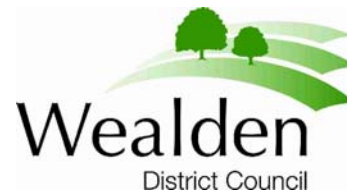


Environmental Protection Service Plan

2009/10



The role of the service

- Provide a high quality, effective pollution control, licensing, engineering, pest control, animal welfare and contaminated land service which contributes to the Council's Corporate Objectives and complies fully with existing legislation.
- Contribute to local strategic and other partnership working, as appropriate.
- Develop, co-ordinate and promote policy and processes in relation to emerging pollution control, licensing, engineering, pest control, animal welfare and contaminated land issues which are likely to impact on Wealden District Council, its service provision and the fulfillment of its responsibilities and obligations to the residents of Wealden.
- Communicate the range, accountability and value of Environmental Protection services the Council provides and help identify and shape the future service needs of the community.
- Contribute to the delivery of the Council's corporate agenda, including Safer Wealden Partnership, Sustainability, Equalities and Youth Matters, working closely with Members, officers and partners and ensuring appropriate awareness training for staff

The service is planning to achieve the following outcomes by March 2012:

- Maintain our independent assurance of the quality of our services ensuring that these are in line with the highest standards nationally
- Improve value for money, where possible, based on the opinions of our customers and when our performance is compared to other local authorities
- Seek to make value for money efficiency savings year on year
- Work more efficiently, meet agreed key priorities, and cut 'red tape' wherever possible
- Improve customer service in line with our customers' perceptions
- Work with partners to consider the effects of licensing policies and activities upon underage drinking and associated crime and disorder issues
- Work with our partners to update flood protection plans
- Raise awareness of the actions residents and businesses can take to minimise the effect of flooding on property through the provision of information on the Wealden website and Business Help pages
- Continue to raise issues of climate change adaptation for Wealden District at Coastal Group meetings
- Continue to ensure that shoreline management plans are implemented
- Continue to identify and prioritise areas of contaminated land and progress the remediation of priority areas
- Assist the Council in its work upon improving local air quality through the Climate Change Action Plan and National Indicators
- Prepare for the implementation of the EU Services Directive and consider the implications for the service and the Council generally.
- Consider the implications of the draft Flood and Water Management Bill and prepare for forthcoming legislation.
- Prepare the NLPG for Census 2011 and consider the implications of this for the Council

What have we achieved in 2008/09?

Corporate Objective 1 : Putting People First

Providing Quality Services
Health, Prosperity and Community Safety

- Secured Charter Mark for the service
- Improving customer service in line with our customer's perceptions
- Raised awareness of the actions residents and businesses can take to minimise the effect of flooding on property through the provision of information on Wealden website and Business Help pages and events

Corporate Objective 2 : Pride Of Place

Sustainability
Place Shaping

- Reviewed the results of the Uckfield flood protection pilot to inform future projects
- Raised issues of climate change adaptation for Wealden District at Coastal Group meetings
- Shoreline management plans implemented to provide a long-term assessment of the risks associated with coastal flooding and erosion
- Examined feasibility and budgetary requirements of varying taxi licence fees according to vehicle fuel efficiency and/or use of alternative fuels concluding that the matter should be held in abeyance, pending further technical assessment of biofuels
- Identified and prioritised areas of contaminated land and progressed the remediation of priority areas
- Assisted the Council in its work upon improving local air quality through the Climate Change Action Plan and National Indicators

Corporate Objective 3 : Purpose Through Partnership

Improving Performance and Efficiency
Strong Community Leadership

- Worked with partners to consider the effects of licensing policies upon underage drinking and associated crime and disorder issues, concluding that partnership working is already proving effective at reducing the incidence of such issues
- Updated flood protection plans with partners
- Value for money efficiency savings year on year
- Improved value for money based on the opinions of our customers and when our performance is compared to other local authorities
- Working more efficiently, meeting agreed key priorities, and cutting 'red tape' wherever possible
- Independent assurance of the quality of our services ensuring that these are in line with the highest standards nationally

