

Directorate of  
Planning  
& Economic  
Development

**BUSINESS PLAN  
2012 - 2013**

POLICY AND CONSERVATION

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

BUILDING CONTROL AND PLANNING SUPPORT

*Epping Forest District Council*



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# BUSINESS PLAN 2012 – 2013

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# **Business Plan**

## **Planning and Economic Development 2012 – 2013**

### **STRATEGIC OVERVIEW - PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

#### **SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION**

The major proportion of Epping Forest District is green and rural with over 90% situated in the green belt or in use for horticulture and farming. This contrasts with a significant proportion of the 123 000 residents who live close to the boundary with London. However other parts of the district experience difficulties with infrastructure, communication and access to services.

A key priority for the Directorate is to facilitate the delivery of the Local Plan in conjunction with the promotion of sustainable development along with carbon friendly green strategies.

This plan seeks to provide a clear framework for the alignment of the Directorate's business, budget and workforce planning and development processes to enable it to focus on its key priorities, further develop the way that performance is managed and to improve communication and consultation.

Sections 1 – 4 of this Business Plan outline the strategic details about the directorate and council key priority objectives.

This Business Plan also provides operational plans with further details of section reviews, and objectives for;

Section 5 Policy and Conservation

Section 6 Development Control

Section 7 Building Control and Planning Support

This plan seeks to establish a clear link between the strategic directorate and corporate objectives, the operational plans and the individual personal development plans of staff (PDR's).

#### **CHALLENGES AND CHANGE IN 2012/13**

A number of important and far reaching changes are already taking place. These changes will significantly affect areas of strategic management within the Directorate relating to the Localism and Place Shaping Agenda with increased influence expected from locally elected members and the public in the shaping of Local Plan in terms of the guidelines by the National Planning Policy Framework along with the proposals for the local setting of planning fees.

This will impact strategically on the formulation of local government planning policies with clarification expected from the Department of Communities and Local Government who will provide further guidance on the way forward in 2012-13 regarding the local setting of planning fees by individual local authorities.

A considerable amount of work has already been undertaken in partnership with PAS (Planning Advisory Services) and CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) to nationally benchmark planning costs along with preliminary proposals for the local setting of Planning Fees. In this respect Planning and Economic Development is currently benchmarking its planning costs with sixteen other 'Like for Like' authorities.

## SECTION TWO: DIRECTORATE SERVICE BACKGROUND

### 2 (a) Title of Directorate, Background and Structure

This is the Business Plan for the Directorate of Planning and Economic Development, comprising of 62 fulltime equivalent posts, divided into three service area's managed by Assistant Directors. The organisation chart Appendix 3 and staffing matrix Appendix 4 outline the details of the composition and structure for the following three service areas;

POLICY AND CONSERVATION consisting of four sections, Conservation, Countrycare, Trees and Landscape and Forward Planning (including Economic Development).

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL covering Development Control Applications Validation and Control as well as Enforcement.

BUILDING CONTROL responsible for Building Control, Contaminated Land and the Planning Support Team.

This plan follows on from previous year's Business Plan 2011 –12, including the general strategies of the 2011 - 2015 Corporate Plan, which contain the Key Corporate Objectives and the Corporate Plan Medium Term Aims.

### 2 (b) Portfolio and Corporate Responsibilities

The day-to-day regulatory activities of Development Control and Building Control are not, however, Cabinet functions. All the above functions are the responsibility of the Director of Planning and Economic Development (J. Preston).

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>PORTFOLIO HOLDER</u>	<u>DEPUTY PORTFOLIO HOLDER</u>
<b>BUILDING CONTROL, DEVELOPMENT CONTROL &amp; ENFORCEMENT</b>	Cllr John Philip	Cllr Mrs Sue Jones
<b>CONSERVATION, TREES &amp; LANDSCAPE AND COUNTRYCARE</b>	Cllr Penny Smith	Cllr Kewal Chana
<b>FORWARD PLANNING</b>	Cllr John Philip	Cllr Mrs Sue Jones
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT &amp; TOWN CENTRES</b>	Cllr Gagan Mohindra	Cllr David Johnson
<b>PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY STANDING PANEL CHAIR</b>	Cllr Haluk Ulkun	Vice Chair Cllr Antony Watts
<b>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT</b>	Cllr Gagan Mohindra	Cllr Alan Lion

**2 (c) Date of commencement of the Business Plan**

This plan is operational from April 2012 to March 2013.

**2 (d) Overview, Functions & Vision**

We are working towards achieving locality based accessible planning services by seeking to reduce the use of paper by promoting the dissemination of electronic planning records. In addition we also support carbon friendly sustainable development integrating this into our strategic plans for the future. This is supported in the context of our responsibilities for Environmental Co-ordination as well as our responsibilities to retain the existing rural character of the Green Belt. We also seek to be accountable and responsive to empower communities to support a sustainable prosperous community strategy.

Much of what the Directorate does is statutory, within the legislative framework set out in previous plans. We also provide care and advice on both the historic and natural environment of the district. In addition we remain committed to helping others to protect, enhance and manage the countryside; and operate the statutory controls over new development – its design, impact and construction. Part of this includes active measures to ensure that all potentially contaminated land is investigated and where necessary remediated in terms of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. We undertake statutory Building Control responsibilities for the processing of building regulation applications and inspection of building work. This includes the enforcement of the Building Regulations and other relevant standards such as the investigation and removal of dangerous structures along with the provision of community building legislation advice.

Our Vision as a Directorate is that we will seek to gain the respect and trust of our customers and the community by delivering a high quality service that is transparent and visible. We will do this by promoting courtesy, honesty, objectivity, professionalism and political impartiality. An integral part of this is the value we place on our workforce and partners by working and learning from others.

**2 (e) Customer Focus and Profile**

The Directorate of Planning and Economic Development operates for the benefit of the entire population of the district, and for businesses within and visitors to the district.

However, more directly, the customers of the services provided are those who engage with the specific activities of the services, e.g. those who make applications for planning permission or building regulation approval, those who object to planning applications or local plan alterations, those who seek advice about any aspect of the services, or those who benefit from countryside projects or heritage grants.

Generally, the Council has no control over the numbers or type of these direct customers, and the Directorate simply has to react to the size of the customer base, and the nature and complexity of the casework.

**Customer Feedback**

Formal complaints and compliments about the service we offer are logged before investigation. For the year the number received are as below:

	2010/11 (Q4)	2011/12 (Q1)	2011/12 (Q2)	2011/12 (Q3)
<b>Compliments</b>	3	4	7	9
<b>Complaints</b>	12	10	2	13
NB these are figures for each quarter, they are not cumulative				

Development Control operates a system of agent panels to gain feedback directly from those who submit a large number of our applications. In addition the quality of Development Control service BVPI previously provided a very good indicator of performance, but at irregular intervals.

### **Customer Focus**

Planning and Economic Development continues to support the principle of customer centred focus of the directorate by taking steps to facilitate easy and access to planning records via iPlan and the Corporate Website. We know that the web provides the lowest cost in being able to provide useful planning information online and is already the preferred option for citizens with simple questions or straightforward business, such as finding out about Planning Applications in their local area.

This is supported by data supplied by the Society for Information, Innovation and Improvement SOCITM, (an association of professional ICT managers, drawn primarily from local authorities that deliver public services) who in 2008 indicated that average 'Avoidable Contact' costs were; Face to face £6.56 per visitor, Phone £3.22 per visitor; and Website £0.27 per visitor

Whilst we know that current data indicates that we regularly have in excess of 5000 persons specifically visiting i-Plan, to access plans every month, we are also aware that in excess of 30 000 people visit some or all of our general planning website pages to access information they may well have obtained in previous years, by either visiting, telephoning or e-mailing us. With improvements expected to our website in 2012-13 we hope to be able to provide a better service.

## **SECTION THREE: DIRECTORATE SUMMARY**

### **3 (a) Performance Management**

#### **(i) Planning and Economic Development Corporate Quarterly Key Performance Indicators**

##### **KPI 50 - What was the net increase or decrease in the number of homes in the district?**

<b>QUARTER</b>	<b>TARGET</b>	<b>ACTUAL</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
QUARTER FOUR (2010/11)	180	356	Cumulative fourth quarter 2010/11
QUARTER ONE (2011/12)	30	22	First quarter 2011/12
QUARTER TWO (2011/12)	72	140	Cumulative second quarter 2010/11
QUARTER THREE (2011/12)	135	223	Cumulative third quarter 2011/12

Quarter 3 has reached and exceeded the cumulative target for 2011/12.

**KPI 51 - What percentage of major planning applications were processed within 13 weeks?  
(Target 81%)**

QUARTER	TARGET	ACTUAL
QUARTER FOUR (2010/11)	81%	84.62%
QUARTER ONE (2011/12)	81%	85.71%
QUARTER TWO (2011/12)	81%	86.96%
QUARTER THREE (2011/12)	81%	82.76%

Being predominantly a Green Belt planning authority, Major type represent only a small percentage of all overall planning applications received, but they are more complex and resource demanding. It is too early to ascertain whether the target will be achieved at year end because of the low number of cases, so therefore the percentage figure will be volatile depending on whether planning applications are decided (or recommended subject to a legal agreement) outside of the 13 week target period. However at Q3 the target had been reached and exceeded.

**KPI 52 - What percentage of minor planning applications were processed within 8 weeks?**

QUARTER	TARGET	ACTUAL
QUARTER FOUR (2010/11)	80%	80.55%
QUARTER ONE (2011/12)	81%	76.54%
QUARTER TWO (2011/12)	81%	77.25%
QUARTER THREE (2011/12)	81%	74.22%

This includes planning applications from 1 to 9 dwellings/ pitches per application as well as offices, light industry, general industry, storage, warehousing or retail floor space under 10,000sq m or 1 hectare and other minor developments. Area planning committees now meeting on a 4 week cycle, rather than previous 3 week, as from 2011-12, which impacts on the 8 week performance decision target, as demonstrated in Quarter 3 actual.

**KPI 53 - What percentage of other planning applications were processed within 8 weeks?**

QUARTER	TARGET	ACTUAL
QUARTER FOUR (2010/11)	N/A	92.21%
QUARTER ONE (2011/12)	93%	92.67%
QUARTER TWO (2011/12)	93%	92.77%
QUARTER THREE (2011/12)	93%	91.82%



Slightly under throughout the year, however this represents the highest proportion of all planning application types. The change from 3 to 4 week Area Plans committee cycle is having a slightly negative effect on performance.

**KPI 54 - What percentage of planning applications recommended by planning officers for refusal were overturned and granted permission following an appeal?**

QUARTER	TARGET	ACTUAL
QUARTER FOUR (2010/11)	N/A	N/A
QUARTER ONE (2011/12)	20%	22.20%
QUARTER TWO (2011/12)	20%	22.22%
QUARTER THREE (2011/12)	20%	18.18%

Quarter 3 is an indication that the cumulative figure shows we are on target at year end because only eight out of forty four planning applications were allowed on appeal by the planning inspector. As a result the Q3 target has been achieved.

**KPI 55 - What percentage of planning applications, refused by Council Members against the planning officer's recommendation, were granted permission on appeal?**

QUARTER	TARGET	ACTUAL
QUARTER FOUR (2010/11)	N/A	N/A
QUARTER ONE (2011/12)	50%	50.00%
QUARTER TWO (2011/12)	50%	46.15%
QUARTER THREE (2011/12)	50%	56.25%

This represents seven out of sixteen planning applications reversals that were dismissed by the planning inspector on appeal.

**KPI 56 (formerly NI 159) - How much of the land required to meet our house building needs over the next five years was available to be delivered over the next five years? (Annual) Indicator previously know as NI 159**

YEAR	TARGET	LEVEL
2008 – 2009	100%	212.40%
2009 – 2010	100%	164.76%
2010 – 2011	100%	144%

## **OUTTURN 2010/11**

This is a yearly figure calculated from the five-year assessment of land supply in November/December each year. Good performance is represented by a 100.00% or higher outturn. The Council's performance for 2010/11 was 144.00%, meeting and exceeding the target. It is slightly lower than last year's figure. This partly because many of the larger residential developments that have been permitted in recent years, such as on St Margaret's Hospital and Epping Forest College, are nearing the final stages of completion, and will no longer contribute to future housing figures. However, performance is still very good.

No corrective action is proposed, as the target has been met and exceeded

### **(ii) Planning and Economic Development Internal and other performance Indicators**

#### **Forward Planning**

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE	
	TARGET 2011/12	RESULT 2010/11 (Quarter 4 & Yearly outturn)
NI186 – per capita CO2 emissions from the local authority area	3.0%	Results not published by DECC yet.
LPI143 Completion of Local Development Scheme	These no longer need to be as detailed or submitted to the Secretary of State. A draft LDS as well as separate project timetable to Q4 2012/13 is being redrafted following major change to the national planning system.	Not available
LPI44 Achievement of Milestones in Local Development scheme	Key milestones have been set for 12/13 for delivering the Local Plan, as part of a project timetable. The milestones plus achieving these will be mirrored in the LDS,	
NI 197 Supply of ready to develop housing sites		136.01%

## **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS BUILDING CONTROL**

Internal Measure	Target 2011/12	Performance			
		2010/11 (Q4)	2011/12 (Q1)	2011/12 (Q2)	2011/12 (Q3)
<b>REGISTRATION</b>					
FULL PLANS: Initial registration, charge assessment and acknowledgement	3 Days	81%	62%	68%	69%
BUILDING NOTICES: Initial registration, charge assessment and acknowledgement	3 Days	88%	25%	32%	34%
INITIAL NOTICE: Initial registration, assessment and acknowledgement	5 Days	100%	64%	50%	71%

Internal Measure	Target 2011/12	Performance			
		2010/11 (Q4)	2011/12 (Q1)	2011/12 (Q2)	2011/12 (Q3)
<b>PLAN VETTING</b>					
Applicant notified of defects/amendments required	15 Days	95%	88%	79%	68%
Decision notified within statutory time limits	5 Weeks	84%	79%	88%	88%
Decision notified within statutory time limits	2 Months	87%	87%	73%	79%
<b>INSPECTIONS (BUILDING REGULATIONS)</b>					
'Same day' requests (received before 10.00 a.m.) satisfied.	Same Day	81%	81%	82%	78%
Detailed site inspection record to be made	1 Day	94%	95%	95%	95%
<b>OTHER ADMINISTRATION</b>					
Dangerous structure call out: response time during working hours	1 Hour	100%	100%	100%	100%
Dangerous structure call out: response time outside normal working hours	2 Hours	100%	100%	100%	100%
Dangerous structure written record made	1 day	100%	100%	100%	100%
Inspection charge invoices raised and issued.	10 days	97%	94%	86%	91%
Completion certificates issued	5 days	100%	100%	99%	99%

### 3 (b) Business Review

#### Business and Environmental Analysis

A Business and Environmental analysis of Planning and Economic Development has been carried out. This confirms that as a result of reductions in spending that there is a need to look strategically at what are the priorities for the Directorate.

This analysis has identified three key strategic choices for the Directorate;

- The priority is to promote full cost recovery methods for Development Control to align this with what is currently being carried out by Building Control who have had some success in this area. In addition across all sections of the Directorate there is a need to actively promote improved services and continuously implement efficiency savings.
- However it is recognised that savings need to be based on business principles and that it is essential that any decline or reduction in customer efficiency requires innovative and creative solutions based on Locally Decided Priorities for services.
- Within Budget limitations, there is a need to prioritise measures to safeguard the unique character of the District.

#### Financial Review

Planning and Economic Development financial activities are primarily divided into four areas;

- Direct Services
- Regulatory Non Fee Earning (Planning Appeals, Enforcement and Building Control)
- Regulated Fee Earning (Development Control)
- Regulated Full Recovery of Fee Earning work (Building Control).

Expenditure is estimated for **2012/13 to be £3.331** million met as follows;

<b>CSB Budget</b>	£ 2 713 000
<b>CSB Savings</b>	£ -106 000
<b>DDF Budget</b>	£ 724 000
<b>TOTAL NET BUDGET</b>	<b>£ 3 331 000</b>

#### DIRECT SERVICES

The forecast costs for Direct Services are likely to reach £2,072,000 for 2012/13 as compared with 2011/12 - Original Estimate £1,712,000 and Provisional Outturn of £1,457,000.

Direct Services primarily consists of the sections within Policy and Conservation including;

- Forward Planning
- Economic Development
- Environmental Coordination
- Conservation Policy
- Town Centre Enhancements
- Countrycare

## REGULATORY SERVICES NON FEE EARNING

It is expected that the costs for Non Fee Earning activities within Development Control are estimated to be £744, 000 for 2012/13 which represents a decrease as compared with 2007/08 of £820 000.

### **Development Control Appeals**

The forecast cost of Appeals increased from £237 000 in 2007/08 (132 Appeals) to £421 000 in 2008/09 (153 Appeals). The forecast figure for 2012/13 is £275 000 (140 estimated).

### **Enforcement**

The following table illustrates how the annual costs of Enforcement have dropped in recent years combined with a significant increase in Enforcement Notices served.

	<b>2007/08</b>	<b>2012/13 (estimated)</b>
Complaints received	757	720
Enforcement Notices Served	23	50
Costs	£583 000	£469 000

### **Building Control Non Fee Earning**

Building Control Non Fee earning activity costs are expected to reach £158 000 for 2012/13 This expenditure has been managed to ensure that £164 000 for 2007/08 has not increased.

## REGULATORY SERVICES FEE EARNING

This comprises of the following estimated Expenditure and Income for 2011/12 and 2012/13

<b>FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>INCOME</b>	<b>NET</b>
<b>Development Control</b>			
2011/12	£900,000	£552,000	£348, 000
(Probable Outturn)			
2012/13	£934 000	£576, 000	£358 000
<b>Building Control</b>			
2011/12	£460,000	£528,000	(£68,000)
(Probable Outturn)			
			(Surplus ring fenced)
2012/13	£507,000	£528,000	(£21,000)
			(Surplus Ring fenced)

### **Building Control** (full fee earning recovery)

Local Authorities were required, by the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010, to bring in a new scheme of charges with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010. This was to enable cost recovery by Building Control services. Building Control has been able to achieve full cost recovery of fee earning services in recent years. Building Control continues to control costs and search for new income sources.

