

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Environment and Highways Cabinet Board (Special)**

3 June 2016

### **Report of the Head of Planning and Public Protection**

N. Pearce

#### **Matter for Decision**

**Ward Affected:** All

#### **BUSINESS PLAN 2016 TO 2017**

#### **Purpose of Report**

1. To endorse the Business Plan for the Planning and Public Protection Section covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

#### **Executive Summary**

2. The Business Plan identifies and reviews the key achievements of the service during 2015/16, includes a list of strategic priorities for 2016/18 and how they will be measured, together with an identification of the risks associated with service delivery and the method of service delivery. An up to date structure is also included to advise Members of the re-structure that has taken place within the service over the last few months.

#### **Background**

3. During the financial year 2015-2016, the Council reviewed its performance management arrangements having regard to the findings of the Corporate Assessment. A number of improvements to the Council's performance management framework were proposed following this review and these are reflected in the amended business plan format which is now used by Heads of Service when preparing their Business Plans.

The Business Plan for the Planning and Public Protection Service has been developed with the staff and has been agreed between the Head of Planning and Public Protection and the Director of Environment for the financial year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.

## **Monitoring Arrangements**

4. Progress in delivering the Business Plan will be monitored in a number of ways:
  - Fortnightly meetings are held between the Head of Planning and Public Protection and Accountable Managers to discuss a number of issues including performance management.
  - Monthly meetings are held between the Accountable Managers and their teams in addition to one to one performance meetings with staff, to discuss and if needed, address performance issues.
  - An annual Performance Appraisal is undertaken for all staff including the Head of Service with mid-year appraisal meetings for the latter, to establish whether identified targets are being achieved, and to set new targets for the forthcoming year. If targets are not being met and the reasons can be addressed, measures will be identified to ensure that services are back on track to achieve those targets.
  - The format of the new Business Plans enable for the development of Action Plans for each Accountable Manager which can in turn be presented to Members in the form of report cards. These will illustrate performance targets and associated achievements and will be reported regularly to either the Economic and Communities Regeneration Board and the Environment and Highways Board for scrutiny by Members depending upon which portfolio the individual service falls within. There will be four report cards for this service and dates for reporting have not yet been finalised.

## **Financial Implications**

5. The Business Plan sets out various savings which have been secured under the Forward Financial Plan (FFP) for 2015/16 in addition to identifying how further savings are being pursued.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

6. A Screening Assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its Public Sector Equality Act 2010. After completing the assessment it has been determined that this function does not require an Equality Impact Assessment.

## **Workforce Impacts**

7. The service has recently been restructured to reflect staff departures under ER/VR. This new structure is illustrated within the attached appendix. Other factors which impact upon and/or are as a consequence of the workforce including sickness, changing levels of performance etc are all reflected within the Business Plan.

## **Legal Impacts**

8. There are legal duties associated with delivering the Planning and Public Protection service. These are reflected within the strategic objectives and achievements together with the risks as outlined within the Business Plan

## **Risk Management**

9. The Business Plan includes a risk matrix which includes Service, Departmental and Corporate risks together with the recommended actions required to mitigate those risks.

## **Consultation Outcome**

10. Staff within the service have been consulted and have contributed towards the development of this Business Plan.

## **Recommendations**

11. That the Cabinet Board which includes Members from both the Economic and Community Regeneration Board and the Environment and Highways Board formally endorses the Business Plan for 2016-2017

## **Reasons for Proposed Decision**

12. To implement the Council's performance management framework.

## **Implementation of Decision**

13. The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

## **Appendices**

14. Appendix 1 – Service structures

## **List of Background Papers**

15. Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form
16. Business Plan 2016-2017

## **Officer Contact**

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# **Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council**

## **Environment**

### **Business Plan 2016 / 2017**

For

### **Nicola Pearce**

Head of Planning & Public Protection

#### **Councillor Anthony Taylor**

Cabinet Member

for

Economic Development and Property Services

and

#### **Councillor Edward Latham**

Cabinet Member

For

Environment

## Section 1: Introduction

### Introduction

This is the Business Plan for the Planning and Public Protection Service within the Environment Directorate for the period covering the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. It describes the vision and objectives for the service going forward, sets out a summary of achievements in 2015/16, the priorities for 2016/17 which have been identified to achieve these objectives, together with the risks which could impact upon service delivery.