What we plan to improve

Target for 2011/12	2008/09 Baseline	2009/10 Milestone	2010/11 Milestone
Corporate Objective 1 : Putting People First Providing Quality Services Health, Prosperity and Community Safety			
Maintain Charter Mark status for the service and enhance standards wherever possible	Charter Mark achieved	To maintain award status	To maintain award status
Continue to improve customer service in line with our customer's perceptions	Not established	Establish baseline	Subject to baseline
Corporate Objective 2 : Pride Of Place Sustainability Place Shaping			
Raise issues of climate change adaptation for Wealden District at Coastal Group meetings	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Continue to implement shoreline management plans to provide a long-term assessment of the risks associated with coastal flooding and erosion	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Continue to identify and prioritise areas of contaminated land and progress the remediation of priority areas	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Assist the Council in its work upon improving local air quality through the Climate Change Action Plan and National Indicators	Ongoing	Ongoing	Ongoing
Corporate Objective 3 : Purpose Through Partnership Improving Performance and Efficiency Strong Community Leadership			
Maintain Chartermark and prepare for move towards Customer Service Excellence	Charter Mark achieved	To maintain award status	To maintain award status
Deliver 3% cashable efficiency savings year-on-year	£933,101	£905,108	£877,955

Risk

The risks to delivery of the Service Plan centre around the staff, since these make up the backbone of the service. In general terms, staffing levels are relatively lean and any significant rise in demand for the service will create additional pressure. Current staffing levels also add to the pressure when responding to new corporate or service specific initiatives. There is a moderate risk of losing staff in any given year and this could also have a significant impact on the delivery of the service.

Other Considerations

Customer Satisfaction

The Environmental Protection Service already achieves high levels of customer satisfaction, as evidenced by our satisfaction surveys, which are targeted at 25% of all those having dealings with the service. Whilst the service generally scores highly in percentage terms, in relation to satisfaction levels, individual customer comments are invited and these are analysed and service improvements made wherever appropriate.

Customer Involvement

The creation of the new Wealden Panel of Residents late in 2008 has provided a strong evidence base for consultation on the Council's plans, services and future policy decisions. There are a range of opportunities for the public to engage with the Council so long as these are communicated well and appropriately to all sections of our communities. To sustain that level of engagement we need to demonstrate that the Council listens to public opinion through feedback to groups and individuals and by publicising how we have listened and what we have changed as a consequence.

Access to Services

Much of the work of the service is both mandatory and enforcement related and all opportunities are used to deliver the service to customers by whatever means are available. Our equality audits are ensuring that everything possible is done to provide our service to the widest possible community base. The full range of services is shown on the Council's website, together with guidance and advice wherever possible.

Value for Money

Through the Transformation Programme we will review all services to determine how we could improve value for money over the next three years. The following options will be explored:

- Service cessation (where the service is discretionary)
- Reduce the service
- Improve the service by doing it differently
- Shared service with partner / other local authority
- Service provided by others

Workforce Priorities

The service is subject to continual review to ensure that staffing resources match service demands. Currently one FTE post remains vacant within the Engineering team pending further review as part of the Council's Transformation programme during 2009/10. Opportunities for flexible working and flexible retirement have also been explored and implemented within the service.

Learning & Development

The service is committed to continuing professional development for all staff and the pursuit of relevant qualifications by individuals, subject to available resources.

Equalities and Diversity

The service is provided to all customers and customer groups in the most flexible and fair way possible, subject to any limitations imposed by statute. We are undertaking equality impact assessments for all areas of the service and implement any actions arising.

Sustainability

Ongoing actions in respect of air quality management, flooding and coastal management will contribute towards the Council's commitment to the climate change agenda.

Rural impact

We will continue to deliver each area of our service with due regard for the implications upon both rural and urban parts of the District.

