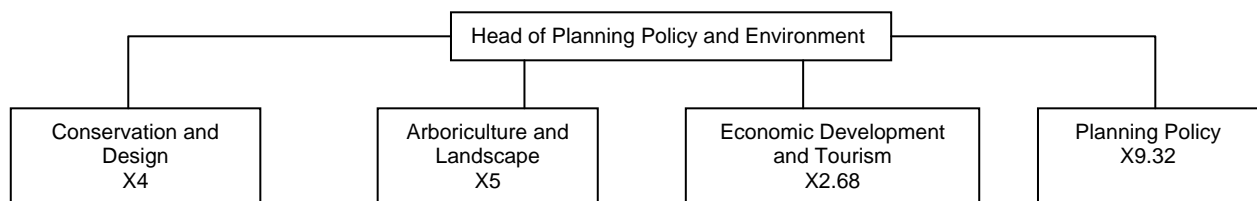
Health and safety remains a key consideration in the way we provide local services and in the way our services are run. Working practices must take proper account of the health and safety of our employees and work in ways that minimise the risks to lone workers and of violent incidents associated with the various roles we undertake.

Standards

Our approved SCI and LDS identify standards and levels of service for consulting upon and producing our LDF documents . Specialist planning services are provided to standards agreed and set with the Head of Planning and Building Control and to help meet Government targets for determination of planning applications. General correspondence, e-mails and phone calls are responded to within corporately set standards.

Resources and budget

Staff Organisation Chart (22 FTE)



Budget

	2010/11 £(000)	2011/12 £(000)	2012/13 £(000)
Head of Planning & Environmental Policy	81	81	81
Planning Policy	608	605	605
Building Preservation & Conservation	223	223	223
Economic Development	118	118	118
Tourism Development	90	89	89
	1,120	1,116	1,116

Performance indicator targets

PI No.	Description	2009/10 Actual	2010/11 Target	2011/12 Target
NI151	Overall employment rate		80%	
NI152	Working age people out of work on benefits		1.3%	
NI154	Net additional homes provided (as set out in current Local Area Agreement)	213 to Quarter 3	480 or 290	480 or 410
NI159	Supply of ready to develop housing sites	121%	120%	
NI170	Previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years (based on 2006 data latest available)	0.06% (2007 data - latest available)	0.93%	
NI171	New business registration rate	70.5% (2007)	50	
NI172	Percentage of small businesses showing employment growth	11.33% (2007)		
NI173	Flows onto incapacity benefits from employment	-0.07%		
Local Indicators				
WLI ED01	Website hits on Enjoy Sussex Tourism website	60,204 (to 31/08/09)	100,000	
WLI ED02	Business Support to Wealden Businesses from EDEAL	24 (to 30/06/09)	120	
WLI PP01	Responses by Conservation and Design team to consultations on planning applications within 21 days	72% to Quarter 2	100%	100%
WLI PP02	Responses by Landscape and Arboriculture team to consultations on planning applications within 21 days	84% to Quarter 2	100%	100%

Previous years' performance data can be viewed on the Council's website

How this Service Plan will be monitored

The Council's performance management framework is critical to monitoring and reporting the achievements of the Service and as a catalyst for improvement when targets are not achieved.

In the same way that targets cascade down to individual appraisals, the achievement of those targets is managed at individual, team or service level. Day to day management is used to identify good performance and also those areas where delivery is slower or below the standard expected. There is an underlying principle of "no surprises" and the regular use of 1:1 meetings with staff, holding of team meetings, and individual appraisal underpin this. Key performance indicators and service issues are reported to monthly DMT meetings.

At the end of each quarter, performance against key targets is collated and reported to a directorate management meeting. Based on the above system, management should already be aware and have taken appropriate action to improve a situation subject to the availability of appropriate resources. This quarterly meeting and information review should allow the Corporate Director to balance the outcomes from each of the service areas for which they are responsible and take appropriate action within their directorate.