Attached to this document is an appendix which outlines the staff structure created as a consequence of the merger of the Environmental Health and Trading Standards service with the Planning service, the principle of which was agreed by the Personnel Committee on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

The Planning and Public Protection Service has evolved since the aforementioned Personnel Committee and now provides the following services; Development Management, Planning Policy, Building Control, Countryside and Wildlife including responsibility for the Rights of Way network, General Environmental Health, Food Hygiene and Communicable Diseases and lastly, Trading Standards.

This enlarged service will work collaboratively to secure the following aim:

#### Aim

To establish the framework for shaping, creating and delivering quality, safe, healthy and sustainable communities within which to live and thrive.

To secure this aim the following vision will be pursued:

#### Vision

A pro-active front loaded service where everyone works together to achieve a shared purpose of promoting and creating safe, healthy and sustainable places to work and live in. This will enable us to achieve the corporate priority of securing prosperity for all, better, simpler and cheaper.

### Values

Adopting strong values are key to securing the above aim and vision. This new service aims to work collaboratively to maximise shared knowledge and learning thus improve efficiency. We intend to help each other to secure continuous improvement, improve communication both internally and to our external customers. We

will work in an environment of openness, with consistency, transparency, and equality at the heart of all of our operating principles. We will reduce waste within our services concentrating on adding value and doing what matters for all of our customers.

## Section 2 : Priorities

### Principle 1 – Delivery of Priorities in 2015-2016

Achievement of priorities during 2015-2016 (self-evaluation)

1. In 2015/16 the merger of Environmental Health and Trading Standards with the Planning Service (Pest Control merged with Streetcare) was suggested, scoped and implemented resulting in the transfer of responsibility for the staff on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and their relocation into the Quays in March 2016. This was not a planned priority at the time of writing the Business Plan for 2015/16 but arose as part of a larger restructuring process which sought to deliver additional savings towards the FFP and to enable for the back filling of other responsibilities within the Social Services Directorate as a result of staff departures. As part of this transfer, a savings target of £200k was identified. This required a restructuring of the service to enable four members of staff to leave under ER/VR, but also ensure the continuity of service delivery to a high and safe standard. The restructuring, backfilling of posts and deletion of other posts was completed in March 2016 although the full transfer of the associated budget is still ongoing. Despite this achievement the work is far from complete. It is now necessary to review procedures and practices to ensure that services work collaboratively to deliver efficiencies and cashable savings going forward.
2. As part of the restructuring referred to above, a new team has been established to provide business and technical support to the Planning and Public Protection service. Such support was previously distributed between the individual teams which worked successfully until such times as workload increased or leave/sick resulted in teams being unsupported. The new centralised team will ensure continuity of service delivery relating to business and technical support in addition to allowing for better succession planning for staff wishing to progress to more senior posts within the team at a future date.
3. The building control section have successfully maintained the very high performance in relation to the KPI's which measure the number of Building Control applications checked within 15 days (BCT4) at 95%. It is acknowledged that this is slightly less than that which was achieved last year and is as a result of an increased workload associated with applicants submitting schemes before the recent legislative changes and a significant increase in the number of schemes for external thermal cladding. Furthermore the number of applications which were approved first time (BCT7) dipped during 2014/15, but due to improvements in the interaction between officers and our customers and the training provided by our staff this has improved resulting in a performance figure of 99% at the close of the year.
4. The building control section maintained their market share for fee earning controllable building work at 87% in 2015/16. This was achieved through continuous marketing of a service which is superior to that provided by Approved Inspectors.