### **Development Control** (regulated fee earning recovery)

Planning Fees for Development Control Planning Applications have in the past been nationally regulated and do not currently aim to achieve full cost recovery of fees. Development Control has been working with Planning Advisory Services since 2010/11 to set up a Benchmarking exercise aimed at full cost recovery of Planning Application costs.

Recent results from the Benchmarking exercise carried out in conjunction with PAS (Planning Advisory Services) and CIPFA in December 2011 have confirmed that we are not achieving full cost recovery of the fee earning component of planning fees (as set by legislation). The benchmarking exercise to establish full cost recovery for Development Control Fee earning activities carried out with CIPFA is now complete. As a result we are now awaiting further guidance from Planning Advisory Services and the Department of Communities and Local Government regarding legislative approval for the local setting of planning fees. If accepted and approved by Parliament these charges could be implemented sometime in 2012/13.

### **3 (c) Local Plan**

The new planning system will consist of a single volume Local Plan. The introduction of the new NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework), heralded the abolition of the East of England Plan and Planning Policy statements has made significant changes to the mechanisms of growth delivery for this district. The Council will therefore have to identify the development needs for the district backed by a robust evidence base and defend the figures at EIP (Examination in Public). The new Local Plan will likely contain a strategic section and a separate section with site allocations as well as a third section that will incorporate the councils Development Management policies.

The Cabinet are keen for the plan to be submitted to the Secretary of State in 2013 and officers have formulated a timetable to achieve this deadline, which is currently being reviewed and therefore not specified here. The development and production of the Local Plan is a Key Priority of the Council, KCO 1 as well as Medium Term Aim 5 (Provide clear community leadership).

### **3 (d) Electronic Records Document Management System**

Over a period of several years the Directorate of Planning and Economic Development has made significant progress in moving away from paper based office systems to Electronic Record and Document Management Systems ERDMS. Implementing electronic record keeping is an essential part of the e-government aims of both Central Government and the Council. The principles of e-government acknowledge that there are numerous benefits to be gained in making information available electronically such as;

- Improved public access to information.
- Generating savings from increased speed of work, reductions in the costs of printing, post and file storage.
- Reduced carbon emissions by using less paper.

As a result the Planning and Economic Development has made available nearly all current planning information on the Corporate Website along with a significant percentage of historical planning information via iPlan. This has had a major impact on the accessibility of planning information as many residents are now able to access planning information in their local area on their home or office computers.

Planning and Economic Development has traditionally been one of the most 'paper dependant' departments in the district council. While well over half a million maps, plans and documents electronically scanned, a considerable amount of older important planning information is still retained in paper and microfilm format. The manual retrieval of this information is time consuming and if and when resources are made available it is intended to place this information online.

Given the rural nature of Epping Forest District Council the placement of planning information online has potentially saved a considerable amount of long journeys to Epping Civic Offices along with parking difficulties which were previously available during office hours. With Electronic Planning records now available online we are now able to provide this information on a 24 hour basis, retrievable by members of the public from our website at any location that has access to a PC and the Internet.

Planning applications that have been placed on our website are available for the public to view on i Plan, Epping Forest District Council's interactive planning website.

[http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/Council\\_Services/planning/iPlan.asp](http://www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/Council_Services/planning/iPlan.asp)

For example some of the most frequently asked requests are about planning and building control applications which are readily available by clicking a variety of links such as;

- Search Planning Application records,
- View Documents and Plans
- How to Access Planning Information Online
- View Committee Agendas
- View Webcasts
- Search Planning Appeals
- Search Building Control Records
- How to use i Plan to Access Planning and Building Control Data

## SECTION FOUR: CORPORATE OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

### 4 (a) Review of the Key Cabinet Objectives and Priorities for 2011/12.

The following Key Cabinet Corporate Objectives formed the basis of Planning and Economic Development strategic plan for 2011-12. These are linked to specific Key Corporate Objectives (KCO's) and Medium Term Aims (MTO's) as indicated.

#### **(i) Responding to the Recession and Economic Development (KCO 1 & 2)**

The Directorate continues to support measures that promote the local economy along with prompt payment of local supplier invoices. In addition Government is offering local areas the opportunity to take control of their future economic development by supporting the formation of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP'S) which are locally-owned partnerships between local authorities and businesses to play a central role in determining local economic priorities as well as undertaking activities to drive economic growth and the creation of local jobs.

Our district belongs to the East Sussex and Kent Essex LEP. The Directorate follows an agreed programme of business events with partners for 2011/12, co-ordinating business survey work to better understand the needs and issues of the business community. There are ongoing projects such as St John's Epping Development brief and the Lee Valley White Water Centre Economic Development Study, which will aid economic development and aim to boost local economy. The Directorate continues to play an active role in the Sustainable Communities Group of the LSP.

We have continued to review the role of Economic Development and Town Centre projects in 2011-12 in particular the introduction of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) where their role in forming local priorities and promoting the local economy will continue into 2012-13.

#### **(ii) Planning For Growth, Local Plan, Affordable Housing and Regeneration/Town Centres (KCO 1 & 2)**

The requirement to deliver a sound Core Strategy has now changed with urgent emphasis now placed on the delivery of the Local Plan. Whilst the promotion of opportunities for Growth, Local Development, Affordable Housing and Regeneration in the wider District will continue to be a major part of the Directorate strategy, the priority is to develop this through the Local Plan.

#### **(iii) Review of Shared Service Opportunities (KCO 5, 6 & 8, MTO 1 & 4)**

The Directorate already participates in shared services in some areas. We are receptive to considering shared services with other Local Authorities; however the overarching criteria is to ensure that this will produce real savings and/or efficiencies.

#### **(iii) The Environment Climate Change Agenda (MTO 5)**

The Directorate continues to support energy efficiency improvements for Council stock and participates in the review and development of the Corporate Climate Strategy, now called the Carbon Reduction Strategy.

#### **(iv) Value For Money and Performance/Efficiency Improvements (KCO 6 & 8)**

There has been ongoing Value for Money and efficiency improvements across all areas of the Directorate. Progress has been made in key areas such as; Building Control who continue to match income with expenditure for their third successive year.

Development Control who have participated in a CIPFA and Planning Advisory Services Benchmarking exercise to enable the full cost recovery for fee earning applications. There are positive indications that this may be agreed by government (DCLG) sometime in 2012 - 2013. The Planning Support Team continues its work on promoting sustainability and carbon friendly processes with its Electronic Records Document Management in reducing our dependency (and cost) on paper records.



**(v) To improve access to and information and customer service (KCO 8)**

The Directorate continues to improve processes, procedures and customer service. For example we have been actively taking steps to increase the amount of information being held on i-Plan the Councils Interactive Website for both new and historic planning data, so that more information is held electronically and is more accessible. This is aimed at reducing the costs of dealing with enquiries, by providing more information on the website, rather than via individual letters, or individual meetings.

In the year under review the Local Councils Liaison Committee set up the iPlan User Group to facilitate communication and dialogue between representatives of the twenty four Parish Councils within the District and Planning and Economic Development Directorate to look at ways to improve the access to and use of electronic planning records. As a result a number of productive meetings have been held along with visits by Councillors and Parish Clerks to the Directorate Offices. This has enabled improved partnership working as well as promoting steps towards gaining a greater understanding of electronic planning records. iPlan which displays Planning Records on the Epping Forest District Council's website also acts a portal to a range of useful tools hosted on our website and elsewhere.

**(vi) Continue improvement of processing planning applications (KCO 8)**

Section 3 (a) of this Business Plan indicate that Key Performance Indicators for Planning KPI 51, 52 53, 54 and 55 met and exceeded two out of five targets at Quarter Three. The remaining targets were marginally missed. Part of this is as a result of the team working approach between the Planning Teams and the Planning Support Team, who provide a significant input in assisting Planning Officers to meet their targets.

**4.(b) On the Horizon – Strategic Key Objectives for Planning and Economic Development 2012/13**

The following is an outline of the strategic key objectives for the Directorate in 2012/13 with links to specific Key Corporate Objectives (KCO's) and Medium Term Aims (MTO's) as indicated.

**(i) Local Plan (KCO1 & MTO5)**

The Local Plan is the key work item for the Directorate and top priority for the Council and will set the objectives and strategic directions for growth in the district up to 2031. This is considered to be the Key Corporate Objective One of 2012-13. It is intended that this will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in 2013

**(ii) Annual Monitoring Report (KCO1)**

Due to changes in 2011/12 it is now for the LA to determine when this should be published. (It is no longer a requirement to be published on Councils' website). However it is intended that this will be subject to approval by Local Plan Cabinet Committee

**(iii) Promotion of sustainable economic development and tourism (MTO 4 & 5)**

The Council's commitment to economic development is set out in the Sustainable theme of the Council Plan and is also evident as part of the recently approved Key Performance Objectives for 2012-13. The main priority for 2012 - 2013 is the completion of an economic development & tourism strategy, which will be a key piece of evidence for the Local Plan.

**(iv) Partnership working to help secure the future viability and vitality of the district's town centres. (MTO 4 & 5) Corporate Plan 22**

The Local Plan will identify key priorities to be addressed in the district's town centres. The Council continues to work with the Town Centre Partnerships, the Chamber of Commerce and the FSB to support businesses and help alleviate the negative impact of the recession.

**(v) Assist in the completion of a Green Infrastructure Plan for the District (GU4 KCO 1 & MTO 5)**

A Green Infrastructure strategy formulated as part of the core strategy policies which will be incorporated as part of Local Plan.

**(vi) Protect landscape & trees as part of the unique character of the District (EFDC Combined Policies Feb 2008, Land & Landscape; & Tree Strategy, 2008 MTO 5)**

Trees & Landscape protection given high priority by council which will be incorporated as part of Local Plan

**(vii) Work towards operating Countrycare as a Traded Service along with raising the profile of Countrycare. (MTO 4 & 5)**

Countrycare will investigate potential income for external work in parishes on non EFDC Nature Reserves along with other forms of income generation such as environmental education package for schools. The aim is to improve sustainability for Countrycare by implementing a long term and successful income generation strategy. An essential part of this is to improve volunteer services by promoting the recruitment of volunteers to add resilience to Countrycare. In addition further steps to raise the profile are already underway to publicise Countrycare particularly on the Corporate Website so as to improve both their image and reputation.

**(viii) Promote customer centered performance through the use of up-to-date technology and best practice. (KCO 2 & MTO 4)**

Further steps will be to improve iPlan accessibility and information for service users including the development of links with Parish/Town Councils along with other improvements to customer service such as enhanced customer feedback and improvements to the Planning Website.

**(ix) Improve planning application turnaround times (KCO 2 MTO 3 & KPI's 51, 52 & 53)**

In 2012 – 2013 it is intended that Development Control will exceed Key Corporate Planning Performance Indicators. In addition it is intended to further enhance this by developing and improving the joint Benchmarking exercises being carried out in partnership with Planning Advisory Services and CIPFA. This will help to provide high quality Planning Services and at the same time match DC fee earning costs to income.

**(x) Operate an effective and efficient enforcement & appeal service (KCO 2 MTO 4 & 5, KPI's 54 & 55)**

It is also intended to protect and enhance quality of environment by taking timely enforcement action by promoting good DC decision making in the context of protecting the unique character of the district. We will do this by supporting successful enforcement processes. In terms of Appeals we intend to meet and exceed Appeals Performance Indicators

**(xi) To secure appropriate levels of community benefit by the use of Section 106 agreements. (KCO 2 & 5 & MTO 4)**

In 2012 -2013 we intend to promote community benefits by liaising with internal and external groups in the early stages of the planning process to maximise S106 benefits. This will improve support for the formulation of the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy expected to take place in 2013 – 2014.

**(xii) To match income with expenditure for Building Control charge earning account (KCO 4 & 5)**

Central government requires the income from building regulation charges to meet the cost of that part of the service. Building Control will continue in 2012 – 2013 to ensure that their Fee Earning Income matches costs.

**(xiii) To promote the use of Information Technology to improve administrative processes (KCO 4 & 5, MTO 2 & 4)**

The Directorate will actively seek to participate in promoting the lowest council tax in Essex as well as safeguarding frontline services by utilising Information Technology improve administrative processes. The aim is to provide carbon friendly, accessible planning records

on the Corporate Website and achieve efficiency savings by continuously improving business processes.

#### 4 (c) Risk Management

Risks that arise in the Directorate fall broadly within three categories – risk to accommodation and records, risks to personnel and risks to service delivery. The Risk Matrix and Risk Action Plan for intolerated risks are shown in Appendix Eight and Nine.

The following Risk Capture Analysis identifies intolerated vulnerabilities and these are further dealt with in the Risk Matrix plotting Impact against Likelihood in Appendix Eight and the Risk Action Plan Appendix Nine.

Only eight of the recorded seventeen Directorate risks are above the ‘tolerance’ line. All others are considered to be either low probability or of low consequence. It is only necessary therefore to include management plans for those eight identified risks managed by the Risk Action Plan – Appendix Nine.

RISK NO.	CURRENT RISK SCORE	TARGET RISK SCORE	DESCRIPTION
1	A2	C2	Inability to maintain service provision due to inadequate resources and/or external recruitment restrictions
2	B2	C2	Development Control Fee earning costs not being met by Fee earning income.
3	B2	C2	Potential need to address Gypsy, Roma and Traveller incidents
4	B2	C2	Inability or failure to provide current planning records on corporate website
5	B2	C2	Potential Difficulty in producing Local Plan to timetable
6	B2	C3	Loss of budget and/or income DC, BC & P & C
7	B3	C2	Increasing work due to Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAA)
8	B3	D3	Inability to ‘backscan’ additional files including secure destruction along with quality control processes due to insufficient funding

### **Business Continuity**

The Directorate has a Business Continuity Plan and is progressing with measures in place to cover the main area of risk to personnel, service delivery, accommodation and records. The protection and recovery of records and working files lost through fire or other impact upon accommodation is a matter of concern. Copies, including computer records, exist of much of the resources, although some current working file papers are at risk for example Building Control, Large Commercial Site files and some Microfiche historical records. It is intended in the forthcoming year to investigate ways to address this. Appendix Two attached details this further in Phases 3 - 6.

#### **4 (d) Crime and Disorder**

The duty to regard to crime and disorder is continuing to be addressed. Various policies of the Local Plan relate to safety; new developments may have regard to crime prevention in their layout and design.

#### **4 (e) Equality and Diversity**

A Corporate Equalities Working Group is leading on this subject and Planning and Economic Development is represented by the Assistant Director (Building Control).

As part of the Corporate Equalities Working Group we are investigating the practicality of including online equality monitoring questions as part of our satisfaction surveys. Once this is implemented we will analyse the outcome of this survey to see if there are significant differences in perception of the service by different groups of users.

#### **4 (f) Value for Money**

Planning Services & Economic Development Department recognises the importance of Value for Money and is currently utilising a number of different measures to achieve Value for Money such as Benchmarking and achieving sustainability by matching income to expenditure for fee earning activities. We are currently working with CIPFA and Planning Advisory Services (PAS) to develop the local setting of Development Control Charges (Fee earning). Building Control are also monitoring value for money by ensuring their expenditure is matched with income in line with LABC (Local Authority Building Control) guidelines.

### **DEVELOPMENT CONTROL:**

The preliminary results from the Benchmarking exercise carried out from 27th June to 22nd July 2011 included current data and time recording carried out by all staff within Planning and Economic Development (excluding Building Control and Economic Development).

We have recognised the importance of managing our costs based on time taken to process applications. As a result from August 2011 we continued to monitor the time taken to deal with Development Control applications. Initial indications show that one of the consequences of the management of officer time on applications has resulted in better outcomes in key planning performance indicators as reported in Section 3 (a) of this Business Plan.

A key element in the Benchmarking exercise was establishing the costs of processing Development Control applications. The charging formula proposed by PAS and CIPFA is based on the full recovery of costs for fee earning applications as per the calculation; forecast workload and projected fee income. This was based on 2562 projected applications for 2012-13 with recoverable costs being £1.032 million and a projected income of £1.056 million. However the approval of local fee setting is subject to government approval and enabling legislation due sometime in 2012-13.

Indications from our benchmarking group indicate that our fee proposals are not excessive. They show that fixed fees mainly for residential development has the lowest average charge amongst our benchmarking group and that our sliding fees for multiple residential and commercial applications are at midpoint, in comparison to the sixteen other similar local authorities.

## **FORWARD PLANNING, TREES & CONSERVATION**

In order to achieve value for money the sections ensure they follow EFDC's adopted procurement policies which are reviewed and benchmarked to industry standards. Current CIPFA benchmarking exercise will provide more information on level/quality of service delivery in relation to current service charges. For Economic Development there is an emphasis on exploring joint working with Epping's Local Strategic Partnership and with other neighbouring authorities, to achieve increased Value For Money through economies of scale and optimising outcomes and achievements. This is a particular emphasis of the work being carried out via the West Essex Alliance (sub LEP), the London Anglia Growth Partnership and the West Essex Economic Development group.

## **BUILDING CONTROL**

Building Control continue to work in a competitive Building Surveying market and actively take steps to match expenditure with income. Building Control constantly reviews how services are provided by ensuring that key LABC (Local Authority Building Control) performance indicators are met and exceeded.

As a result current indications show that Building Control will continue to match income with expenditure for the third year in succession in 2011/12. In addition it is also likely that in the forthcoming financial year 2012/13, Building Control will again match expenditure with income.

## **Outlook**

The outlook for Development Control is promising with significant steps taken towards the full cost recovery for Development Control (Fee Earning) activities with the possibility (subject to government enabling legislation) that this will eventually generate almost half a million pounds per annum (pro rata) in additional income.

Building Control has a very good record of matching income to expenditure and are currently engaged in a two pronged approach to ensure that Value for Money is achieved, its main priority is matching income to expenditure. As a result Building Control are continually looking at investigating ways of sourcing additional income by working with partners along with providing internal and external professional surveying services.