Communication

We will continue to provide up to date information upon our service web pages, for the benefit of our customers and will seek to enhance this with specific, targeted information wherever possible. By continuing to work in partnership with local organisations and community groups we will disseminate information as widely as possible. We have also improved our internal arrangements for staff feedback and involvement.

Health and safety

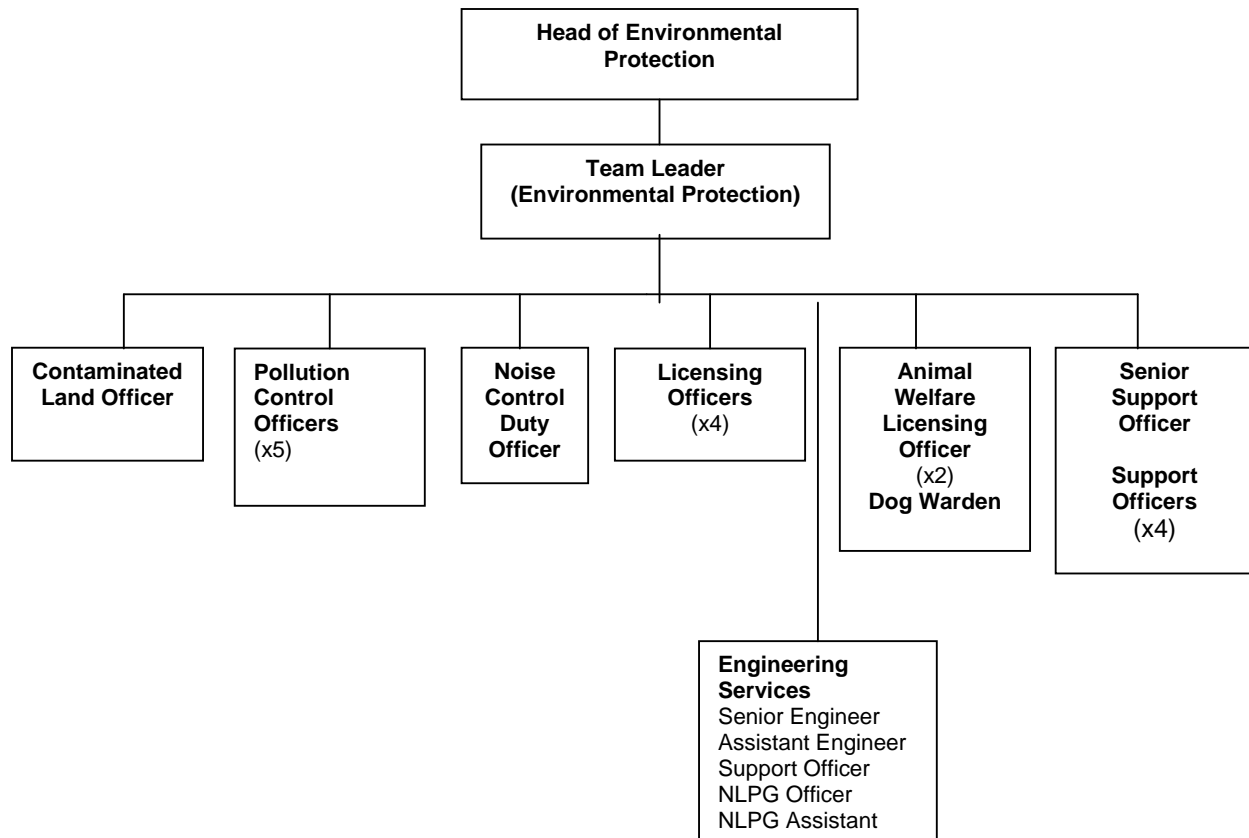
All of our activities are carried out in accordance with the Council's current Health and Safety procedures. Risk assessment is an integral part of the service's operational activity.

Standards

The service works within the framework of National Indicators, as outlined below, and also contributes to other national and local benchmarking initiatives, to ensure that a good quality of service is maintained and improved wherever practicable. We are looking to develop service outcomes for all areas.