5. All officers within building control played an active role within LABC Cymru, contributing to each of the identified work streams within that organisation thus ensuring that this Council is influencing the National Building Control agenda going forward. Key issues pursued amongst others, relate to the operation of Approved Inspectors. The work-stream relating to collaborative working in a national context was stalled pending the outcome of Local Government Reorganisation. However this council is continuing to work collaboratively with Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Swansea to undertake warranty inspections on behalf of LABC. A successful bid has been submitted and a surveyor from NPT been chosen to be trained by LABC to carry out the function. Once completed this will result in raising the profile of the service nationally in addition to securing additional income for the Council.
6. Building control officers supported both Neath RFC and Aberavon RFC in navigating the transitional arrangements associated with the deregulation of sports grounds.
7. Whilst work commenced on the improvement of working arrangements between the building control and development management sections to improve enforcement this was delayed due to the wider restructuring associated with the merger of the Environmental Health and Trading Standards service into the Directorate. Work has since commenced on streamlining the wider enforcements responsibilities of the Planning and Public Protection service. This is being led by the Building Control and Business and Technical Support Manager and will be a priority for this 2016/17.
8. Building control assisted in the successful delivery of three landmark projects in the county borough, namely the Swansea Bay Campus, phase one of the Neath town centre redevelopment scheme and the new Aberavon leisure and Fitness Centre. All of these schemes evolved during the construction process and as such required a proactive approach from officers to identify problems at an early stage and the necessary solutions to not only secure compliance with the building regulations but also to save on development costs.
9. The Building Control section were part of a collaboration between Construction Excellence Wales, LABC Cymru, developers and contractors and three other Local Authorities on developing Site Waste Management Plans on an App for mobile phones. This has recently been rolled out nationally.
10. A draft protocol covering the contribution made by the Pollution Control team to Phase 1 / Geoenvironmental Desk Studies for Council projects, and the provision of services to the general public / developers in respect of such matters, including appropriate pre-application advice on the content and methodologies of such reports has been prepared. However based on recent experience in dealing with contentious sites the protocol needs to be amended further. This will be prioritised for progression this year.
11. The Council's website relating to contaminated land issues has been updated. Whilst it was proposed to upload the Contaminated Land Public Register onto the website this has been delayed due to the need for Welsh translation. This will be prioritised this year and will enable members of the public to self serve.
12. Monitoring of key sites in respect of air quality and nickel levels, to ensure compliance with National and European targets, has been ongoing in accordance with our statutory duties. This has identified continued areas of concerns in some parts of the Borough but improvements in others.
13. The Development Management section experienced a reduction in performance following a loss of experienced staff. Despite this, improvements in performance have been secured especially within the householder development area which secured an average of 95% of applications determined within



the statutory period. Overall performance increased to 80% in the final quarter of 2015/16.

14. A priority for last year was to design and implement a S106 database and protocol to ensure that we improve the monitoring and management of S106 infrastructure and payments to the authority. Whilst work is ongoing on this database, we now have a dedicated officer working on the creation and management of this database which will in turn improve the Council's ability to secure maximum contributions from developers on time and in the right places. This in turn should reduce financial pressures upon the Council.
15. Training for all elected Members has been increased in relation to Planning matters, with bespoke mandatory targeted training for those Members who sit on the Planning Committee. Such training has and will continue to improve the quality of decision making and is especially important given the significant legislative changes which have been introduced in a very short period of time.
16. The introduction of standardised procedures and protocols in relation to the delivery of the Planning Enforcement Service and the Planning Appeals service was identified in the previous business plan as a priority. Unfortunately due to the time spent in responding to the huge number of consultations issued by the Welsh Government associated with the Planning (Wales) Act 2015, together with the associated new procedures and the need to train agents on the implications of all the changes which are currently being rolled out, it has not been possible to concentrate on these procedures and protocols. Given the merger of the service as previously referred to it is also opportune to consider such procedures and protocols in relation to the wider service, from which lessons can be learnt and improvements can be made. This is a priority for this year.
17. Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) were secured for two Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) which were determined by the Planning Inspectorate within the Council's boundaries last year. However one of the schemes related to the proposed power station at TATA steel works which did not progress as the company did not pursue the discharge of the requirements associated with the development which would have delivered the associated funding for the council. The PPA which secured contributions towards the costs of employing a planning officer and covered part of the salary of an ecologist within the service related to the Tidal Lagoon project. A further extension of the Pen-y-Cymoedd Wind farm SLA was also negotiated to secure additional income for the service.
18. Planning agents' workshops have resumed after a suspension for approximately 18 months. These proved particularly useful to ensure that agents working within the County Borough are aware of all the changes in legislation and as such satisfy our expectations in terms of the quality and validity of new submissions. These workshops will continue to be delivered on a regular basis.
19. The planning application for the mineral development at East Pit was thoroughly assessed and granted planning permission subject to an extensive number of conditions and an alternative S106 agreement. This ensured that the site was not abandoned in an unrestored state which could have had long term adverse visual impacts upon the surrounding area in addition to preventing potential flooding from the void area in an uncontrolled manner. The approval also secured the continued employment of those directly employed on site and those working within the supply chain for a further four years.
20. A cost benefit analysis was undertaken in relation to the enforcement opportunities available to the Council associated with the unrestored state of the former Margam Open Cast coal Site. As a consequence of this a planning application was subsequently submitted for an alternative restoration scheme of the site. This application has been assessed and is awaiting the signing of a legal agreement to secure the use of the associated bond to pay for the

restoration of the site.