This is in line with the Corporate Medium Term Aims 2010/11 to 2013/14, which requires that the council works towards having the lowest District Council Tax in Essex (section 2) and continuously improves efficiency by adopting new ways of working with our partners (section 4).

In addition Policy and Conservation whilst seeking to minimise costs are currently engaged in a major thrust to complete the Local Plan with the Value for Money benefit derived as a long term subjective corporate gain. The recent revision to Key Corporate Indicators supports this as the development of the Local Plan is now the one of the main corporate priorities (KCO 1).

## **4 (g) Resource Requirements**

ICT Development continues to be the focus on resources within the Directorate along with the shortage of some staff resources to meet the challenges faced in 2012/13.

Further development of the Directorate Electronic Documents Records Management System (EDRMS) is essential to ensure that we are able to provide sustainable economic, effective and efficient planning services for Epping Forest District. While it is not possible to make immediate progress towards paperless planning, measurable progress is important to ensure that eventually in the future we will be adequately prepared to take this step.

A key element of this is the Electronic Records Management Progress Plan Appendix Two which details the progress made and steps required in moving the Electronic Documents Records Management System (EDRMS) forward.

Key elements impacting on resource requirements for 2012/13, will be the steps taken to ease resource requirements (funding) for the directorate;

- It is expected that Building Control will continue for the fourth year in succession to match expenditure with income in 2012/13.
- Development Control, subject to government enabling legislation intends to match fee earning charges with expenditure and it is likely if implemented that this may possibly result in almost £500 000 in additional income pro rata per annum, as and when it is implemented.
- Countrycare will be investigating the possibility of establishing a traded service during the course of 2012/13.

#### **4 (h) Workforce Planning and Development**

The Directorate continues to promote staff development including continuous professional development.

A strategy for absence monitoring is in place with absence reported regularly to Directorate Management Team Meetings. A table summarising absence levels for the period January 2011 to December 2011 is contained in Appendix Seven. In the period under review the directorate lost 154 days due to short term sickness, and 228 days due to long term sickness, totalling 382 lost days. This equates to lower than 2.5 % of work days being lost due to all types of sickness absence. The average sickness absence per staff member has been maintained at 6.17 days as compared with a similar period in 2010 of 4.28 days per member.

Details of the Workforce information and staff composition is contained in Appendices Three to Seven attached.

# DIRECTORATE SERVICE PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

## SECTION FIVE POLICY AND CONSERVATION

(Comprising of Forward Planning, Trees and Landscape, Conservation and Countrycare)

### 5.1 KEY FUNCTIONS

#### (a) Forward Planning

- (i) Delivery of the Local Plan, by combination of internal work and commissioning additional reports and ensuring that these are kept as up-to-date as possible (See Appendix 15);
- (ii) Annual Monitoring Report, key requirement of the Local Plan. Housing completions are monitored via NI154 (Net additional homes provided), future land supply for housing monitored via NI159 (Supply of ready to develop housing sites);
- (iii) Carbon Emissions and Reduction Carbon Strategy and Green Travel Plan;
- (iv) Fuel Poverty Outreach Referral and the London Commuter Belt Energy Efficiency and Fuel Poverty Initiative;
- (v) Promotion of sustainable economic development and tourism;
- (vi) Partnership working to secure the future viability and vitality of the district's town centres;
- (vii) Engagement with the Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), West Essex Alliance and active membership of the London Anglia Growth Partnership;
- (viii) Continued input and involvement with the Joint Investment Plan and Integrated County Strategy; and
- (ix) Monitoring Government guidance and adjoining authorities' LDFs/Local Plans and responding to consultations as appropriate.

#### (b) Trees and Landscape

To protect and where appropriate improve the quality and extent of green infrastructure provision throughout the district, and in particular:

- i. Influence the strategic framework potentially affecting the future landscape of the District, through e.g. The Green Arc; The Harlow and Environs Green Infrastructure Plan;
- ii. Generate tree and landscape policy;
- iii. Protect trees, using tree preservation orders (TPO's) where necessary;
- iv. Administer the making and confirmation of TPO's;
- v. Advise on the range of tree and landscape issues in relation to development;
- vi. Monitor and enforce implementation of approvals for development in relation to tree protection and landscape issues;
- vii. Deal with applications for works to trees protected by TPO and in conservation areas (TPX);
- viii. Develop community engagement in tree and landscape initiatives, including through the production of Community Tree Strategies; and (with Countrycare) direct the Community Tree Warden Scheme
- ix. Deal with hedgerow cases, under the countryside Hedgerow Regulations and the High Hedge legislation;
- x. Deal with breaches of TPO, Conservation Area or Hedgerow Protection legislation, including prosecutions where necessary and appropriate;
- xi. Advise on issues relating to dangerous trees, where they are subject to planning protection, or there is a threat to public safety.

#### (c) Conservation

- (i) Give information and advice on new development in relation to historic buildings and conservation areas to development control

- (ii) Advise on “curtilage” development in relation to historic buildings
- (iii) Produce up to date character appraisals and management plans
- (iv) Manage consultant’s review of the Council’s 25 conservation areas, including potential boundary reviews and article 4 directions (Local Plan evidence base)
- (v) Enable enhancement and joint grant schemes
- (vi) Maintain Local List initiative
- (vii) Enable Historic Buildings grants (EFDC)
- (viii) Provide advice on maintenance and repairs of historic buildings and buildings within conservation areas
- (ix) Advise members of the public on development in relation to historic buildings and conservation areas and FOI requests relating to same
- (x) Produce and distribute up to date advisory leaflets and articles
- (xi) Issue urgent works and repairs notices and Building Preservation Notices
- (xii) Monitor Buildings at Risk Register
- (xiii) Carry out Listed Building and Conservation Area prosecutions & enforcements
- (xiv) Urban design advice

**(d) Countrycare**

- (i) To conserve and promote the landscape and biodiversity value of the Epping Forest District
- (ii) To improve public access to the countryside and provide for informal recreation
- (iii) To promote a greater understanding and respect for the countryside
- (iv) To involve and educate local communities and schools in all aspects of the Service’s work
- (v) To manage and guide the maintenance of the District’s nine Local Nature Reserves
- (vi) To promote and support the designation of new Local Nature Reserves and the Local Wildlife Sites network across the district
- (vii) To provide Development Control planning application advice

**5.2 STAFFING SUMMARY**

**(b) Forward Planning**

Planning Policy includes Forward Planning, Economic Development and Environmental Co-ordination. The Forward Planning team comprises 6 permanent professional posts (FP Manager, Principal Planning Officer, Senior PO, PO (being filled Jan/Feb 2012), Information and Technical Officer and Forward Planning Assistant. There is a fixed term Forward Planning Assistant role for one year and a one year Technical & Information post. Interviews are anticipated in January/February 2012. There is also a Senior PO/Consultation Officer post on a 2-year contract which started in May 2010, who was seconded to this year after the previous postholder departed. The economic development team currently has one officer who was on maternity leave from late 2011 and returned to work on a three day week from the 17th Jan 2012. The Environmental Co-ordinator is a permanent professional role, currently reduced to 3 days a week. The full staffing profile is shown in Appendix 3 and 4.

**(c) Trees and Landscape**

The team comprises 1 Principal Officer, 2 professional Tree and Landscape Officers and 1 Technical Officer

**(b) Conservation**

- (i) The conservation section consists of one Conservation Officer (PPC 13) and there is a Technical Support Officer for Conservation (PPC18C) post (1 fixed term), that is currently vacant.
- (ii) Essex County Council (ECC) provides advice on most applications for Listed Building Consent and all matters relating to archaeology and Scheduled Ancient Monuments



under a service level agreement set up in 2008 (for period 2008/2011). The staffing resulting from this service level agreement is:

- 1 x Senior Historic Building Adviser (p/t)
- 1 x Archaeologist (p/t)

Following discussions with ECC the service level agreement was agreed for 11/12 and will extend to 12/13.

**(c) Countrycare**

There are four permanent members of staff within Countrycare. Throughout the year Countrycare is supported by a range of volunteers. These include tree wardens, work placement students and practical conservation volunteers. Their support is fundamental to the Service achieving many of its objectives.

**5.3 KEY OBJECTIVES**

**Priority Service Objectives**

This area of the Planning Directorate has identified the following priority service objectives for this business plan:

Objective	Council plan or other ref	Background
<b>FORWARD PLANNING</b>		
Local Plan	KCO1	The Local Plan is the key work item for the Directorate and top priority for the Council and will set the objectives and strategic directions for growth in the district up to 2031. Under the changes via the NPPF and Localism Act there will be a requirement for co-ordinated working arrangements with neighbouring authorities to deliver aspirations for regeneration and growth.
Annual Monitoring Report	KCO1	There have been changes to the planning system in 2011/12. It is now for the LA to determine when the AMRs are published and it is no longer a requirement to submit to the Secretary of State. Instead AMRs are to be published on Councils' websites. For this Council the AMRs will continue to be presented to the Local Plan Cabinet committee.
Carbon Emissions and Carbon Reduction Strategy	Corporate Plan 8 (theme 2)_20 & 21	National Indicator 186 Other Indicators relevant to this objective i.e NI185, NI188 and NI194 have been discontinued
Fuel Poverty	KCO 4, 5 & 6	NI 187 has been discontinued. The Council will continue to measure fuel poverty. This is being delivered in conjunction with the Housing Directorate's 5 yearly Household Conditions Surveys..
Promotion of sustainable economic development and tourism	MTO 4 & 5	The Council's commitment to economic development is set out in the Sustainable theme of the Council Plan and is also evident in the recently approved KPOs. Beyond this, the Council is actively engaging with the SELEP on economic development matters and has formalised sub-regional partnership working with the West Essex Alliance (sub LEP) in order to

Objective	Council plan or other ref	Background
		<p>fully input into the broader LEP (which covers East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock).</p> <p>The main priority for 12/13 is the completion of an economic development &amp; tourism strategy, which will be a key piece of evidence for the Local Plan. Given the work taking place on a West Essex level it is anticipated that this piece of work will extend to become the West Essex Economic Development &amp; Tourism Strategy</p>
<p>Partnership working to help secure the future viability and vitality of the district's town centres.</p>	<p>MTO 4 &amp; 5 Corporate Plan 22</p>	<p>The Local Plan will identify key priorities to be addressed in the district's town centres. The Council continues to work with the Town Centre Partnerships and Chamber of Commerce to support businesses and help alleviate the negative impact of the recession.</p> <p>The Council and the Local Strategic Partnership launched the One Shops Local initiative in 11/12. The website is a forum for businesses to register their information, offer discounts and get people to shop on their local high street. Other initiatives like this will continue to be delivered throughout 12/13</p> <p>White Water Canoe Centre - Economic Development study was completed in 11/12. Ancillary development and leisure options were outlined in the report as were opportunities to improve employability, skills and adjacent local economies via regeneration and initiatives</p> <p>Waltham Abbey Town Heritage Initiative was submitted to the HLF in 11/12. The aim of the initiative is for physical and other improvements to be delivered in Conservation Areas with high deprivation levels. Successful candidates for the first stage development funding will be announced in April 2012.</p>
<b>TREES AND LANDSCAPE</b>		
<p>Assist in the completion of a Green Infrastructure Plan for the District</p>	<p>GU4 KCO 1 MTO 5</p>	<p>A Green Infrastructure plan or strategy will be formulated on the basis of the LDF core strategy policies</p>
<p>Protect landscape character within the District</p>	<p>EFDC Combined Policies Feb 2008, Land &amp; Landscape MTO 5</p>	<p>Landscape protection given high priority in the LDF.</p>
<p>Protect trees within the District</p>	<p>EFDC Combined Policies Feb 2008, Land &amp; Landscape; &amp;Tree Strategy, 2008 MTO 5</p>	<p>Landscape protection given high priority in the LDF, and a duty under S198 of The Town &amp; Country Planning Act 1990.</p>
<p>4 Maintain public support for and involvement with the objectives of the team</p>	<p>IP4 MTO 1 MTO 4</p>	<p>Ensure delivery of customer focused service</p>

<b>CONSERVATION</b>		
Protect and manage the character and appearance of our conservation areas.	KCO 1 MTO 5	Work is underway on the character appraisal and management plan for Staples Road, Baldwin's Hill and York Hill Conservation Area as well as Copped Hall
Enhance the character of our conservation areas via minor enhancement schemes.	KCO 1 MTO 5	Other projects will be brought forward as the character appraisals are completed.
Protect the built heritage of the district	KCO 1 MTO 5	Formal consultant's review of the Councils 25 Conservation Areas The successful Local List project will be continued The Conservation team will also assist property owners or other interested parties who are interested in getting buildings formally listed in conjunction with English Heritage. Continue Historic Buildings Grants Scheme – specifically targeting Buildings at Risk and Commercial buildings. One formal application has been received
Ensuring ECC responses are timely and accurate, and that the service given is cost effective.	MTO4	Owing to the pressure on meeting performance targets it is essential to monitor the speed of ECC responses. This is done through regular officer meetings and quarterly management meetings with ECC. The quality of service is also to be considered as this is equally as important as the speed of service.
Ensure internal responses to DC consultations are timely.	MTO4	Owing to the pressure on meeting performance targets it is essential to monitor all DC consultations and ensure a timely response.
<b>COUNTRYCARE</b>		
Work towards operating Countrycare as a Traded Service.	MTO 4 & 5	Some approaches have already been made to Countrycare to quote on potential work in parishes on land outside EFDC's Nature Reserves. Some negotiation is being undertaken internally to assess potential of internal charging for Countrycare Services ie to Environment, Leisure and Estates. An Environmental Education package is being proposed to schools to charge for Countrycare's Service both in and outside the District.
Address issue of office move	CORPORATE PLAN 15	With the potential development of Town Mead Depot during the next five years an alternative appropriate site should be identified for the re-housing of the Countrycare office, garages and storage areas.
Support and encourage Big Society	MTO4 & 5 Corporate Plan 10	EFDC Countrycare is one of the few Local Authorities which already has a large community involvement and volunteer base. Continued training and

		mentoring of volunteers and tree wardens gives individuals a sense of possession and community whilst also allowing easier access to grants and external funding.
Recruitment of volunteers and promotion of healthy living	MTO 5	It is important that the volunteer base is constantly increasing as the need for succession is becoming apparent. With the development of a Traded Service opportunities for paid work to be given to volunteer contractors may attract a younger "volunteer" base.
Increase partnership working to deliver more efficiently and share skills	MTO4 & 5	Already working closely with Essex Wildlife Trust, Field Studies Council, City of London, Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers and Woodland Trust on events, training days, project tasks.
Raise Countrycare's profile in and outside the District	MTO 5	More publicity, use of website, and events already underway.
Staff training	MTO 5	A gap analysis has been undertaken and training arrangements are underway to increase skills and knowledge.
Gain recognition for management of Local Nature Reserves	MTO 5	Apply for Green Flag status for Roding Valley Meadows LNR – started January 2012. Apply for Living Landscapes Award (Essex Wildlife Trust) for Linder's Field LNR, Weald Common LNR and Church Lane LNR – underway January 2012.
Produce an Annual Report highlighting the achievements of the service 2012/13	MTO 1	TBC

## 5.4 REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2011 - 2012

### (a) Action Plan 2011/12 - Review

A combined Action Plan review Forward Planning, Trees and Landscape, Conservation and Countrycare for 2011/12 is shown in Appendix 10 (A).

### (b) Strengths and Weaknesses - Development Control SWOT Analysis

In the formulation of this business plan, a SWOT analysis was carried out for Forward Planning, Trees and Landscape, Conservation and Countrycare staff in January 2012 and the results of which are shown below;

## FORWARD PLANNING

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>Team focused on delivery Team has strong skill set, experience and knowledge Sound/innovative consultation strategy Positive relationships with other teams</p>	<p>Low staff retention over time has led to shortages affecting delivery of work. Stress levels Difficulty from time to time due to staff shortages to keep up with changes to planning system/guidance and strategic advice. The work related to this can be substantial during periods of rapid change. Difficulties due to staff shortages from time to time to deal with adjacent and other planning authority consultations related to Local Plans and other planning documents</p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Further in-house development of staff/strong succession planning Further improving on consultation methodology and Forward Planning's image by the public. Early stage of Local Plan delivery- this provides EFDC with more flexibility to adapt to change Tight deadlines and timescales Further streamline DC application advice</p>	<p>Lack of clarity regarding targets Ongoing stress levels and threat of related sickness absence remain high ICT: ongoing unresolved software issues Building consensus on approach with all Members (inconsistent and competing views) , including cross boundary working with adjoining Councils Lack of clarity, steer/guidance from Government Impact of Gypsy Roma Traveller consultation on image of Planning and any additional work Planning image through bad press leading to criticism</p>

## TREES AND LANDSCAPE

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>Strong Investment in development of team members, leading to retention of staff. Excellent team skills. Strong team identity and positive approach. Positive relationships with other teams. Good support for CPD. Ability to undertake strong community based initiatives, e.g. Tree Strategies; landmark trees, with Countrycare involvement and support. IT systems now embedded in procedures</p>	<p>Not resourced to be pro-active in relation to implementation of landscape schemes/ tree protection plans No dedicated administrative support. Not resourced to take on all enforcement cases without impact on other areas of work Out of date and limited tree strategy for the district, not fully taking account of Planning issues. Highway constraints have resulted in limited involvement in Town centre Enhancement schemes.</p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Development of new District Tree Strategy could integrate planning priorities for T &amp; L into the wider strategic framework. Discharges of conditions applications allow impact on greater number of sites. Continuing program of Community Tree Strategies could extend effectiveness of work of the team, and public involvement. Involvement in Safer Cleaner Greener initiatives could link team to wider agenda. Further development of 50 Favourite Trees database can support tree protection. Further development of ICT capabilities Develop involvement in Town Centre strategies by developing approaches that address concerns of Highways.</p>	<p>Inability to recruit new staff to react to increases in workloads. Not fully resourced to react adequately to new demands such as new discharge of conditions applications. Not fully resourced for workload of major applications, arising from the government's growth agenda. Changes to Permitted Development rights increasing threats to trees Hot and dry summer, leading to increased compensation claims for TPO tree decisions.</p>

**CONSERVATION.**

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<p>Staff resource providing quality service to Development Control and general public                      Ability to respond to existing and future National Policy and Guidance                      Availability of County support</p>	<p>Lack of staff resources, 1 member of staff                      No long term arrangement for staff coverage for absences from the office including annual leave and sickness                      Reliance on County support                      Lack of extensive Urban Design expertise</p>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<p>Develop in house skills around Historic building advice                      Continuing Professional Development                      Develop Urban Design expertise including up to date information on GIS layers and on website</p>	<p>Reduced resources to achieve targets, including delivery of up to date Character Appraisal and Management Plans and updating Conservation Area leaflets and website                      Growth of discharge of condition applications                      Increase in applications workload                      Conservation is unrecognized as a key issue and statutory duty with Members                      Increase in number of pre-application discussions</p>

**COUNTRYCARE**

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<p>Strong team skills                      Strong team identity and positive approach                      Positive relationships with partners in the conservation sector                      Strong volunteer base and one of EFDC's key Services for community involvement in community projects                      Strong commitment to environmental education and awareness raising                      Provide EFDC with in-house Ecological support service</p>	<p>No dedicated administrative support                      Town Mead satellite office means that team do not work in close proximity with other Planning staff                      Town Mead satellite office often means delays in addressing problems with IT, printers etc.</p>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<p>Extend the volunteer base and community projects                      Extend Service delivery to more schools                      Extend Service delivery presently within District beyond EFDC area                      Recharge Service/Officer time for Countrycare projects internally                      To run Countrycare as a traded service externally</p>	<p>Inability to recruit appropriate staff to react to increases in workloads                      Reduced funding opportunities due to recession                      Current site at Town Mead may not be Health &amp; Safety compliant.</p>

## 5.5 ON THE HORIZON 2012 - 2013.

### (a) Action Plan 2012 - 13 (Forward Look)

A combined Forward Look Action plan is contained in Appendix Ten (B). This sets out the actions to be carried out in this service area to meet the Key Objectives set out in Section 5.3 of this Business Plan for Forward Planning, Trees and Landscape, Conservation and Countrycare.