Resources and budget

Staff Organisation Chart (FTE)



Budget

2008/09 £(000)		2009/10 £(000)	2010/11 £(000)	2011/12 £(000)
23,130	Systems and Support	23,210	23,210	23,210
142,260	Engineers	136,610	165,990	165,990
5,000	Coast Protection	5,000	5,000	5,000
25,000	Street Naming and Numbering	25,000	25,000	25,000
62,180	NLPG	66,160	66,160	66,160
10,260	East Dean/Birling Gap	12,830	12,830	12,830
10,550	Pevensey Beach	14,240	14,240	14,240
1,000	Public Paths	1,000	1,000	1,000
38,960	Sewerage Requisition Schemes	38,400	8,400	8,400
13,000	Flooding and Land Drainage	13,000	13,000	13,000
(900)	Dog and Game Licenses	(900)	(900)	(900)
196,810	Other Licenses	193,160	193,160	193,160
(102,010)	Hackney Car and Private Hire Licenses	(106,900)	(111,900)	(111,900)
40,820	Pest Control	40,820	40,820	40,820
411,120	Pollution	425,680	425,680	425,680
2,500	Mediation Service	2,500	2,500	2,500
879,680		889,810	884,190	884,190

Performance indicator targets

The National Indicator Set was introduced from 1 April 2008. In 2008/09 we gathered baseline data which has been used to set targets for 2009/10 and beyond.

PI No.	Description	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Target	2010/11 Target
NI 182	Satisfaction of businesses with local authority regulatory services	81%	To be determined	To be determined
NI 189	Flood and coastal erosion risk management	90%	90%	90%
	Respond to enquiries from service users within relevant target time	96%	90%	90%
	Complete the investigation of service requests within relevant target time	87%	85%	85%
	Respond to service requests regarding stray dogs within 24 hours	98%	98%	98%
	Respond to service requests regarding alarms and blocked drainage within 24 hours	87% (alarms) 100% (drainage)	98%	98%
	Determine licence applications and renewals within 28 days	52%	90%	90%
	Respond to Temporary Event Notice applications within the target response time of 10 days	100%	98%	98%
	Respond to telephone calls received within 15 seconds (within 6 rings)	97%	90%	90%
	Percentage of unanswered telephone calls returning to the switchboard	5%	<4%	<4%

How this Service Plan will be monitored

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

In the same way that targets cascade down to individual appraisals, the achievement of those targets is managed at individual, team or service level. Day to day management is used to identify good performance and also those areas where delivery is slower or below the standard expected. There is an underlying principle of "no surprises".

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

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

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

At the year end, provisional outturn figures are prepared and considered by Cabinet. These must then undergo a process of data quality checks internally and external validation by the Audit Commission prior to final publication around June 2010.

Other key reference documents for the service

Licensing and Pollution Control Service Enforcement Policy Statement :
[[http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Environment_and_Transport/Pollution/L&PC%20Enforcement%20Policy%20\(def\).pdf](http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Environment_and_Transport/Pollution/L&PC%20Enforcement%20Policy%20(def).pdf)]

Pollution Control Customer Charter :
[http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Environment_and_Transport/Pollution/documents/Pollutioncontrolcharter.pdf]

Licensing Customer Charter :
[http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Health_and_Public_Safety/Licensing/documents/Licensingcharter.pdf]

Engineering Customer Charter :
[http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Environment_and_Transport/Roads_and_Footpaths/documents/Engineeringcharter_000.pdf]

Policy Statement on flood and coastal defence 2004 :
[http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Environment_and_Transport/Coast_and_Beaches/Policy%20statement%20on%20flood%20and%20coastal%20defence%202004.pdf]

Statement of Licensing Policy :
[http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Health_and_Public_Safety/Licensing/documents/WDC Licensing%20PolicyJan05.pdf]

Gambling Act Statement of Principles :
[http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Health_and_Public_Safety/Licensing/Wealden%20SoP.pdf]

John Gallop
Head of Environmental Protection
T : 01323 443555
E : environmental.protection@wealden.gov.uk