21. A new pre-application protocol has been introduced as required by the Welsh Government under the new Planning Act. In addition to this statutory requirement, we have retained and improved our existing pre-application service to provide choice in the level of service available to customers, in addition to giving them the opportunity to continue having confidential discussions with the Council until such a time as a planning application is submitted.
22. The Service Level Agreement relating to the provision of a minerals service to the authority by Carmarthenshire council has been extended to cover enforcement of minerals and waste in addition to scheduled visits, the latter of which has resulted in an increase in income to the Council.
23. Two major Public Inquiries relating to wind farms at Hirfynydd and Mynydd Brombil were determined following considerable officer and consultant input. Whilst the former was successfully defended with the Council securing a partial award of costs against the developer, the latter was allowed and we are currently working on discharging the conditions. A PPA was secured to fund the work associated with assessment of conditions.
24. The Examination in Public (EIP) associated with the Local Development Plan (LDP) was completed and led to only minimal changes to our deposited plan. The LDP was subsequently adopted by the Council on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Following its adoption the planning policy officers involved in the preparation and adoption of the LDP were commended by the Chief Planning Officer of the Welsh Government for the quality of the plan, and for their professionalism at all stages of the process.
25. A detailed procedure has been designed to monitor the effectiveness and delivery of the policy aspirations within the recently adopted Local Development Plan. The results of this will feed into the first Annual Monitoring report which is due for submission to the Welsh Government in October 2017 and annually thereafter.
26. Five strategically important SPGs which were essential to support the LDP going forward and which were also essential to assisting access to funding streams for the Property and Regeneration section were drafted and scrutinised within the EIP. These will now be refreshed to take on board the Inspectors report and the adopted version of the LDP.
27. Work commenced on the preparation of a joint Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for Fabian Way through collaborative work with colleagues in the City and County of Swansea. This SPG will help to secure a coordinated approach towards the redevelopment of this strategic corridor, in addition to securing funding through planning obligations which will itself deliver essential infrastructure required to facilitate our collective regeneration aspirations. A draft version is now complete and has been consulted upon. Work will continue this year to compile and assess consultation responses and make any necessary changes to the document prior to its adoption as SPG by both authorities. Such work should be completed this year and will be identified as a priority going forward.
28. Despite an immensely tight timescale from the Welsh Government and inadequate funding the first Existing Route Map (ERM) for the whole of the County Borough was prepared, consulted upon and submitted to the Welsh Government within the defined timescales. The priority for last year was to concentrate only on the two main settlements of Neath and Port Talbot, however a decision was taken to complete all 11 qualifying settlements within the

County Borough. We have since received a letter from the Welsh Government directing us to make minor alterations to our ERM. Whilst this was initially a concern, it has since been established that only 5 authorities had their ERMs accepted, 3 authorities were required to resubmit the entire document while the 14 remaining authorities were required to make some amendments. Work will commence on these minor alterations as a priority going forward as they are required for submission to the Welsh Government by July 2016.

29. The management and maintenance regimes associated with our Public Right of Way (PRoW) network have been redesigned to reflect the relocation of the service from Crynant to the Quays. This secured savings as part of the FFP from accommodation costs, efficiencies and access to plant and machinery. The cessation of contracts with a small number of Community Councils resulted in a number of complaints and concerns that footpaths within urban areas and within the urban fringe would be neglected going forward. Despite these concerns, the maintenance of these paths has been taken on successfully by the Countryside & Wildlife team and following the announcement of a better than expected settlement from the Welsh Government, a sum of £100k was identified for use in the improvement of hard surfacing of a network of regularly used footpaths throughout the County Borough. This will not only improve their accessibility but will also reduce the maintenance liability going forward. Implementation of the project will be undertaken during this financial year.
30. Officers within the Countryside and Wildlife team have been working with other departments to ensure the Local Authority complies with the statutory duty for Biodiversity Conservation under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 and the requirements of other national and European environmental legislation (current and emerging); and contributes towards the delivery of the goals and objective requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.
31. The Food and Health Protection section successfully inspected 100% of the high risk food business liable for inspection in 2015/2016. 100% of medium risk food businesses also had an official control.
32. 92% of new businesses identified by the Food and Health Protection team were subject to a risk assessment (or returned a self-assessment questionnaire). This is an increase of 13% compared to the previous year (79% for 2014/2015).
33. The percentage of food establishments that were inspected and found to be broadly compliant with Food Hygiene Standards in 2015/2016 was maintained at 92.7% when compared to the previous year.
34. The requirement to migrate/reissue food hygiene ratings that were awarded under the discretionary scheme that were covered by the mandatory scheme was achieved.
35. The Food and Health Protection service achieved a number of projects in 2015/2016 which included promoting National Food Safety Week, and undertaking various Microbiological Food Sampling in Businesses. Two projects were withdrawn following discussions with the FSA (namely, awareness raising of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme with business to encourage the use of reputable suppliers and coaching on specific cleaning and disinfection issues).