### (b) Challenges and Issues arising from 2011/12, Likely to be faced In 2012/13

## FORWARD PLANNING

### (i) Local Plan:

- Deadline for completion is the end of August 2013. The timetable is tight and advice from the Planning Advisory Service has been that the Council ensures that all stages of the process are managed carefully and not by-passed in an effort to speed up the process since this could affect the soundness of the final document.
- Should be prepared taking into account the Key Objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy published by the Local Strategic Partnership;
- Corporate recognition of, contribution to, and support for, the establishment of the Evidence Base, building a political consensus and delivery of the final document.
- Multi layered partnership working with other public sector organisations is required in the preparation and adoption. The new duty to co-operate under the Localism Act needs to be duly considered.
- The East of England Plan will be formally revoked probably in April 2012 under the provisions of the Decentralisation and Localism Act;
- The Localism Act also introduces a series of new concepts including Neighbourhood planning etc, which will have a capacity impact on the FP team.
- Local Plan budget – given the number of changes that have occurred since the budget was allocated (eg all the work on the Gypsy and Traveller DPD, the introduction of the NPPF, and additional items of work), it will be important to continue to monitor and review the budget, and the timescale;
- There continues to be heavy reliance on consultants to prepare much of the Evidence Base (see Appendix 15); and
- Public engagement – a Communications Strategy was agreed by the LDF Cabinet Committee and can be reviewed throughout the preparation of the Local Plan. Given the number of national planning changes this will be reviewed. There are concerns that the Issues and Options consultation for the Gypsy and Traveller DPD has had long-term negative consequences for the Council's relationship with the local community. To date the first stage Local Plan consultation (visioning exercise) has been successful, with valuable lessons learned. There are ongoing discussions regarding the next stage consultations in terms of their set up and content.

### (ii) Carbon Emissions and Carbon Strategy

- This is a Corporate objective so it requires input from, and implementation by, all Directorates and getting this input can be a challenge.
- The Carbon Emissions and Carbon Strategy replaces discontinued National Indicators which dealt with this issue (NI 185 and NI 194).
- The Government requires an annual report on emissions to be published on LA websites.

### (iii) Fuel Poverty

- Limited officer resource and budget – the one National Indicator previously applied has been discontinued (NI 187).
- Work in this area now being delivered in conjunction with the Housing Directorate's 5 yearly House Condition Survey. Vulnerable households targeted through this survey and targets for both social and private housing energy efficiency are included in the Council's Carbon Emissions and Carbon Strategy.

- (iv) **Sustainable economic development and tourism**
- Limited officer resource and budgets. This has partly been dealt with by the LSP having some input into the work items. The return of the Economic Development officer, albeit on a part-time basis, will also allow items to progress further.
  - Delivering a coherent, action and delivery orientated Economic Development and Tourism strategy.
  - Ongoing questions remain around the effective operation of the new SELEP structure, especially given its size and diverse geographic demands and priorities.
  - Ongoing challenge in ensuring that the local area captures optimum benefit from the London 2012 Games and most significantly the legacy operation of the Lee Valley White Water Centre.
  - General lack of external funding available for local authorities/private sector partnerships to deliver/sustain projects and activities
  - Establishing effective, joint, working across West Essex. Partnering to deliver cost effective services and support to business and local economies and promoting sustainable economic development. Establishing a West Essex Economic Development Officer Group and jointly feeding in bottom up to West Essex Alliance, West Essex Partnership (WEP), and the Integrated County Strategy.
- (v) **Engagement with Local Enterprise Partnerships**
- The South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) includes East Sussex, Essex, Kent, Medway, Southend and Thurrock – there is real concern that the needs of the M11 corridor, including this Council, will be lost or overshadowed by other major issues – eg Thames Gateway, a new Thames crossing, the Haven Gateway, coastal towns etc;
  - Need to continue to engage with North London Strategic Alliance and Hertfordshire LEP, latter because of links with Harlow's potential growth;
  - Monitor progress and status of Essex Integrated County Strategy and its input to the LEP
- (vi) **Town Centres**
- The Town Centre Officer contract ended in 11/12 as did the funding for this post. The Council is currently reviewing how it supports its town centre; this is ongoing but not without its intricacies;
  - General lack of external funding available for local authorities/private sector partnerships to deliver/sustain projects and activities;
  - Work required to improve or gain the right representation on some Town Centre Partnerships
  - Implementation of briefs for Debden Broadway and St John's Road, Epping could be affected by current economic climate, and limitations of influence on the private sector. St John's Road will proceed through broader stakeholder and public consultation phases and formal Council approval procedures.

## **TREES AND LANDSCAPE**

- (i) Work will continue on the development of a Green Infrastructure Plan, identifying and recognizing the special place of landscape in the identity of the district. Developing strong and strategically sound green infrastructure policy within the council plan is a major challenge.



- (ii) The team has within 2010/2011 absorbed extra responsibility for the registration of TPO/TPX applications, while having lost the previous fixed term administrative support shared with the Conservation Officer. The relatively high number of TPO's made in 2010/11 and 2011/12 continues to add to the number of applications received/dealt with annually. Deciding TPO applications as if they were planning applications and the fact that high priority continues to be given to inspecting all application sites and negotiating agreed outcomes wherever possible continues to offer a high quality of service. However the ability to continue this is under increasing threat. The lack of dedicated administrative support already severely limits the team's ability to monitor implementation of development schemes, to deal with TPO applications thoroughly and in good time, and also to be pro-active, for example by completing further Community Tree Strategies.
- (iii) The Community Tree Strategy for Loughton was completed in draft by end 2011, but publication awaits agreement to the text by concerned parties; it is hoped that this can take place before the end of March 2012. Following this it is intended to investigate means to continue the program.
- (iv) There is also an acknowledged need for an up to date and integrated tree strategy for the district. It is now intended that this will be developed corporately ancillary to the proposed Green Infrastructure Plan

## **CONSERVATION**

### **Character Appraisals and Management Plans.**

The most significant area that remains outstanding is the production of Character Appraisals and Management Plans. The work involved is detailed and resource heavy and competing statutory duties have meant they have not been finalized to date.

## **COUNTRYCARE**

- (i) The difficulty of securing external funding will impact on the Service. Many funding bodies have cut their budgets. The Service relies on securing external grants for "one off" projects to enhance sites e.g. tree-planting or major habitat enhancement. Working in partnership with parish, town councils and community groups, Countrycare may be able to access community-based grants.
- (ii) Countrycare is well placed to offer volunteering opportunities to people wanting to change careers or trying to get back into full time employment. It is also important that the volunteer base is constantly increasing as the need for succession is becoming apparent.
- (iii) It is an intention of the Assistant Director (Policy & Conservation) and the Countryside Manager to run Countrycare as a traded service. This will involve ongoing discussions with the Portfolio holder and eventual reporting to Planning Scrutiny and Cabinet.

## SECTION SIX: DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

### 6.1 KEY FUNCTIONS:

Regulate and manage development and use of land in the district  
 Consider planning applications against the development plan and any other material planning considerations.  
 Monitor development as it takes place.  
 Take enforcement action against breaches of development or uses.  
 Provide information and advice about development control system and proposals.  
 Defend appeals against planning decisions made by the Council.

### 6.2 STAFFING SUMMARY

- (a) There are 17 permanent posts within Development Control (see Staffing Matrix Appendix 4) – 10 application case officers, two of which are effectively team leaders of a North and South Area teams and 5 enforcement officers with 1 Planner overseeing that service plus one dedicated enforcement support officer – all under the leadership of the Assistant Director (Development). This is supported by the Planning Support team under the Planning Business Manager who are located in the working area of the professional officers.
- (b) In addition, a budget for consultant staff permits additional staff resources to cover occasional specialized appeal work.
- (c) The section has generally been fully staffed, however, one planning officer post has been temporarily vacant since October 2011 due to current recruitment restrictions.

### 6.3 KEY OBJECTIVES

#### Priority Service Objectives

This area of the Planning Directorate has identified the following priority service objectives for the 2012/13.

Objective	Council plan or other ref	Background
<b>Maintain and improve customer centered performance through the use of up-to-date technology and best practice.</b>	<b>KCO 2 Med Term Aims 4</b>	To increase accessibility and information for the general public and other users to planning applications, appeals and general development control held information/guidance. Promote improvements in the use of i-Plan by working with Parish Councils and ICT Directorate.
<b>Improve planning application turnaround times</b>	<b>KCO 2 Med Term Aims 3 KPI 51, 52 &amp; 53</b>	Meet and exceed all relevant planning performance indicators. Promote Benchmarking with Planning Advisory Services and CIPFA to manage and reduce planning application business processes.
<b>Improve appeal success rate.</b>	<b>KCO 2 Med Term Aims 4 &amp; 5 KPI 54 &amp; 55</b>	Meet and exceed all relevant planning performance indicators. Promote good decision-making and at the same time strongly support the special character of the district.

Objective	Council plan or other ref	Background
<b>Operate an effective and efficient enforcement service</b>	<b>Med Term Aims 5</b>	To maintain and enhance the quality of the environment. If the council fails to take appropriate and timely enforcement action where it is expedient to do so, it could be found guilty of maladministration by the local government ombudsman and required to compensate members of the public.
<b>To secure appropriate levels of community benefit, particularly affordable housing by the use of Section 106 agreements and other means.</b>	<b>KCO 2 &amp; 5 Med Term Aims 4</b>	Promote community benefits by liaising with internal and external groups in the early stages of the planning process to maximise S106 benefits and compliant applications for affordable housing in accordance with adopted policies of the local plan.
<b>Maintain staff development to ensure the most proficient provision of the service to its customers</b>	<b>KCO 2 Med Term Aims 4</b>	Training and development of staff to ensure IIP accreditation and improved staff experience and knowledge.
<b>To provide improved communication with the public</b>	<b>Med Term Aims 1 Corp Plan 26</b>	Collection of Development control feedback will allow us to target how to use our limited resources effectively and deliver a more customer focused service.
<b>To explore ways of generating increased income</b>	<b>KCO 2 Med Term Aims 2 &amp; 4</b>	Planning application fee income is affected by submission of major type developments in particular, which is lower at present due to the economic climate, and we are likely to find other income streams to offset future potential spending cuts. Promote implementation in partnership with PAS and CIPFA of locally set Planning fees.

The actions (and relevant targets) for achieving these objectives are detailed in section 9 (b) of this part of the business plan.

## 6.4 REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2011- 2012

### (a) Action Plan 2011/12 - Review

An Action Plan showing the review of the previous year 2011/12 is shown more fully in Appendix 11 (A).

### (b) Strengths and Weaknesses - Development Control SWOT Analysis

In the formulation of this business plan, a SWOT analysis was carried out among the Development Control staff in January 2012 and the results of which are shown below

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>Availability of planning information on website. Information@Work – electronic document storage &amp; management for ease and speed of finding information. Stable staff resource, providing quality response and decisions Low sickness absence. Availability of professional staff to respond to public/agents etc (Support staff, pre-application meetings and Duty Planner). Own reception and permanent receptionist Good level of delegation resulting in high turnaround of planning applications in time, given level of professional staff and support. Admin. Support led by a Business Manager. Effective strong enforcement team. Joined up working between Development Control and Building Control. Good balance in validation process of Planning applications. Highway Officer hot-desking weekly. Extensive procedure notes</p>	<p>Basis and evidence for s.106 contributions. Not achieving all KPI upper-quartile performance targets. Some professional staff not prioritising answering or returning customer messages Delay in Local Plan Core Strategy 4-week committee cycle delay on decisions affecting performance targets No specific urban design expertise in Directorate. Resourcing of staff training ICT support – examples of non-customer friendly service and slow response, Inadequate administration cover during absences. Continuing incompatibility of <a href="#">Information@Work</a> and MVM3-Northgate. Statutory requirement to advertise certain applications results in high cost to service Lack of procedure notes for appeals.</p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>Increase Electronic consultation. Scan all planning property files and applications. ICT and Website User Groups to improve service delivery. Improve turn-around KPI performance on planning applications - More frequent District-wide committees. Benchmarking and increase charging of planning fees. Officer reports and third party representations be made available on the Website. Improve accuracy of press reporting. Remote working. Have CIL in place to achieve community benefits. Electronic access and link between M3 and Information@work.</p>	<p>Loss of consultants budget for appeals. Service threat because of potential council budget cutbacks and Ernst and Young Report (when known). Large cost awards against Council in appeal cases. Planning image harmed through bad press leading to criticism. ICT and website failure Uncertainty of national planning guidance and strategic advice Cross-authorities service sharing Delivery of planning more locally without professional experts or strategic guidance Government change to planning system resulting in need for re-training.</p>

## 6.5 ON THE HORIZON - 2012/13.

### (a) Action Plan 2012/13 – Forward Look

An Action Plan showing of the Forward Look for the year 2012/13 is shown more fully in Appendix 11 (B).

This action plan will be reviewed and updated at regular intervals during the course of the year 2012/13.

**(b) Challenges, Targets and Issues Likely To Be Faced in 2012/13**

- i. Performance targets continue to be the main focus of the Development Control Section. Major and Minor Planning Applications targets were achieved in 2010/11. In the case of 'Minors' this unlikely to be fully achieved by Quarter Four in 2011/12 due to committee cycles changing from three to four weeks and one full time planning officer vacancy from October 2011 which will continue into 2012/13.
- ii. Section 106 planning obligations are an important element of planning implementation which requires evidence based decisions to be integrated within current applications particularly in the case of major developments. The challenge ahead is to make measurable gains in section 106 benefits which comply with the Community Infrastructure Levy regulations 2010.
- iii. In respect of Planning Appeals, 2011/12 introduced two Appeal Performance Indicator of Planning Appeals allowed for Officers and Appeals dismissed for Members. Current Appeal Performance indicators show that we are averaging 18% success as compared with the indicator required of 20% for Officers. In respect of the Members Performance indicator the average is 46% as compared to the target of 50%. As these are two new Performance Indicators the focus will be on exceeding the targets for 2012/13.
- iv. The Directorate is currently undertaking a Benchmarking costing process of staff time and duties in conjunction with CIPFA, comparing costs and performance with other similar local planning authorities. We have completed two benchmarking exercises in 2011 and have agreed a formula with CIPFA for the setting of locally agreed planning fees. We are now awaiting government approval and legislation for us to proceed further. Currently our planning fee structure enables us to recover only 50% of planning fee costs with full fee recovery built in to our proposed locally set planning fees.
- v. The back scanning exercise carried out in 2010/11 has resulted in considerable improvements on the amount of planning information now available online. It is important that these gains are consolidated and enhanced with Planning Information for large commercial sites and historical microfilmed planning information still to be placed online. Whilst limited progress was made in 2011/12 due to resource limitations it is hoped that progress will be made to include both historical commercial sites and microfilmed records alongside improvements to the quality of i-Plan to make available online a better quality planning service.

## SECTION SEVEN: BUILDING CONTROL AND PLANNING SUPPORT TEAM

### 7.1 KEY FUNCTIONS

#### (a) Building Control

The checking of applications and work on site in relation to the Building Regulations and the associated legislation  
Enforcement action against illegal or non-compliant work  
Dangerous structures  
Demolitions  
Provision of advice and support on disabled issues  
The processing of initial notices from approved inspectors  
Providing pre-application and general advice  
Dealing with complaints  
General Building Surveying work

#### (b) Planning Support

Provision of administrative and business support for Development Control and Building Control.  
Coordination of ERDMS (Electronic Records Document Management System) and Directorate ICT systems.  
Processing of directorate accounts/invoices, reconciliation of income and coordination of procurement contracts.  
Customer focus including Freedom of Information requests for Directorate.  
Maintenance of the Corporate LLPG (Land and Property Gazetteer) standards to National LLPG standards.