A quarterly report is prepared by each directorate which is then collated by the Policy Officer with responsibility for Performance Management. This report then forms an appendix to a Cabinet report, with portfolio holders commenting on performance for their respective portfolios and recommending any improvement to Cabinet. The Cabinet report is circulated to all Members. Cabinet recommendations are then implemented by officers.

In the Scrutiny cycle following Cabinet's consideration of performance, the three Scrutiny Committees review the decisions of Cabinet and scrutinise the actions taken to improve performance and whether these have been effective.

At the year end, provisional outturn figures are prepared and considered by Cabinet. These must then undergo a process of data quality checks internally and validation by the Audit Commission prior to final publication around June 2011.

Other key reference documents for the service

Corporate Plan - setting out the Council's overall strategic direction and priorities

Performance Management Framework - the Council's arrangements for monitoring and acting on performance information and ensuring data quality

Wealden Sustainable Community Strategy - Wealden Local Strategic Partnership's visioning document formally adopted by Wealden District Council as part of the East Sussex Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy. It sets the overarching local framework for improvement of quality of life in the District, informing and aligning strategic and operational planning in organisations working together for the good of the district.

East Sussex Local Area Agreement - a three-year agreement between East Sussex County Council on behalf of service providers, including Wealden District Council, and central government which identifies priorities for improvement in East Sussex and how they will be delivered.

East Sussex Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy - a profile of East Sussex and its communities as it is now and a vision for improvement over the next 20 years, with key priorities for people in East Sussex

Communications Strategy - the Council's approach to communicating with people in the district and local and national media

Wealden Sustainability Strategy - how the Council will seek to enable the current needs of the district to be met without compromising the ability of future generations living in Wealden to meet their own needs

Community Engagement Strategy provides a framework for co-ordinated and effective engagement of stakeholders and individuals by the Council in its decision-making.

Wealden Equality Scheme 2007-2010 sets out how we will ensure that all our services and employment opportunities are provided with equity and fairness to everyone.

Local Development Scheme/Local Development Framework

This sets out the timetable and work programme for the Council's production of Planning Policy Documents-Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Statement of Community Involvement

Explains how people can become involved in planning policy documents and planning applications. The document sets out how the Council will carry out its consultation on all planning matters

Issues and Options

This major public consultation document/ exercise was carried out in Summer 2007 sought the views of a number of statutory consultees and the public on the major issues and options facing the district council in planning for future growth to meet the requirements of the SE Plan.

Spatial development options consultation - Summer 2009

This Regulation 25 consultation sought views on six possible options for the distribution of housing growth and on four possible options for employment. The level of growth proposed

was to accord with the requirements placed upon the district by the South East Plan which requires this Council to find land for some 11,000 homes to the period 2026.

[Sustainability Appraisal reports](#) to accompany spatial development options consultation (2009)

Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

Sets out the broad sustainability objectives against which planning policy documents will require to be assessed

Local Development Framework Evidence Base Studies

These specialist studies cover a wide range of topics including Housing Market assessment, Flood risk assessment, employment land, retail impact and landscape evaluation. Together they will provide an important evidence base for the Core Strategy .Work is also progressing upon an Infrastructure delivery Plan (IDP) which will sit alongside our approved Core Strategy document .

Wealden Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (October 2008)

Provides detailed guidance and advice to promote high quality and sustainable development within the District .The guide covers both small scale householder applications as well as major development schemes .Use of the Guide will enhance the quality of schemes submitted for planning permission .

Sustainable Community Strategy

A strategy agreed by the Local Strategic partnership to improve the quality of life for all communities . The document sets out agreed objectives and priorities for the future.

Wealden Tourism Strategy

This strategy details the issues and priorities to be addressed by the Council's tourism service. The current strategy runs until Spring 2009 and a refreshed strategy has been commissioned and once approved will be available to view on the website.

WDC Tree Preservation Order Policy and Procedures

A Policy which sets out clearly how the Council will prioritise and deal with the making of Tree Preservation Orders. The procedures set out what is involved in the assessment and making of a TPO and how affected landowners and others may submit their representations to the Council on such matters .

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