36. The Food and Health Protection team were successful in enforcing the food hygiene rating scheme in accordance with the Enforcement Policy. In 2015/2016, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council received 4 appeals, 43 applications for a Rescore Assessment (at £150 each) and served 4 fixed penalty notices (proceeds go to Wales Govt). All appeals were considered and dismissed, and the actions of the Inspecting officers confirmed. This demonstrated the robustness of service delivery.
37. A number of successful campaigns have been carried out to protect the public, for example, rogue traders week, scammers and suckers, allergen training, menus count in care and infectious disease control in care homes, to name but a few.
38. The Food and Health Protection team successfully investigated 91.3% complaints/referrals of infectious disease within the appropriate timescale.
39. All suspected cases of food poisoning were investigated with liaison with Public Health Wales when appropriate. Such investigations confirmed that there were no major food poisoning outbreaks during this period.
40. Trading Standards further developed an intelligence led enforcement approach. Through data gathered and shared both locally and nationally, priority areas have been identified. These include dealing with the rogue elements of the building and second hand car trade, food and feed enforcement, and increasingly the victims of scams. The department is now focussing on these priority areas. Consequently, fewer resources are being devoted to the inspection programme, this can conflict with the requirements of national enforcement bodies.
41. A number of successful campaigns and investigations were undertaken in relation to product safety including child car seats, toys and sunbeds.
42. The department has undertaken considerable cross agency work, including work during the annual Rogue Trader Week. Working with the Police and other agencies to stop and advise traders on their rights and obligations and to collate intelligence on rogue trading. The department also took the opportunity to carry out weights checks of vehicles to ensure they were within manufacturers safety limits.
43. The new Consumer Rights Act came into force, which strengthened the rights of the consumer and brought in more obligations for the trade. The department has identified that the second hand car trade and home improvements are amongst the most complained about trade sectors for civil dispute. Consequently, they were targeted for advice.
44. 44 The department continues to develop its work in dealing with victims of scams. It has worked with local branches of Nationwide and Barclays bank in raising awareness of vulnerable customers who may be victims of scams and rogue traders.
45. In conjunction with neighbouring authorities, the department has carried out a number of food sampling exercises, including food prepared by schools, allergen declaration of food, food supplements and locally produced products. Most significantly, it has identified that there is an issue with the mis-description and the levels of colours and presence of unauthorised colours of meals sold from takeaways. This has been particularly resource intensive for the Retail and Industrial Section.

46. The Department investigated and took action when necessary in relation to a wide variety of complaints ranging from defective drainage to noise.
47. The Trading Standards team successfully inspected 100% of all high risk businesses liable for a programmed inspection in 2015/2016. The Animal Health team also successfully inspected 100% of high risk businesses liable for a programmed inspection.
48. A Private Landlord Forum was delivered and well attended by approximately 45 landlords and agents. We had a keynote speaker from Rent Smart Wales who explained the new law about landlord registration and licensing requirements in Wales. The forum also provided an opportunity for landlords and agents to meet and discuss issues with various officers from across the Council. This forum is proposed to continue with a view to promoting compliance with the new duties introduced under the Housing (Wales) Act 2015, relating to registration and licensing requirements
49. 1908 properties were identified as long term vacant at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. We sent all of these properties an empty homes letter detailing ways the owners can get assistance to bring the houses back into use. We provided a number of owners with advisory information packs, and made referrals to the Council's Houses to Homes property loan scheme. During this period, 767 empty properties were identified as having been re-occupied.
50. The service supported the Housing Options Service in helping to prevent homelessness
51. Housing Options funded two temporary Environmental Health posts until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 using the Welsh Government Homelessness Grant. During this period we developed procedures to assess the suitability of accommodation for homelessness purposes. We received 72 requests from Housing Options to inspect houses for suitability. Unfortunately that financial assistance has not continued beyond March 2016 and as such these inspections will be scaled back.
52. We received 127 statutory notifications involving injuries, dangerous occurrences and diseases at workplaces in the Borough regulated for Health and Safety by the Local Authority all of which were assessed and investigated where necessary. We also investigated 43 complaints relating to Health and Safety at workplaces within the County Boroughs
53. We carried out 110 smoke-free inspections of enclosed public places subject to the smoke-free legislation. The majority of premises were found to be compliant with the legislation with verbal advice for non-display of signage given.
54. One priority project was successfully completed relating to water quality within swimming pools and spas in the Borough. The majority of pool water was found to be satisfactory with advice given where the results were borderline. A second project has been developed as a joint initiative with the City and County of Swansea targeted at Industrial Estates. The actions from this successful collaboration which includes the delivery of a safety training programme for businesses will be rolled out in 2016/17.