### 7.2 STAFFING SUMMARY

#### (a) Building Control

The Building Control Team has establishment strength of 9.59 FTE with 9 staff in post; however of these 9 staff, two are consultants, Paul Cattell and John Vanderloo who both work 2 days per week. Due to this the team functions with the equivalent of 7.4 full time posts.

#### (b) Planning Support

Planning Support has a total of 10.47 posts (excluding the Business Manager) distributed as follows;

Development Control	55.4%
Building Control	23.9%
Records and Scanning	9.6%
Accounts, Invoices and Procurement	6.4%
Land and Property Gazetteer	4.8%

The distribution as shown above shows we have no permanent internal ICT and/or GIS Mapping Support and that our resources for Financial Control (Accounts, Invoices and Procurement) is also very limited.

### 7.3 KEY OBJECTIVES

#### Priority Service Objectives

This area of the Planning Directorate has identified the following priority service objectives for this business plan:

OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL PLAN OR OTHER REF	BACKGROUND
<b>BUILDING CONTROL</b>		
To at least match income with expenditure for the charge earning account.	KCO 4 & 5	Central government requires the income from building regulation charges to at least meet the cost of that part of the service while not making a significant surplus
To improve on Performance targets in general	Medium Term Aims 4 KCO 4	Staff training and constant evaluation of the service should improve performance.
To train and develop staff to ensure the most proficient provision of the service to its customers	KCO 4 Medium Term Aims 3 & 4	The identification of training needs is a key element of the Performance Development Review process. These are met through the Corporate Training and external courses to address changes in legislation, national initiatives and Continuing Professional Development, which is a requirement for RICS and Building Engineer members.
Improve Customer Care	KCO 4 Medium Term Aims 4	Scope exists for further development.
Raise Building Control's profile	Medium Term Aims 4 & 5	Scope exists for further development.
<b>PLANNING SUPPORT</b>		
Safeguarding frontline services and keep Council Tax the lowest in Essex;	KCO 4 & 5	Promote effective and efficient frontline services and participate in reducing planning support costs. Encourage the robust use of Market Place procurement processes to ensure efficiency savings. Take active steps to reduce the use of paper within the directorate. Maximise income.
Promote long term reductions in funding from the Continuing Service Budget;	Medium Term Aims 2 & 4 KCO 4	Continually review and improve business processes within planning support services to provide better and more easily access to planning records. Ensure structure of the Planning Support Team promotes VFM (Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy). Maximise income by ensuring timely reconciliation and charging processes.
To promote the use of Information Technology to improve administrative processes.	Medium Term Aims 2 & 4 KCO 4 & 5	To play a role in promoting the lowest council tax in Essex and also safeguard frontline services by: Utilising Information Technology improve administrative processes. Provide carbon friendly, accessible planning records on the Corporate Website.

## 7.4 REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2011-2012

### (a) The challenges facing the Building Control in 2011/12 have been;

An Action Plan showing the review of the previous year 2011/12 is shown more fully in Appendix 12 (A).

**(b) Strengths and Weaknesses SWOT Analysis**

In the formulation of this business plan a SWOT analysis was carried out, the results of which are shown below;

**BUILDING CONTROL**

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
Local knowledge Professionally qualified, experienced and dedicated team Ability to offer a one-stop shop Familiarity with Council aims and objectives Excellent networking at County, regional and National levels Investors in People Strong customer loyalty Same day site inspections Timed site visits In-house contaminated land advice Partnership Scheme	Loss of some market share Limited online payments High cost of housing Number of different surveyors that visit the same site due to staffing levels Lack of capacity to follow up projects e.g. 3 monthly reporting and site visits. Lack of capacity to monitor district for illegal works Difference in approach from council to council in interpretation of the regulations No on-line submissions ICT system not fully utilised Weak National House Warrantee scheme
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
Potential market share increase Partnership Scheme Corporate development Programme Changes in legislation Remote on-line working Provision of additional services New fee regulations give the ability to be more competitive	Insufficient time for staff to keep knowledge current Increased competition for work Changes in legislation A test of customer loyalty Changes in local and global economy i.e. recession Government directives/cuts Progressive and aggressive marketing by AI's Increasing number of AI's

**PLANNING SUPPORT TEAM**

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
Committed Public Facing Team. Staff knowledge and expertise in terms of Development and Building Control Systems. Resilient Web based Planning records – iPlan. Improving financial procurement and commitment processes	Gaps in Staffing Structure due to partial adoption of the Electronic Records Document Management System. Lack of formalised internal ICT Support within Team Inability to place all Planning Records on the Web resulting in increased Freedom of Information and document requests for planning information. Limited resources to manage financial element of Directorate (Income and Procurement)
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
Progress electronic records further for all areas of Planning records Improve Gazetteer/NLPG and GIS standards for addresses/mapping. Improve Business Processes in line with e-consultation and movement towards a paperless office.	Inability to flexibly restructure team to meet changing requirements of ERDMS (Electronic Records Document Management Systems) Inability to meet NLPG standards for Land and Property Gazetteer mapping to current GIS standards. Failure of Web based Planning records – iPlan. Delays in implementing electronic measures to work faster and reduce the use of paper. May not be fully audit compliant in reconciliation of income and management of procurement.

**7.5 ON THE HORIZON AN ACTION PLAN FOR 2012/13**

**(a) Action Plan 2012/13 (Forward Look)**



A combined action plan for 2012/13 is set out in Appendix 12 (B) and sets out the actions to be carried out.

This action plan will be reviewed and updated at regular intervals during the course of the year 2012/13.

**(c) Challenges, Targets and Issues Likely To Be Faced In 2012/13**

**Building Control**

- (i) Maintaining service standards
- (ii) Maintaining Income
- (iii) Increases in expenditure
- (iv) Increased competition for work
- (v) Changes in legislation
- (vi) Sufficient time for staff to keep knowledge current
- (vii) Changes in local and global economy i.e. recession

**Planning Support Team**

- (i) Maintain and improve Planning Support standards due to limitations in resources.
- (ii) Meet the challenges of providing full disclosure of Planning Records information available on the Council Website via i-Plan. If implemented this would directly reduce Freedom of Information Requests which are increasing in both volume (amount of requests) and complexity (requests for large and detailed amounts of information)
- (iii) The need to plan and implement further developments regarding the “back scanning” of Building Control Applications and historical microfilmed planning information.
- (iv) Maintaining measurable improvements in E-consultation implementation and streamlining the Appeals system into a faster electronic process.
- (v) There is an ongoing requirement to maintain and continually improve National Land and Property Gazetteer addresses and GIS mapping standards.

## APPENDICES

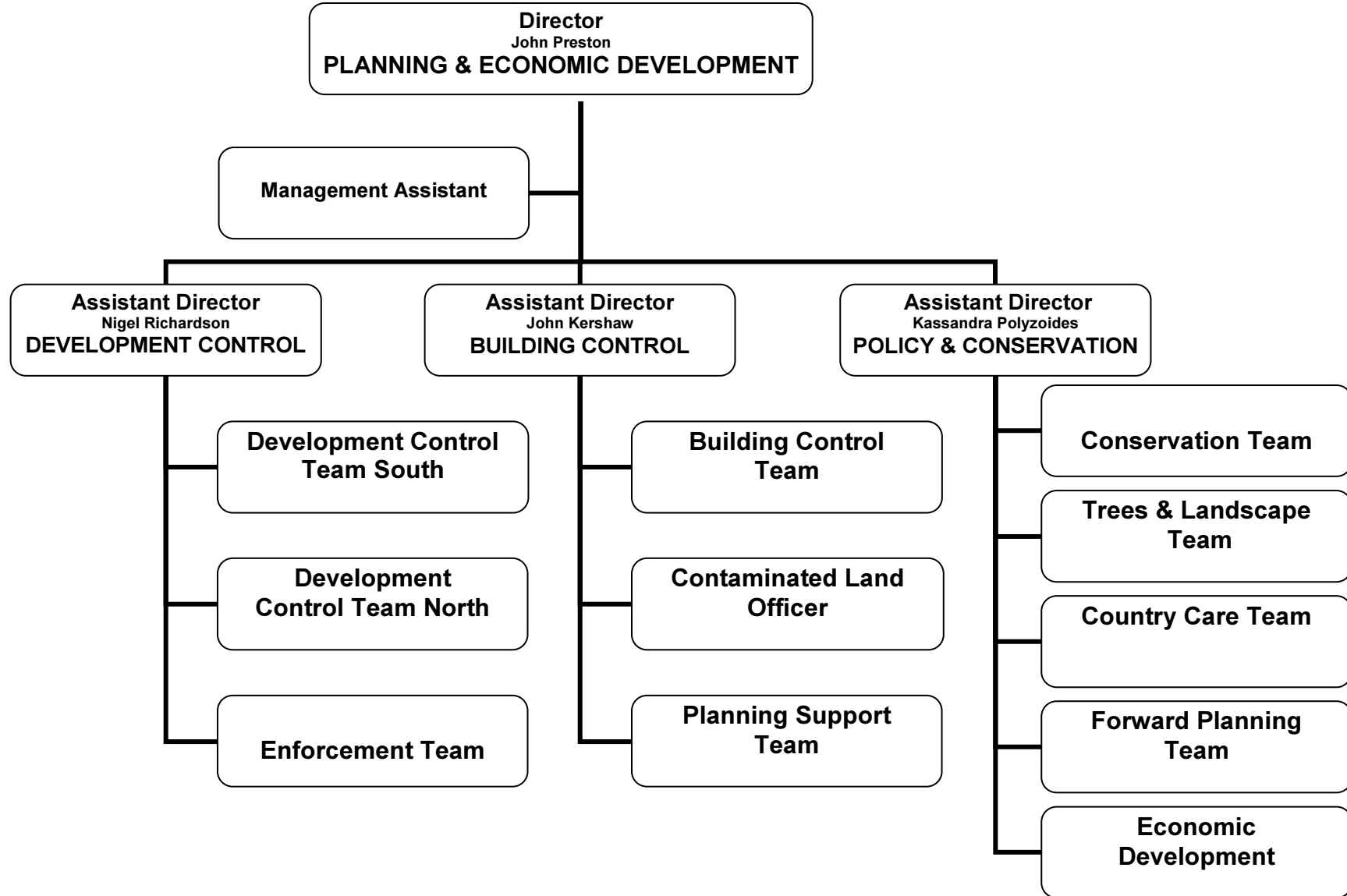
### APPENDIX ONE - BUSINESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

		SAFEGUARD FRONTLINE SERVICES	HAVE THE LOWEST DISTRICT COUNCIL TAX IN ESSEX	BE RECOGNISED AS AN INNOVATIVE AND TOP PERFORMING COUNCIL IN ESSEX;	CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE EFFICIENCY ADOPT NEW WAYS OF WORKING TO MAXIMISE REVENUE.	PROVIDE STRONG LOCAL COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP TO PROMOTE THE SPECIAL CHARACTER & PEOPLE OF THE DISTRICT
<b>STRENGTHS &amp; OPPORTUNITIES</b>		Promoting full cost recovery of services for Building Control and Development Control to safeguard frontline services and reduce the burden on council tax.	Well placed to provide effective, user friendly and high performing planning and building control services Significant progress made in i-Plan that is User and Carbon friendly. Recognition of the benefits of cost recovery in charging for BC and DC		Good record in terms of promoting green and sustainable policies in Conservation, Trees, Countrycare and protecting the environment.	
<b>WEAKNESSES &amp; THREATS</b>		Some Frontline Services may be reorganised as a result of reductions in Public Spending. This may lead to perceptions that we are providing less than efficient planning and customer services. Delays in locally setting Planning Application fees may adversely effect income leading to shortfalls being met from Council Tax	Spending reductions may inhibit the ability of the Directorate to contribute towards innovative ways to improve service delivery. Short term savings may lead to a decline in the quantity and quality of electronic planning records held on i-Plan. Short term cost reductions may result in a negative “domino” effect leading to increased paper usage and “invisible” staffing requirements.		Reductions in staffing may have an adverse effect in formulating effective strategies to protect the special character of the district. Reductions in sustainability and economic initiatives’ could well be the subject of future savings with a detrimental “knock on” effect on the special character and economic development of the district.	
<b>STRATEGIC CHOICES</b>	A	Substantially reduce frontline services to minimise impact on council tax (ie implement major savings)	Maximise savings by making large cuts in spending to achieve significant savings but reducing service efficiency and effectiveness.		Make major cuts in the provision of green sustainability which may adversely affect the unique character and services for the District	
	B	Promote increased charges to meet full cost recovery. This may be subject to market resistance due to perceptions that the increases are combined with the provision of less than efficient service delivery.	Limit spending to achieve greater savings and actively manage the reduction in service effectiveness and decline in service improvement.		Limit cuts in spending to protect the interests of the people and District but recognise that some services may decline or be given less priority.	
	C	Promote full cost recovery methods for DC and BC. Actively promote improved services. Continuously implement efficiency savings.	Implement some unpopular savings based on business principles. Manage/limit the decline in customer efficiency by innovatively improving services to compensate for this (for example reducing paper based planning and implement better quality electronic services via iPlan)		Introduce limited savings in conjunction with the active implementation of the Local Plan and other business measures to safeguard the unique character of the District. At the same time implement measures to deliver improved and more efficient ways of working to deliver high quality, accessible planning services throughout the district.	

## APPENDIX TWO - ELECTRONIC RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRESS PLAN

	ACTION FOR IMPROVEMENT	SERVICE AREA	BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS	STATUS	SECTION
1	Investigate ways to improve the speed of all Planning procedures including Business Process improvements for electronic record keeping	SCANNING AND RECORDS PST/ALL	This is an essential element of ERDMS that needs to take place to achieve significant staff/resource savings.	Resource/Budget limitations Improvements in Technology	Generally postponed due to lack of resources & technology developments	Directorate Policy
2	Support measures that improve Corporate Website design and access	WEB DEVELOPMENT BOARD	Improved access by members of the public to all aspects of Planning and Building Control Information/Records	Wider Council resource limitations & priorities	ICT/Web Development Board implementing improvements	Council Policy
3	Support measures to develop accessible performance/data reporting of electronic information Crystal Reports and Information@work	ALL PLANNING TEAMS	Enable officers to benefit directly from ERDMS, saving time, resources to provide efficient, effective and economical services	Northgate & ICT Development resource availability	Ongoing external training in Crystal Reports being carried out.	Planning Support Team
4	Improvements in the Gazetteer & LLPG addressing capability	ALL COUNCIL TEAMS	Improved accurate address capability creates a positive effect on all council and public services within the district	Partnerships - other local authorities & Development of GIS mapping	1 x 18 hour p/w Gazetteer Officer	Council Policy
5	Implement facility to accept payments online by card for both DC and BC. Enable the receipt/acceptance of one line building control applications including the development of an online fees calculator for both BC and DC (PHASE 2)	BC & DC	BC and DC require this to take place as early as possible (April 2012) as part of its modernisation programme.	Subject to co-ordination by ICT.	Ongoing 2012/13	Directorate Policy
6	Back scan Large Site Files, the balance of Decision Registers, Conservation Files, Contaminated Land and remaining Policy & Cons Files (PHASE 3)	DC ENFORCEMENT POLICY AND CONS.	Other Planning Records of considerable interest to members of the public, professionals and businesses within the District. Assists in reduction of Freedom of Information requests	Resource Budget limitations	Generally postponed subject to resources allocation	
7	Carry out a comprehensive audit of all Microfiche Records to ensure an accurate pre project listing is made including numbers and date originally microfilmed. (PHASE 4)	DC & BUILDING CONTROL	Important historical data that needs to be accurately catalogued prior to project implementation to convert to electronic format. Current estimates of all microfiche records is approximately 5-6 million images.	One additional staff member required could be work experience candidate	Ongoing 2012/13	Directorate Policy
8	Enable scanning of Microfiche records over two-three years due to high costs involved. These records are rapidly deteriorating due to age, frequent handling and exposure to light Previously considered not cost effective due to high costs. Recent technology developments have now made this possible at a lower unit cost. (PHASE 5)	DEVELOPMENT CONTROL BUILDING CONTROL	This is important historical Planning and Building Control data which is deteriorating that may be lost unless corrective action is taken to convert to electronic format.	Large amount of files and/or microfilmed information needs to be scanned.	Is able to be carried out over a three to four year period as part of PED CSB Scanning budget	
9	Set up Project to scan all Building Control Records. (PHASE 6)	BUILDING CONTROL	Interest in BC Records to members of the public, professionals & businesses.	Significant Resource required	Gen.postponed subject to resources allocation	

**APPENDIX THREE - ORGANISATION CHART OVERVIEW**



**APPENDIX FOUR - STAFF ESTABLISHMENT MATRIX (62 POSTS)**

POST TITLE	POSTS	POST TITLE	POSTS
DIRECTOR	1	MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT	1
<b><u>POLICY AND CONSERVATION (21)</u></b>		<b><u>DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (17)</u></b>	
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	1	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	1
FORWARD PLANNING MANAGER	1	PRINCIPAL PLANNING OFFICER DEVELOPMENT CONTROL	3
PRINCIPAL PLANNING OFFICER FORWARD PLANNING	1	SENIOR PLANNING OFFICER DEVELOPMENT CONTROL	4
SENIOR PLANNING OFFICER FORWARD PLANNING	2	PLANNING OFFICER DEVELOPMENT CONTROL	4
PLANNING OFFICER FORWARD PLANNING	1	SENIOR ENFORCEMENT OFFICER	1
INFORMATION AND TECHNICAL OFFICER FORWARD PLANNING	1	ENFORCEMENT OFFICER	3
TECHNICAL OFFICER FORWARD PLANNING	1	ADMINISTRATION OFFICER ENFORCEMENT	1
FORWARD PLANNING ASSISTANT	2	<b><u>BUILDING CONTROL &amp; SUPPORT TEAM (22)</u></b>	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OFFICER	0.6	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	1
ENVIRONMENTAL CO-ORDINATOR	0.6	PRINCIPAL BUILDING CONTROL SURVEYOR	2
CONSERVATION OFFICER	1	SENIOR BUILDING CONTROL SURVEYOR	4.59
TECHNICAL OFFICER CONSERVATION	1	TECHNICAL CO-ORDINATOR-CONTAMINATED LAND	1
PRINCIPAL LANDSCAPE OFFICER	1	TRAINEE SENIOR BUILDING CONTROL SURVEYOR	1
TREES & LANDSCAPE OFFICER (65 hrs)	1.8	BUSINESS MANAGER	1
TECHNICAL OFFICER TREES & LANDSCAPE	1	SENIOR TECHNICAL OFFICER DC	1
COUNTRYSIDE MANAGER	1	TECHNICAL OFFICER DC/BC	2.80
ASSISTANT COUNTRYSIDE MANAGER	1	ACCOUNTS, INVOICE & PROCUREMENT OFFICER	0.67
COUNTRYSIDE ASSISTANT	2	ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS BC/DC	2.5
		GAZETTEER OFFICER (LLPG CUSTODIAN)	0.5
		RECORDS & SCANNING OFFICER	1
		TRAINEE TECHNICAL OFFICER	1
		ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT	2

**APPENDIX FIVE - SICKNESS ABSENCE SUMMARY JAN 2010 – DEC 2010**

2011	TOTAL STAFF WORKING DAYS	<u>SHORT TERM SICKNESS</u>			<u>LONG TERM SICKNESS</u>			<u>ALL SICKNESS ABSENCE</u>		
		DAYS LOST	% OF TOTAL WORK DAYS	DAYS PER EMPLOYEE	DAYS LOST	% OF TOTAL WORK DAYS	DAYS PER EMPLOYEE	DAYS LOST	% OF TOTAL WORK DAYS	DAYS PER EMPLOYEE
JANUARY	1,240.00	20.50	1.65%	0.33	16.03	1.29%	0.26	36.53	2.95%	0.59
FEBRUARY	1,240.00	5.64	0.45%	0.09	16.01	1.29%	0.26	21.65	1.75%	0.35
MARCH	1,426.00	8.00	0.56%	0.13	11.50	0.81%	0.19	19.50	1.37%	0.31
APRIL	1,054.00	3.00	0.28%	0.05	25.40	2.41%	0.41	28.40	2.69%	0.46
MAY	1,240.00	8.00	0.65%	0.13	35.00	2.82%	0.56	40.00	3.23%	0.65
JUNE	1,364.00	27.51	2.02%	0.44	33.88	2.48%	0.55	64.40	4.72%	1.04
JULY	1,302.00	15.01	1.15%	0.24	34.03	2.61%	0.55	48.03	3.69%	0.77
AUGUST	1,364.00	5.00	0.37%	0.08	18.47	1.35%	0.30	23.47	1.72%	0.38
SEPTEMBER	1,364.00	13.00	0.95%	0.21	12.74	0.93%	0.21	25.74	1.89%	0.42
OCTOBER	1,302.00	9.38	0.72%	0.15	3.56	0.27%	0.06	12.93	0.99%	0.21
NOVEMBER	1,364.00	27.50	2.02%	0.44	9.06	0.66%	0.15	36.57	2.68%	0.59
DECEMBER	1,116.00	12.02	1.08%	0.19	12.09	1.08%	0.20	25.11	2.25%	0.40
	<b>15,376.00</b>	<b>154.55</b>	<b>1.01%</b>	<b>2.49</b>	<b>227.78</b>	<b>1.48%</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>382.33</b>	<b>2.49%</b>	<b>6.17</b>

## APPENDIX SIX – WORKFORCE TEMPLATE

### (a) Directorate Workforce Profile

<b>FULL-TIME/ PART-TIME</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>TURNOVER</b>		<b>ETHNICITY (continued)</b>	
FT Male (%)	42	Dismissal (% of Turnover)	0.0	Black Caribbean (%)	0.0
FT Female (%)	44	Early Retirement (%)	0.0	Chinese (%)	0.0
PT Male (%)	2	End of Fixed-Term Contract (%)	70.4	Chinese Background (%)	0.0
PT Female (%)	12	Other Reason (%)	0.0	Mixed Background (%)	0.0
<b>MALE/FEMALE</b>		Retired (%)	7.4	Mixed White & Asian (%)	0.0
Male (%)	44	Voluntary Leavers (%)	22.2	Mixed White & Black African (%)	0.0
Female (%)	56	Projected Turnover (end of year %)	27	Mixed White & Black Caribbean (%)	0.0
Part-Time Male (%)	2	<b>DISABILITY</b>		Other Ethnic Group (%)	0.0
Part-Time Female (%)	12	Staff self-declared with disability (%)	9	Unspecified (%)	7.0
<b>AGE ANALYSIS</b>		<b>ETHNICITY</b>		Unspecified (%)	0.0
16 - 24 (%)	12	Asian Background (%)	0.0	White Background (%)	1.8
25 - 34 (%)	19	Asian Bangladeshi (%)	0.0	White English (%)	75.4
35 - 44 (%)	14	Asian Indian (%)	0.0	White Irish (%)	3.5
45 - 54 (%)	28	Asian Pakistani (%)	0.0	White Other (%)	7.0
55 - 64 (%)	25	Black African (%)	1.8	White Scottish (%)	1.8
65+ (%)	2	Black Background (%)	0.0	White Welsh (%)	1.8

## APPENDIX SEVEN - WORKFORCE TRAINING FRAMEWORK ACTION PLAN

FACTORS	RECRUITMENT & RETENTION	MANAGEMENT TRAINING	STAFF TRAINING	BUDGET IMPLICATIONS	RISKS	RESP. & TIMESCALE
<b>THE BENEFITS CREATED BY DIRECTORATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</b>	Retention of staff significantly improves quality of work/productivity of the workforce. For example the sending of three staff - Masters in Town Planning as well one to complete a degree in Building Surveying has aided both recruitment and retention.	Three senior managers have benefited from corporately sponsored CMS/DMS training undertaken several years ago.	Creates stability amongst staff within Directorate and helps to ensure staff are able to continuously develop.	Ensure the Budget is being better managed for short term strategic gains.	High Staff turnover and/or Potential loss of skilled and qualified staff.	
<b>THE CURRENT LIMITATIONS OF DIRECTORATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT</b>	Historically there have always been difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified Building Surveyors and Planning Officers.  Specifically identified areas where there are current staff shortages are within Building Control, Forward Planning and Conservation.  Inability to retain staff and recruitment difficulties creates negative domino effect on staff.	No specialist strategic management currently training available Limited short duration external training has taken place such as; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RPTI Getting to grips with Infrastructure Planning.</li> <li>• New Era for Planning and Localism.</li> <li>• LABC Management (Building Control)</li> </ul>	To replace a qualified person takes at least six months. Current recruitment freeze could result in a twelve months vacancy lapse.  In addition limitations in development of the Planning Support Team may result in additional pressure on qualified staff	Limitations in funding for existing training budget along with escalating training costs. The loss of additional PDG funding limits training options to offer specialist training.	Loss of staff knowledge specific to Epping District  Negative Succession Planning  Duplication of training needs. Lack of efficient identification & delivery of training needs via PDR's	DIRECTOR ALL ASSISTANT DIRECTORS BUSINESS MANAGER
<b>INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TRAINING &amp; DEVELOPMENT</b>	Due to the specialised nature of Planning there is limited relevant Internal Training available.  Future external training may well need to be targeted at relevant short courses on a value for money basis.	Managers require training in areas such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Management</li> <li>• Localism</li> <li>• Health and Safety Management</li> <li>• Impact Assessments</li> </ul>	Short duration external training carried out such as; History of Architecture, Flood Risk Management, Giving evidence at Inquiries, Heritage Assets & Place Making, Records Management and ISO 9001:2008 QA (Intro).	Increased training needs, means that savings need to be identified at zero cost in order to fund any increase in the Training Budget.	Lack of resilience created by the reduction in real terms of the training budget to meet the needs created by new working practices.	To be reviewed monthly via Training Commitment s register and reported to DMT quarterly
<b>NEW SKILLS REQUIRED TO DEAL WITH CHANGING WORK PRACTICES</b>	Due to statutory and other changes to that have far reaching implications for all elements of Planning and Building Control functions. There is a requirement to support staff during these periods of significant change; such as the Modernisation Agenda, Localism, Big Society, Community Infrastructure Levy, Electronic Document Management and Benchmarking Services to achieve full cost recovery. Managers/Staff require specialist technical training in areas such as; Strategic Management, Urban Design, Conservation, Architecture, Electronic Records and Freedom of Information (and other areas). There is a need for internal ICT training such as Crystal Reports and information@work.			Prioritise the training budget to meet essential training needs		



**APPENDIX EIGHT - RISK MATRIX**

<b>LIKELIHOOD</b>	VERY HIGH	A			1	
	HIGH	B		7, 8	2, 3, 4, 5, 6,	
	SIGNIFICANT	C		15, 16,	9, 10, 11, 12, 13,	
	LOW	D		17		
	VERY LOW	E				14
	ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE	F				
			<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
			NEGLIGIBLE	MARGINAL	CRITICAL	CATASTROPHIC
			<b>IMPACT</b>			

TOLERATED RISKS	UNTOLERATED RISKS
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## APPENDIX NINE - RISK ACTION PLAN

RISK NO.	RISK DETAILS	EXISTING CONTROLS TO ADDRESS RISK	EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTROLS	MANAGEMENT ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS	REVIEW FREQUENCY	KEY DATE
1	Planning Directorate not self-financing	Promote full cost recovery of DC and BC Fees	DC/P & C awaiting agreement/direction from Central Govt BC implemented LABC Fees Sept 2010	Benchmark and agree local fee setting for Planning Applications Maximise B C Fees Rationalise funding for P & C	Asst Directors & Business Manager	Full Cost Recovery and minimise CSB Budget	3 monthly	April 2012 to March 2013
2.	Inability to maintain service provision due to inadequate resources	Liaise with Portfolio Holder to inform of essential elements required to stabilise Planning Directorate	Set minimum targets for Performance and Customer Satisfaction.	Set up Action Plan to manage reduced resource provision for Planning Directorate	Asst Directors & Business Manager	Establish Business need to stabilise Planning Support Team	3 monthly	April 2012 to March 2013
3	Potential need to address Gypsy, Roma and Traveller incidents	Resource-expensive travellers incidents	Potential changes in Government Policy Awareness of G, R & T issues in Neighbouring LA's	Revised Procedures in line with emergency legislation/guidelines to be adopted Maintain/liaison Neighbouring LA's on possible G, R & T developments	Asst Director (Dev) and Enforcement Team leader	Successful management of incident	6 monthly	Ongoing
4	Inability or failure to provide current planning records on corporate website	Essential elements prioritised by Planning Support Team within existing resources	Limited assistance able to be provided by Planning Support Team with staff covering existing vacant post	Monitored by Business Manager and reported to PED DMT	Business Manager	Current Planning records placed on EFDC website within timescales	Monthly	Ongoing

RISK NO.	RISK DETAILS	EXISTING CONTROLS TO ADDRESS RISK	EFFECTIVENESS OF CONTROLS	MANAGEMENT ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS	REVIEW FREQUENCY	KEY DATE
5	Potential Difficulty in producing Local Plan to timetable	Provision of a case to manage this in terms of the Recruitment Freeze	Subject to Corporate Direction	Prioritisation of Resources. Prioritisation of Workloads	Asst Director (Policy & Conservation)	Easing of the Recruitment Restrictions	Monthly	Ongoing
6	Loss of budget and/or income DC, BC & P & C	Manage BC and DC income Identify good use of resources to Members	Necessary budgets maintained to date	Monitor at regular intervals income of BC & DC. P & C to explore Income Opportunities	Asst Directors and Business Manager	Identification of Efficiency Savings Govt notice on planning fee increase	Monthly	April 2012 to March 2013
7	Increasing work due to Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAA) and related work (linked to Risk 23)	Addition unplanned work to be prioritised by Forward Planning Manager	Volume of this work is partly dependent on external factors. Controls need to be reviewed as work progresses	Subject to Member & Corporate Direction	Asst Director (Policy & Conservation)	Easing of the Recruitment Restrictions	Monthly	April 2012 to March 2013
8	Inability to 'backscan' additional files including secure destruction.	Prioritise scanning Continue limited scanning activity within limited resources	Implement Quality Control Standards Investigate scanning to be carried out by other sections within EFDC	Manage Quality Control in terms of file retention. Investigation of other funding sources and implementation of this within the review of the Planning Support Team.	Business Manager	Integrate Quality Control as a key objective for the Planning Support Team.	3 monthly	April 2012 to March 2013

**APPENDIX TEN (A) POLICY & CONSERVATION ACTION PLANS**  
**Action Plan 2011-12 Review**

ACTION	SOURCE	RESP. OFFICER	TARGET	PROGRESS/ PERFORMANCE
<b>FORWARD PLANNING TEAM</b>				
Review and maintain Local Development Scheme	Requirement of PPS12 and Regulations	KP/IW/AT	Q2 12/13	LDSs no longer need to be as detailed or submitted to the Secretary of State. A draft LDS as well as separate project timetable to Q2 2013/14 will be redrafted following major changes to the national planning setting. Further discussions with Members will be required
Meet milestones in updated LDS	GU4	KP/IW/AT	No targets as current LDS is out of date.	As above, milestones will be relevant to updated LDS
Publish Annual Monitoring Report	GU4	KP/IW/AT	31/12/09	Achieved
Prepare and co-ordinate Evidence Base studies	GU1; GU4; HN1; EP3	KP/IW/AT	May 2009	Please see Appendix 15 attached
Promotion of the Vision and Development Brief for Debden	EP2; EP3; EP5; EP6	KP/IW/AT	Ongoing	Subject of ongoing work between the Council and various stakeholders. Forward Planning to continue to liaise externally and assist other Council offices (i.e. Estates, Development Control) & ensure proposals recognised in emerging LDF documents.
Preparation of the Design and Development Brief for the St John's Road area, Epping	SC3; EP3; EP6	KP/IW/AT	Spring/Summer 2011	Work on Brief has progressed during 2011/12. It has been apparent that additional feasibility work is required, especially in relation to traffic impacts. The project is currently being managed by Estates
Publish combined Local Plan and Alterations document and revised Proposals Map	KCO 1 MTO 5	KP/IW/AT	Delayed/ongoing	This item has been deleted as a result of a) the accelerated timetable for the production of the Local Plan, and b) the move from preparing a Core Strategy to producing a single volume Local Plan.
Member training/briefing sessions on Local Plan issues	GU4	KP/IW/AT	Ongoing	Given the amount of changes taking place regarding the planning system there have been regular updates and support offered to Members bringing up to speed on the process.
<b>TREES AND LANDSCAPE</b>				
Identify partners and funding for a further series of Community Tree Strategies	MTO 4	K P CN	March 2011	Draft Loughton Tree Strategy completed March 2011. Full publication by March 2012

ACTION	SOURCE	RESP. OFFICER	TARGET	PROGRESS/ PERFORMANCE
Continue to monitor DC consultations and ensure response on 90% within 14 days	MTO 1 MTO 5	CN MB RH	Ongoing	Met
Monitor all TPX applications and ensure response on 90% within 6 weeks	MTO 1 MTO 5	CN RH	Ongoing	Met
Ensure that all TPO applications and High Hedge applications (exc. Subsidence cases) are dealt with within 8 and 12 weeks respectively.	MTO 1 MTO 5	CN RH MB	Ongoing	Not met The increased numbers of applications under all categories, and the complexity and difficulty of High Hedge cases in particular mean that this target has not been met, and is unlikely to be in future.
Contribute to revised Tree Strategy for the District	KCO 1 MTO 5	CN	March 2011	Deferred pending production of Green Infrastructure Strategy as part of local plan
Green Infrastructure Plan for the District	KCO 1 MTO 5	CN FP Team	March 2011	Deferred to 2011/12
<b>CONSERVATION</b>				
Manage consultant's review of the Council's 25 conservation areas, including potential boundary reviews and article 4 directions (Local Plan evidence base)	KCO 8 MTO 5	MK/KP	April 2012	Consultant' s brief issued Feb 2012
Complete Character Appraisal and Management plan for York Hill	GU3 MTO 5	MK/KP	Q3 2011/12	York Hill currently in progress not completed
Complete Character Appraisal and Management plan for Staples Road	GU3 MTO 5	MK/KP	Q3 2011/12	Staples Road currently in progress not completed
Complete Character Appraisal and Management plan for Baldwins Hill	GU3 MTO 5	MK/KP	Q3 2011/12	Baldwin's Hill currently in progress not completed
Publish Character Appraisal and Management plan for Epping	GU3 MTO 5	MK/KP	Q1 2009/10	Published in November 2009
Publish Character Appraisal and Management plan for Bell Common	GU3 MTO 5	MK/KP	Q2 2009/10	Published in February 2010
Monitoring of ECC Specialist advice	PO16 MTO 5	MK/KP	Quarterly Ongoing	Ongoing
<b>COUNTRYCARE</b>				
Produce an Annual Report highlighting the achievements of the service 2010/11	SC3, FL3 MTO 4 & 5	AO	May 2011	Completed
Continue Investigating the possibility of the Service taking on the management of Essex	GU3 MTO 4 & 5	AO	March 2012	January 2012 negotiations in progress over Management Agreement and costings for a SLA between Countrycare

ACTION	SOURCE	RESP. OFFICER	TARGET	PROGRESS/ PERFORMANCE
County Council owned woodlands on the Lambourne Estate, Abridge.				and ECC
Obtain consent from Natural England for designation of Norton Heath Common as a Local Nature Reserve	GU3 MTO 4 & 5	AO	April 2011	Natural England gave their consent in September 2010. But designation is on hold. Legal Services report that EFDC has "no legal interest" in Norton Heath so it cannot designate it an LNR. Other ways around this problem are being explored with High Ongar Parish Council ie. the possibility of the Parish Council "adopting" the site and EFDC having a Management Agreement with the Parish Council.
Continue veteran tree survey of the District. Record a further 1,000 trees. (Baseline – Nov 2010, 3149 trees recorded)	GU3 MTO 5	AO	March 2012	Ongoing. January 2012: 636 new veteran trees recorded onto website. Surveys completed in Moreton, Bobbingworth, the Lavers, Abbess, Beauchamp and Berners Roding though data from these have not yet been entered onto website (approx 200 trees).
Review funding opportunities and secure a minimum of £20k in external grant funding for biodiversity projects across the district.	GU3, SC3, FL2, FL3	AO	March 2012	Many of the annual grants were cut in 2011-12 so it has been difficult finding funding for the Free Tree Scheme. Many grants can only be applied for by schools or community groups and Countrycare has been informing interested parties of their existence (eg. a mailing to 25 schools with information).
Work towards achieving the targets of Epping Forest Biodiversity Action Plan.	GU3	AO	March 2012	Ongoing
Continue to assist with the creation of a pocket park on Bobbingworth Former Landfill site.	GU3, SC3, FL2, FL3	AO	March 2012	Construction phase completed. Ongoing maintenance. Opened to the public July 2011 with ceremony.
Produce an Annual Report highlighting the achievements of the service 2011/12	SC3, FL3	AO	March 2012	TBC and will include report on Countrycare's 25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations throughout 2011.