**Principle 2 – Priorities to be delivered in 2016-2017****Priorities / Actions / Outcomes and Measures Table:**

<b>Priority</b>	<b>Actions to deliver the priorities</b>	<b>Officer (s) Responsible</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Evidence to indicate achievement e.g. outcomes and associated measures.</b>
PM1 – To successfully complete the follow up audit of the Environmental Health and Trading Standards Service by the Food Standards Agency (FSA)	Work is being undertaken to ensure that all the action points on the previous audit are completed.	Mark Thomas	December 2016	Sufficient evidence is submitted to the FSA to demonstrate that all action points highlighted in a previous audit have been complied with. The report from the FSA will confirm whether the recommendations of the audit have been complied with. This will be the appropriate measure
PM2 – Continue to inspect all high risk food premises based on risk assessments and categorisation of premises. Categories A to C will be inspected but work will also commence on inspecting category D premises.	The risk assessments will be undertaken and staff resources will be deployed to cover the priority premises.	Mark Thomas	Ongoing	KPIs will demonstrate the number of premises inspected and will be defined as the appropriate measure.
PM3 –To establish and maximise the percentage of food establishments which are “broadly compliant” with food hygiene standards	Inspections will be undertaken and proactive training to existing and new premises, provide coaching, undertake sampling etc	Mark Thomas	Ongoing	This measure is a PAM, and the KPI’s will demonstrate the number of premises inspected that are broadly compliant in accordance with the FSA definition
PM4 – Review/Restructure the General Environmental Health Service to reflect the demands of the service and the specialisms within the team.	An assessment of service demands will be undertaken and staff will be allocated to address the high demand services according to subject area. Improved performance management will be introduced to	Mark Thomas	March 2017 and ongoing thereafter	The capacity of the service will improve and will be better able to deliver its regulatory functions in a proactive manner. Staff will have more ownership for their work and accountability will improve. This will be reflected in the KPIs going forward, which will also be the appropriate measure.

	track workload and officer performance. Work will also progress towards improving the online presence of the service			
PM5 – Implement the objectives of the Rent Smart Wales Initiative in terms of improving the quality of landlords in homes provided by the private rented sector	Promote the registration and licencing of landlords and letting agents and consider utilising enforcement powers for non-compliance when necessary and appropriate.	Mark Thomas	March 2017	Number of Rent Smart Wales enquiries recorded and associated actions will be the appropriate measures.
PM6 – Mobile working will be piloted in Environmental Health and Trading Standards	Funding will be secured through Rent Smart wales and through proceeds of Crime Awards to pay for mobile devices for staff	Mark Thomas	Ongoing	The introduction of mobile devices will allow officers to spend more time on site rather than travelling to and from the office. This should increase the capacity of the service to deal with demands going forward. KPIs will demonstrate if this is successful and will be the appropriate measure.
PM7- Achieve 100% of the FSA / WhoTS feed premises inspection plan and 100% all of high risk food standards premises based on risk assessments and categorisation of premises by the Trading standards Team	Work will be reprioritised to ensure that these inspections are completed	Mark Thomas	March 2017	KPI's will demonstrate the number of premises inspected in each of the categories and will be defined as the appropriate measure.
PM8 – Improve the intelligence gathering work undertaken by the Consumer Fraud team which has recently been expanded to reflect priorities going forward.	Further work will be undertaken with regional and national partners, and the scammers and suckers work will be prioritised to further protect vulnerable people.	Mark Thomas	Ongoing	There isn't a single measure that can be used to demonstrate effectiveness. It will be a combination of factors but primarily a reduction in the number of people who fall victim to fraud. The protocol will be the appropriate measure, together with a reduction in the number of people who fall victim to all kinds of consumer fraud or victims of unsafe goods.
PM9 – A protocol relating to Phase 1 / Geoenvironmental Desk Studies for Council projects will be adopted	The draft protocol will be further revised to reflect recent experiences and will be consulted upon with appropriate departments	Mark Thomas	December 2016	The protocol will ensure that officers involved in delivering council schemes are made aware at an early stage of the implications associated with contamination and what actions are required to demonstrate delivery of those sites having regard to