## APPENDIX TEN (B) POLICY & CONSERVATION ACTION PLANS

### Action Plan 2012-13 Forward Look

ACTION OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL PLAN OR OTHER REF	RESP OFFICER	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES/ BUDGET
<b>FORWARD PLANNING TEAM</b>				
Deliver Local Plan	Key Corporate Objective	FP team	Q2 13/14	Local Plan Budget
Issues and Options consultation	GU1; GU4; HN1; EP3	FP team	Q2 12/13	Local Plan budget
Revise draft Statement of Community Involvement	GU4	KP	Q1 12/13	Local Plan budget
Community/Stakeholder Engagement strategy		KP	Q1 12/13	Local Plan budget
Review of Strategic Housing Market Assessment	GU1; GU4; EP3	AT	TBA	Local Plan budget
Strategic Land Availability Assessment (LP evidence base)	GU1; GU4; EP3;	AT/JC	Q1 12/13	Local Plan budget
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (LP evidence base)	GU4	IW	SFRA level 1 adopted March 2011; Level 2 to be commissioned Q1 of 2012/2013	Local Plan Budget
Landscape Character and Sensitivity Analysis (LP evidence base)	GU4;	IW/CN	Landscape Character Assessment completed January 2010. Sensitivity Analysis planned for completion early 2012	Local Plan budget
PPG17 Open Spaces Audit (LP evidence base)	GU4;	AT/JC	By Q1 12/13	Existing staff and LDF budget
Updated glasshouse industry study	GU4; EP3	IW	Draft report receive Nov 2011	LDF budget
Annual Monitoring Report	GU4	CW/SK	December 2012	Existing staff

<b>ACTION OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>COUNCIL PLAN OR OTHER REF</b>	<b>RESP OFFICER</b>	<b>TARGET DATE</b>	<b>RESOURCES/ BUDGET</b>
Completion of (i) strategic, (ii) planning, (iii) housing (private and social) and (iv) waste and recycling tasks in Climate Change Strategy (CCS). This includes cutting the Council's carbon footprint (from buildings and transport), and those tasks which will enable adaptation to climate change.	GU1; GU2;	SC	Q3 12/13	Existing staff, but funding not secured for many projects/initiatives
Community engagement tasks in the Carbon Emissions and Reduction Carbon Strategy.	GU1; GU2;	SC	On-going	Funding not secured
Finalising of St John's Brief		Estates	Q2 12/13	Local Plan budget. Project Managed by Estates, with some input from Planning
Olympics-VVCC project		KP	Summer 2012 and legacy work beyond	Corporate input and support and cross Council partnership working
Kent/East Sussex Medway Essex LEP (SELEP) including sub-LEP West Essex Alliance		KP/VW	Ongoing	Corporate input and support and cross Council and business partnership working
Economic development Strategy		VW	Q2 12/13	
Heritage/Conservation Area review		MK	Q1 12/13	Local Plan budget
Low Carbon/renewable energy		SC/IW	Q1/Q212/13	Local Plan budget
Housing provision for the elderly		AT	Q2 12/13	Local Plan budget
Update of Gypsy Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA)		IW	Q3 12/13	Local Plan budget
<b>TREES AND LANDSCAPE TEAM</b>				
Identify partners and funding for a further series of Community Tree Strategies	MTO 4	KP/CN	March 2013	From existing
Continue to monitor DC consultations and ensure response on 90% within 14 days	IP3	CN/MB/RH	Ongoing	Conservation policy budget PP 100 3380
Monitor all TPX applications and ensure response on 90% within 6 weeks	MTO 1 MTO 5	CN/RH	Ongoing	Conservation policy budget PP 100 3380



ACTION OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL PLAN OR OTHER REF	RESP OFFICER	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES/ BUDGET
Ensure that all TPO applications and High Hedge applications (exc. Subsidence cases) are dealt with within 8 and 12 weeks respectively.	MTO 1 MTO 5	CN/MB/RH	Ongoing	Conservation policy budget PP 100 3380
Contribute to Green Infrastructure and landscape protection policy element of new Local Plan	KCO 1 MTO 5	CN/MB	March 2012	From existing
Green Infrastructure Plan for the District	GU4 LAA2 Priority 10 KCO 1 MTO 5	CN FP Team	March 2011	Existing DDF budget
<b>CONSERVATION</b>				
Manage consultant's review of the Council's 25 conservation areas, including potential boundary reviews and article 4 directions (Local Plan evidence base)	KCO 1 MTO 5	MK/KP	April 2012	Local Plan budget
Complete Character Appraisal and Management plan for York Hill*	MTO 5	MK	Q1/Q3 2011/12	Existing staff
Complete Character Appraisal and Management plan for Staples Road	MTO 5	MK	Q1/Q3 2010/11	Existing staff
Complete Character Appraisal and Management plan for Baldwins Hill*	MTO 5	MK	Q1/Q3 2011/12	Existing staff
Complete Charatcter appraisal and Management plan for Copped Hall	MTO 5	MK/KP	Q1/Q2 2011/2012	Existing staff
Identify Next tranche of Character Appraisals and Management plans	MTO 5	MK	Ongoing but given current staffing situation unlikely any others will come forward for 11/12	Existing staff
Identify priorities for future enhancements from Character Appraisals	MTO 5	MK	Ongoing but given current staffing situation unlikely any others will come forward for 11/12	Existing staff

ACTION OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL PLAN OR OTHER REF	RESP OFFICER	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES/ BUDGET
Monitoring of ECC Specialist advice	MTO 5	KP	Quarterly Ongoing	Existing staff
Carry out ongoing monitoring of workload and performance	MTO 4 PO16	MK/KP	Monthly ongoing	Existing staff
Update existing Conservation Area leaflets and publish on the website*	MTO 5	MK	Ongoing. With current staffing shortages it is not a priority	Existing staff
<b>COUNTRYCARE</b>				
Work towards operating Countrycare as a Traded Service.	MTO 4 & 5	AO/KP	March 2013	Some approaches have already been made to Countrycare to quote on potential work in parishes on land outside EFDC's Nature Reserves. Some negotiation is being undertaken internally to assess potential of internal charging for Countrycare Services i.e. to Environment, Leisure and Estates. An Environmental Education package is being proposed to schools to charge for Countrycare's Service both in and outside the District.
Address issue of office move	CORPORATE PLAN 15	AO/KP	Ongoing 2012/13	With the potential development of Town Mead Depot during the next five years an alternative appropriate site should be identified for the re-housing of the Countrycare office, garages and storage areas.
Implement use of Biological Records in Essex in DC Planning	MTO 5	AO	March 2013	In December 2011 Cabinet agreed to help fund from DDF the setting up of a Biological Records Office in Essex. A SLA needs to be drawn up with Essex Wildlife Trust, data has to be transferred and loaded onto Proprinter and Planners need to be made aware of how this is a helpful tool in the planning process.
Support and encourage Big Society	MTO4 & 5 Corporate Plan 10	AO/NR	March 2013	EFDC Countrycare is one of the few Local Authorities which already has a large community involvement and volunteer base. Continued training and mentoring of volunteers and tree wardens gives individuals a sense of possession and community whilst also allowing easier access to grants and external funding.
Recruitment of volunteers and promotion of healthy living	MTO 5	AO/KM	March 2013	It is important that the volunteer base is constantly increasing as the need for succession is becoming apparent. With the development of a Traded Service opportunities for paid work to be given to volunteer contractors may attract a younger

ACTION OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL PLAN OR OTHER REF	RESP OFFICER	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES/ BUDGET
				"volunteer" base.
Increase partnership working to deliver more efficiently and share skills	MTO4 & 5	AO/KM	March 2013	Already working closely with Essex Wildlife Trust, Field Studies Council, City of London, Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers and Woodland Trust on events, training days, project tasks.
Raise Countrycare's profile in and outside the District	MTO 5	All	March 2013	More publicity, use of website, and events already underway.
Staff training	MTO 5	NR	March 2013	A gap analysis has been undertaken and training arrangements are underway to increase skills and knowledge.
Gain recognition for management of Local Nature Reserves	MTO 5	All	March 2013	Apply for Green Flag status for Roding Valley Meadows LNR – started January 2012. Apply for Living Landscapes Award (Essex Wildlife Trust) for Linder's Field LNR, Weald Common LNR and Church Lane LNR – underway January 2012.
Produce an Annual Report highlighting the achievements of the service 2012/13	MTO 1	All	May 2013	TBC

## APPENDIX ELEVEN (A) DEVELOPMENT CONTROL ACTION PLAN

### Action Plan Review 2011-12

ACTION	SOURCE	RESP. OFFICER	TARGET	PROGRESS/ PERFORMANCE
Maintain up to date working procedures	Med Term 3 & 4	AD(D) & DCMT	Throughout 2011-2012	Reviewed and updated existing procedures and identified where procedures need changing
Carry out Equalities Impact Assessment and Implement outstanding actions from Equalities Action Plan	Corp Plan 14	AD(D) & support of PIU and CEWG	March 2011	Incomplete action taken due to resource limitations
<p>Improve planning application and appeals turn around times</p> <p>Implement outstanding actions from Individual Key Performance Improvement Plans.</p>	KCO 4 Med Term 3	AD(D) & DCMT	April 2012	Some progress made with the stabilisation of Planning Support and deletion of Senior Enforcement Officer. However the combination of committee meetings cycle changing from three to four weeks along with one planning officer down in DC from October 2011 is beginning to affect planning application turnaround times.
Regular review of appeal decisions and reporting to members	KCO 4 Med Term 3 & 5	AD(D)	May & Nov 2011	Ongoing and reported to members at regular intervals
Maintain turnover of enforcement investigations	KCO 4 Med Term 5	PPO (ENFO)	Throughout 2011-2012	Ongoing and subject to regular monitoring. Up to Q3 we issued 36 enforcement notices, which is one of the highest amongst the Essex authorities.
Development built conforms to both Building Regs and Planning Application plans	KCO 4 Med Term 5	AD(D) & AD(BC)	Throughout 2012	Existing controls constrained by recruitment restrictions and staff long term sickness absence. However Building Inspectors are liaising with Planning Enforcement to highlight irregularities.
Use all appropriate means to secure community benefits	KCO 4 & 5 Med term 4 Corp Plan 23	AD(D), AD(P&C), DCMT	Throughout 2011-2012	Some progress has been made through s.106 agreements attached to planning applications where necessary. However benefits have been limited by the low submission of major applications combined with the delay in adopting Local Plan Core Strategy and requirement to produce a community infrastructure levy (CIL).

ACTION	SOURCE	RESP. OFFICER	TARGET	PROGRESS/ PERFORMANCE
Meet training needs identified through PDR's	Corp Plan 14	AD(D) & DCMT	Throughout 2011-2012	Some progress made in addressing training needs within budget limitations.
User Group Forum	KCO 4 Med. Term 4 & 5	AD(D)	By Dec 2011	There was a desire to arrange a forum meeting, however this has been superceded by item 39 (a) Planning Services Scrutiny Standing panel 20 <sup>th</sup> December 2011 to include elements of Localism and the Local Plan.
Report Development Control feedback	KCO 4 Med. Term 5	AD(D)	March 2012	Feedback to PSSSP/committee reporting and reviewed through Chair/Vice-Chair meeting. Assessments carried out of completed planning developments compared with application submission was implemented late 2011 by PSSSP with Officers.
Generate increased income: increase planning application fees, Pre-application charging for minor applications	KCO 4 Med. Term 3 & 4	AD(D) & Business Manager	Dec 2011	Benchmarking process prioritised and almost completed. Time recording and financial information submitted to CIPFA. Benchmarked reports received against 15 similar authorities. Awaiting direction from Communities and Local Government regarding the local setting of planning fees which is overdue.

## APPENDIX ELEVEN (B) DEVELOPMENT CONTROL ACTION PLAN

### Action Plan Forward Look 2012-13

ACTION OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL PLAN OR OTHER REF	OFFICER RESP.	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES BUDGET
Maintain and improve customer centered performance through the use of up-to-date technology and best practice. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete Appeal Procedure Notes</li> <li>- Regular review of current Procedures</li> <li>- Website review of DC information</li> <li>- Produce Generic site visit Health and Safety risk assessment</li> </ul>	KCO 2 Med Term Aims 4	AD - DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS MANAGER	Dec 2012	As existing
Improve planning application turnaround times	KCO 2 Med Term Aims 3 KPI 51, 52 & 53	AD - DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS MANAGER	On-going to Q3 2012-13	As existing, but mindful that the section is a planning officer down, due to secondment to Forward Plan section and recruitment restriction.
Improve appeal success rate.	KCO 2 Med Term Aims 4 & 5 KPI 54 & 55	AD - DEVELOPMENT	On-going to Q3 2012-13	As existing, but mindful that the section is a planning officer down, due to secondment to Forward Plan section and recruitment restriction.
Operate an effective and efficient enforcement service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete individual procedure notes on Stop Notices, Injunctions and Direct Action</li> <li>- Produce site specific Health and Safety risk assessment</li> <li>- Produce equality impact assessment</li> </ul>	Med Term Aims 5	AD - DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPAL OFFICER PLANNING (ENFORCEMENT)	Dec 2012	As existing
To secure appropriate levels of community benefit, particularly affordable housing by the use of Section 106 agreements and other means.	KCO 2 & 5 Med Term Aims 4	AD - DEVELOPMENT	On-going	Existing, S106 Monitoring Group and production of CIL through Local Plan Core Strategy process
Maintain staff development to ensure the most proficient provision of the service to its customers	KCO 2 Med Term Aims 4	AD DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS MANAGER	On-going	Existing internal training and development of staff to ensure IIP accreditation and improved staff experience and knowledge. Funding available for external training where appropriate
To provide improved communication with the public	Med Term Aims	AD	Dec 2012	As existing

ACTION OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL PLAN OR OTHER REF	OFFICER RESP.	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES BUDGET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Revise customer feedback form to encourage more replies</li> <li>- Arrange Planning Directorate Forum</li> </ul>	1 Corp Plan 26	DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS MANAGER MANAGEMENT ASSISTANT		
<p>To explore ways of generating increased income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Through local fee setting</li> <li>- Expanding pre-application charging to more categories of planning application types</li> </ul>	KCO 2 Med Term Aims 2 & 4	AD DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS MANAGER	Awaiting Government decision and then action as soon as possible	Promote implementation in partnership with PAS and CIPFA of locally set Planning fees. Carry out consultation and report to Members

**APPENDIX TWELVE (A) BUILDING CONTROL & PLANNING SUPPORT ACTION PLANS - Action Plan Review 2011-12**

ACTION	SOURCE	RESP. OFFICER	TARGET	PROGRESS/ PERFORMANCE
<b>BUILDING CONTROL TEAM</b>				
Review of Building Regulation Fees and Charges	Medium Term Aim 4.	AD(Building) DoPED	Sept 10	Central government requires the income from building regulation charges to at least meet the cost of that part of the service while not making a significant surplus
Improve on Performance targets in general	Council Plan IP4	AD(Building)	Ongoing	Staff training and constant evaluation of the service should improve performance.
Benchmark performance against other Essex Authorities	Council Plan IP4	AD(Building)	Ongoing	Within Resources
Consideration of staff training needs after PDR process	Council Plan IP4	AD(Building)	June 10	The identification of training needs is a key element of the Performance Development Review process. These are met through the Corporate Training and external courses to address changes in legislation, national initiatives and Continuing Professional Development, which is a requirement for RICS and Building Engineer members.
Continue customer satisfaction surveys	Council Plan IP4	AD(Building)	Ongoing	Building Control takes part in regular stakeholder surveys and changes the way it operate accordingly
Raise Building Control's profile	Council Plan IP4	AD(Building) Business Manager	Ongoing	This has been achieved by adding new partners to the partnership scheme and by its website.



**APPENDIX TWELVE (A) BUILDING CONTROL & PLANNING SUPPORT ACTION PLANS - Action Plan Review 2011-12**

ACTION	SOURCE	RESP. OFFICER	TARGET	PROGRESS/ PERFORMANCE
<b>PLANNING SUPPORT TEAM</b>				
Review and monitor workloads of teams in relation to reduced staffing levels	Medium Term Aims 1, 3 & 4. KCO 4	Business Manager	Ongoing 2011 - 12	There were significant challenges facing Planning Support in 2011/12 mainly as a result of the Recruitment restrictions. A review of Support duties lead to the closure of the planning reception in the afternoons and other changes in order to ensure Planning Support focused on core activities.
Continue to implement improvements in information@work & links with Northgate M3	Medium Term Aims 1 & 4. KCO 4	Business Manager	Ongoing 2011 - 12	Limited progress due to resource and staffing difficulties.
Completion of Back Scanning of material from Planning File room	Medium Term Aims 1 & 4. KCO 4	Business Manager	TBA Review 2011 12	Postponed due to resource limitations
Roll out of Northgate M3 Enquiry module to other parts of Planning Services	Medium Term Aims 1 & 4. KCO 4	Business Manager/ Team Leaders	Ongoing 2011 - 12	Postponed due to resource limitations
Continue Gazetteer creation and improve LLPG Addressing/Mapping for district	Medium Term Aims 1 & 4. KCO 4	Gazetteer Officer	Ongoing 2011 - 12	Progress made in terms of meeting NLPG targets, limited progress in terms of GIS Mapping
Electronic Consultation of Consultees and neighbours	Medium Term Aims 1 & 4. KCO 4	Business Manager	Ongoing	Progress made, dialogue with Parish Councils via i-Plan User Group to progress electronic communication between EFDC and Parish Councils.
Restructure and further improve Planning Service Website	Medium Term Aims 1 & 4. KCO 4	Business Manager	Ongoing 2011 - 12	Existing Staff
Mobile solution for all relevant staff	2011/12 Business Plan	Business Manager	TBA Subject to Funding	Existing Staff/ Budget to be allocated
<b>Restructure and further improve Planning Service Website</b>	<b>2009/10 Business Plan</b>	<b>BUSINESS MANAGER</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>Ongoing improvements made subject to Corporate changes and ICT limitations</b>

## APPENDIX TWELVE (B) BUILDING CONTROL & PLANNING SUPPORT ACTION PLANS - Action Plan Forward Look 2012-13

ACTION/OBJECTIVE	COUNCIL MEDIUM TERM AIM	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES/ BUDGET
<b>BUILDING CONTROL</b>				
Review of Building Regulation Fees and Charges	Medium Term Aim 4. Council Plan 17	AD(Building) DoPED	Sept 2012	Ring Fenced Account
Improve Performance	Medium Term Aim 4. KCO 4	AD(Building)	Ongoing	Within Resources
Benchmark performance against other Essex Authorities	Medium Term Aim 3.	AD(Building)	Ongoing	Within Resources
Consideration of staff training needs after PDR process CPD/Training records for all staff	Council Plan 6 (i)	AD(Building)	June 2012	Within Resources
Extend the Partnership scheme for Architects	Medium Term Aim 4.	AD(Building) DoPED	Ongoing	Within Resources
Continue customer satisfaction surveys	Medium Term Aim 1 KCO 2	AD(Building)	Ongoing	Within Resources
<b>PLANNING SUPPORT</b>				
Improved use of web site	Medium Term Aim 1, KCO 2	Business Manager	Ongoing	Support and maintain efficient use of iPlan within resources
Safeguarding frontline services and keep Council Tax the lowest in Essex;	KCO 4 & 5	Business Manager	Throughout Current Year	Promote effective frontline services by reducing planning support costs.
Promote long term reductions in funding from the Continuing Service Budget;	Medium Term Aims 2 & 4, KCO 4	Business Manager	Throughout Current Year	Continually review and improve business processes to ensure the promotion of VFM (Efficiency, Effectiveness and Economy).
To promote the use of Information Technology to improve administrative processes.	Medium Term Aims 4 KCO 4 & 5	Business Manager	Throughout Current Year	Support improvements in ICT to reduce costs.

## APPENDIX THIRTEEN - FORWARD PLANNING EVIDENCE BASE UPDATE

STUDY TITLE	STUDY PURPOSE/CONTENT	CONSULTANT	COST	ANTICIPATED ACTUAL COMPLETION	LENGTH
<b>Harlow Area Appraisal of Planning Transport and Infrastructure Options</b>	<p>This study being completed in partnership with Harlow &amp; East Herts District Councils in accordance with policy HA1 of the East of England Plan.</p> <p>It will be used to inform the preparation of the Core Strategy Issues &amp; Options consultation papers for each of the three authorities.</p>	Scott Wilson	<p>£41,942.50</p> <p>Funded by Growth Area Fund – Round3 (GAF3) – no EFDC contribution</p>	<p>Report complete : January 2010</p> <p>LDF CC : 17 June 2010</p>	143 pages
<b>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) / Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Core Strategy</b>	<p>To form the baseline information and then assess the options contained within the Core Strategy Issues &amp; Options paper.</p> <p>It is a legislative requirement for all plans and programmes to be subject to, and influenced by, this type of assessment.</p> <p>The framework used for this assessment is largely the same for Epping Forest, Harlow and East Herts Councils, to ensure the process is consistent across the three areas and will support the production of sound Core Strategies.</p>	Scott Wilson	<p>£134,899</p> <p>Funded by GAF3 – no EFDC contribution. Further SEA/SA for subsequent rounds of the Core Strategy &amp; other DPDs will need to be funded by EFDC. Budgetary provision for this exists within the LDF budget.</p>	<p>Scoping Report consultation received March 2010. LDF CC 12 April 2010</p> <p>Statutory 5 week minimum consultation period held 17 May-19July 2010</p> <p>Scoping Report finalised November 2010 LDFCC 20 December 2010</p> <p><i>Assessment dependent on timescale for preparation of Issues &amp; Options – Anticipated Autumn 2011.</i></p>	153 pages

STUDY TITLE	STUDY PURPOSE/CONTENT	CONSULTANT	COST	ANTICIPATED ACTUAL COMPLETION	LENGTH
<b>Harlow Stansted Gateway Transport Model</b>	<p>The project will create a transportation model of the Harlow-Stansted gateway area, capable of reproducing existing significant transport movements in the study area. This model will be used as the basis for forecasting the impact of significant housing and related developments and assist in assessing the transport infrastructure required to support the developments.</p> <p>EFDC are currently guests on the Harlow Stansted Gateway Transportation Board, but the outcomes of this work will help make strategic decisions about the growth of Harlow where there may be an impact on Epping Forest district.</p>	Faber Maunsell	<p>Total cost: £255,950 Stage 1 Transport Model Development. GAF3 – Programme of Development (POD), Essex and Herts County Councils, Highways Agency.</p> <p>No EFDC contribution</p>	<p>Model complete September 2010</p> <p><i>Initial findings expected January 2011</i></p>	Not yet known
<b>Rye Meads Water Cycle Study</b>	<p>The study assesses the impact of planned growth on water cycle processes, water infrastructure capacity and environmental capacity. It will recommend viable infrastructure options to accommodate planned growth and ensure water infrastructure is not a limiting factor to the growth of the area. As far as this Council is concerned, it is mainly of relevance with respect to the urban extensions to Harlow, as the south of this district is mainly served by the Beckton STW.</p>	Hyder Consulting	<p>Total cost: £250,000 – GAF3 - POD Partnership of East Herts, North Herts, Epping Forest, Broxbourne, Harlow &amp; Stevenage Councils. No EFDC contribution.</p>	<p>Report complete : October 2009</p> <p><i>LDF CC : Autumn 2011</i></p>	Approx 180 pages including Appendices
<b>Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)</b>	<p>The requirements of a SHMA are set out in PPS3: Housing (November 2006). This study was undertaken jointly with Harlow, East Herts, Uttlesford, Broxbourne and Brentwood Councils. It determines the Housing Market Areas across the sub-region, and makes an assessment of housing need both within each Housing Market Area, and in each Local Authority area.</p> <p>* note – following the revocation of the RSS, this study may need to be updated. *</p>	Opinion Research Services & Savills	<p>£59,950 (+ £3,117.40 advertising costs)</p> <p>EFDC contribution - £10,511</p> <p>* Review – Estimated further cost £5,000 *</p>	<p>Report complete : January 2010</p> <p>LDF CC : 17 June 2010</p>	203 pages including Appendices

STUDY TITLE	STUDY PURPOSE/CONTENT	CONSULTANT	COST	ANTICIPATED ACTUAL COMPLETION	LENGTH
<b>Strategic Housing Market Assessment – Viability Testing</b>	<p>PPS3: <i>Housing</i> requires that all policies requiring affordable housing provision are based on robust and sound evidence of need and viability.</p> <p>* note – following the revocation of the RSS, and changes to delivery of affordable housing, this study may need to be updated. *</p>	Levvel Ltd	<p>£30,750</p> <p>Funded from Programme of Development Fund.</p> <p>* Review – Estimated further cost £5,000 *</p>	<p>Report complete : April 2010</p> <p>LDF CC : 04 October 2010</p>	<p>Report – 301pages Appendices - 379pages</p>
<b>Strategic Land Availability Assessment</b>	<p>To identify land which could potentially be suitable for housing, retail and employment purposes over a 15 year period. This study does not guarantee that planning permission will ultimately be granted, but identifies possible sources of development land supply.</p> <p>*note – following consultation on the methodology the scope of this project is to be widened beyond residential development land, to include land for housing, retail and employment purposes. *</p>	To be confirmed following tender process	<p>Estimated at £30,000. Funded from savings within existing LDF budget.</p>	<p>LDF CC : Agreement of principal 11 March 2010 Methodology 27 May 2010 ; 13 June 2011 ; 01 August 2011 Consultation on methodology October-November 2011</p> <p><i>Appointment of consultants January 2012</i></p> <p><i>Report complete: April 2012</i></p>	Not yet known
<b>Town Centres Study</b>	<p>To consider the vitality and viability of the town centres, the competition from centres in adjoining areas, and the future role of the district's centres. This will include an assessment of floorspace, range of goods, vacancy rates, and rent levels. Customer and visitor surveys will be undertaken. Potential opportunities for development or enhancement will be identified, and the current policy on restricting non-retail uses will be assessed. The study will also assess the need for commercial leisure uses.</p>	Roger Tym & Partners	£39,038	<p>Report complete : April 2010</p> <p>LDF CC : 13 July 2010</p>	<p>Approx 113 pages, not including lengthy Appendices</p>

STUDY TITLE	STUDY PURPOSE/CONTENT	CONSULTANT	COST	ANTICIPATED ACTUAL COMPLETION	LENGTH
<b>Employment Land Study</b>	The Employment Land Study, which has been commissioned jointly with Brentwood Borough Council, will consider the current employment land available and the opportunities for further provision. It will include an assessment of future needs and demands and a comprehensive stock- take of existing sites (quantitative and qualitative), and will make recommendations about the need for additional employment sites to create a balanced portfolio.	Atkins	£27,325  Split equally with Brentwood BC	Report complete : September 2010  LDF CC : 11 November 2010	Report 88 pages  Multiple appendices including maps
<b>Landscape Character Assessment</b>	This Assessment provides a comprehensive district-wide assessment of landscape character, which is intended to help planning and land management decisions. The European Landscape Convention (of which the Government is a signatory) encourages public authorities to adopt policies and measures for the protection, management and planning of all landscapes, whether outstanding or ordinary, that determine the quality of people's environment. The study therefore identifies key issues, sensitivities to change, and management strategy/objectives/guidelines for areas of different character. The quality of the rural landscape is generally recognised as one of this district's key features, and the study should help to develop long-lasting policies to protect and manage existing landscapes, and to create new ones. Seven landscape character types are identified.	Chris Blandford Associates	£24,745	Report complete : January 2010  LDF CC : 27 May 2010	192 pages, including Appendices, and 10 district-wide maps.

STUDY TITLE	STUDY PURPOSE/CONTENT	CONSULTANT	COST	ANTICIPATED ACTUAL COMPLETION	LENGTH
<b>Settlement Edge Landscape Sensitivity Study</b>	Informed by the district-wide Landscape Character Assessment, this study provides a more detailed understanding of sensitive landscape and environmental features around the edges of the 22 principal settlements (ie those excluded from the Green Belt plus Moreton and Sewardstone) in the district. The report will inform options for settlement growth and also outlines the extent to which these areas of landscape contribute towards the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.	Chris Blandford Associates	£24,980	Report complete : January 2010  <i>LDF CC : Spring 2012</i>	138 pages including Appendices, and 73 detailed maps, dealing with visual character, historic landscape, environmental constraints and landscape sensitivity.
<b>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – Level 1</b>  <i>Level 2</i>	A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) is the 'categorisation' of flood risk on an area-wide basis in accordance with PPS25: <i>Development &amp; Flood Risk</i> . This first stage is being undertaken jointly with Harlow Council.  <i>Level 2 assessments will be required on a site specific basis when the Council is considering land allocations. These will be needed in respect of the draft Local Plan, and the preferred development options contained within it.</i>	Level 1 – In-house  <i>Level 2 – to be confirmed</i>	From existing resources  <i>Estimated value of project - £40,000</i>	December 2010 LDF CC : 15 Mar 2011  <i>Consultants appointed April 2012</i>  <i>Report complete May 2012</i>	45 pages plus plans  <i>Not yet known</i>

STUDY TITLE	STUDY PURPOSE/CONTENT	CONSULTANT	COST	ANTICIPATED ACTUAL COMPLETION	LENGTH
<b>Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) review</b>	This study updates survey work last undertaken during the early 1990s – which identified Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) or County Wildlife Sites (CoWS). A comprehensive field survey, in conjunction with a desk-top study and a consultation exercise, has identified new sites, validated most existing ones, and led to the deletion of some. All the LoWS were assessed against current selection criteria (developed through reviews in other Essex districts and modified in line with national guidelines). Species and habitats now afforded attention via county or national Biodiversity Action Plans were specifically considered and their representation within the LoWS network was ensured.	Essex Ecology Services	£49,660 (payment over 2008/09 and 2009/10)	Report complete March 2010  LDF CC : 14 September 2010	37 pages plus plans and descriptions of 222 sites.
<b>PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport &amp; Recreation Audit</b>	PPG17 requires that an audit of existing open space & recreation opportunities is undertaken.	In-house	From existing resources	Audit complete: August 2011	Not yet known
<b>PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport &amp; Recreation Assessment</b>	Following completion of the audit, an assessment of surpluses or deficits within any of the categories will need to be carried out. This must also be accompanied by an assessment by seeking public opinion of the quality of existing open space & recreation facilities.  This further work will require the employment of consultants with expertise in this area.	To be confirmed	£20,000 (estimate)	Anticipated April 2012	Not yet known
<b>St John's Road Development Brief</b>	To determine the most appropriate future use of land currently available for redevelopment at St John's Road, Epping. Working with Essex County Council.	Urban Practitioners	£84,636.41 (including additional transport assessment study)	Spring 2012	Not yet known
<b>Ward Profiles</b>	To provide background information at a ward level to support the preparation of the Core Strategy (and future DPDs) and the Community Strategy.	In-house	From existing resources	Complete January 2010 (to be updated every three years as further information is published)	



STUDY TITLE	STUDY PURPOSE/CONTENT	CONSULTANT	COST	ANTICIPATED ACTUAL COMPLETION	LENGTH
<b>Review of Lea Valley Glasshouse Industry policies</b>	The policies in the Local Plan Alterations (2006) were derived from a study completed in 2003. The Alterations indicated that the policies would be reviewed again, as some areas were identified for "potential de-designation" the time of the next review. There is a current application for residential re-development of one of these sites. Since the Alterations were published, there has been a very significant amount of glasshouse development in Thanet, and officers believe that both these factors justify a further review.	To be commissioned	Not yet known.  Project budget agreed at £30,000	Report due to be completed January 2012  LDF CC : February 2012	Not yet known
<b>Lee Valley White Water Centre – Economic Development Study</b>	To assess and quantify the potential economic impacts of the Lee Valley White Water centre on the local economy. Partner arrangement with Lee Valley Regional Park Authority, Broxbourne Borough Council, Essex County Council & Hertfordshire County Council.	Nathanial Lichfield & Partners	EFDC contribution £15,000.	Report due to be completed July 2011  LDF CC : agreement of contribution & principle of work 11 November 2010  LDF CC : October 2011	124 pages with additional appendices
<b>Gypsy / Roma / Traveller Accommodation Assessment</b>	To review the number of pitches required in the district by the local Gypsy/Roma/Traveller population.  Building on existing Essex-Wide GTAA (2009)	Not yet determined whether external consultancy will be required	Not yet known	Internal review complete by February 2012  Final Assessment complete by April 2012	Not yet known
<b>Household &amp; Population Estimates &amp; Projections to 2031</b>	Following the revocation of the RSS, each authority must determine appropriate levels of housing growth, based on up-to-date estimates & projections of population and household growth.	Edge Analytics commissioned by Essex Planning Officers Association	From EPOA budget – no direct contribution from Local Plan budget	Report complete Summer 2012	Not yet known
<b>Heritage Asset Review</b>	To review the boundaries of Conservation Areas, review particular areas to determine if they should be designated as Conservation Areas, and review buildings on the Local List including the addition of any further buildings to the list.	To be confirmed	Estimated value of project - £15,000	Consultants appointed January 2012  Report complete April 2012	Not yet known

STUDY TITLE	STUDY PURPOSE/CONTENT	CONSULTANT	COST	ANTICIPATED ACTUAL COMPLETION	LENGTH
<b>Carbon Reduction Strategy</b>	<p>The study will identify the renewable and low-carbon energy sources which are most appropriate and financially viable for Epping Forest District, taking account of (a) landscape and visual effects; (b) potential impacts on sites of European and national importance for nature conservation; (c) transport implications; and (d) improvements to technology over the period of the new local plan (ie up to 2031). Develop a district-wide strategy to promote the use of these sources, including identifying potentially suitable areas for the location and delivery of appropriate infrastructure, recognising that the district is 94% Green Belt.</p> <p>The study will also assess the potential for, and viability of, combined heat and power in new developments; draft suggested planning policies to deliver the strategy, referring where necessary to examples of good practice.</p> <p>Identify likely training requirements of officers and members to be able to fully implement such policies.</p>	Not yet confirmed	Estimated value of project - £35,000	<p>Consultants appointed January 2012</p> <p>Report complete April 2012</p>	Not yet known
<b>Community Infrastructure Levy – Assessment of Viability</b>	To assess the viability of the identified Community Infrastructure Levy, in relation to proposed new development to be delivered via the Local Plan.	To be confirmed	Estimated value of project - £35,000	<p>Required to support draft Local Plan stage.</p> <p>Initial Report complete – May 2012 ; to be reviewed with progression of Local Plan</p>	Not yet known
<b>Transport Assessment of Preferred Options</b>	To undertake a detailed transport assessment of the preferred development options identified in the draft Local Plan	To be confirmed	Estimated value of project - £35,000	<p>Consultants appointed April 2012</p> <p>Report complete May 2012</p>	Not yet known