				necessary mitigation. The protocol will be the appropriate measure.
PM10 - Investigate all complaints and referrals of infectious diseases ( E.coli, salmonella, Campylobacter, Giardia, Hepatitis E etc) within appropriate time scales	Complaints and referrals to be allocated to suitably trained staff to investigate within appropriate time scales	Mark Thomas	Ongoing	All complaints and referrals will be evaluated against the appropriate time scales. This will be the appropriate measure.
PM11- Manage the National House in Multiple Occupation licencing scheme and ensure all known licensable HMO's are identified and inspected based on risk.	To continue to enforce the HMO licencing scheme and inspect identified HMO's based on risk	Mark Thomas	Ongoing	Record the percentage of HMO's licenced in relation to the number of properties occupied within the Private Rented Sector. These figures will be the appropriate measure.
PM12 - Fulfill the Authorities legal obligation under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to take reasonable steps to investigate allegations of Statutory Nuisances.		Mark Thomas	Ongoing	Number of complaints received, together with other data relating to the outcome e.g. resolved informally/formal action will be the appropriate measure.
PM13 - Maximise the number of empty houses brought back into use		Mark Thomas	Ongoing	The current KPI is currently under review by Welsh Government and Stakeholders. It is due to be updated shortly. The amended KPI will be the appropriate measure.
PM14 - Continue to fulfil the Authorities responsibility to monitor RIDDOR reports and where appropriate investigate. This will include a minimum of two Health and Safety interventions.		Mark Thomas	Ongoing	RIDDOR reports and subsequent actions will be recorded. Intervention plans/results will be collated. Both of the above will be the appropriate measure.
PM15 - Investigate complaints relating to poor rented accommodation, and inappropriate landlord behaviour such as illegal eviction and harassment.		Mark Thomas	Ongoing	Complaints and subsequent actions including enforcement action when necessary will be recorded and will be the appropriate measure.
PM16 – The Council's Contaminated land Public register will be translated into Welsh and uploaded	The strategy has been adopted by the Council but needs to be translated in to welsh following	Mark Thomas	March 2017	The Contaminated Land Public Register is frequently referred to by third parties interested in developing within Neath Port Talbot. Its availability on line will



onto the web.	which it will be made available on line.			allow customers to self-serve thus releasing staff to concentrate on other duties. The availability of the register online will be the appropriate measure.
PM17 – Regular monitoring in respect of air quality and nickel levels will continue	Air quality and nickel levels is monitored extensively throughout the County Borough, the results of which are publically available and are acted upon by Natural Resources Wales, the Welsh Government, and the European Union. This will continue and any necessary mitigation will be identified where necessary.	Mark Thomas	Ongoing	The results of this monitoring are crucial given the potential threat of infraction proceedings should exceedances arise. The results from monitoring and the identification of necessary mitigation will be the appropriate measure.
PM18 – A comprehensive Enforcement Policy and procedure will be prepared and implemented in relation to complaints about untidy land and buildings in addition to dangerous structures.	A triage system will be prepared and will be implemented by the Building Control section which will deal with all complaints within this subject area.	Paul Davis Steve Ball Mark Thomas	December 2016	One system will be delivered by the service which will utilise all legislative powers available. This will result in a reduction in the number of officers visiting the same site and the complaint being pushed from one service to another. Complaints will therefore be dealt with more efficiently and at less cost to the Council. The existence of a new successful procedure will be the appropriate measure.
PM19 – Officer time will be refocused to deliver the schemes forming part of the Vibrant and Viable Places (VVP) Project.	The constraints which could prevent schemes from coming forward will be identified at the earliest possible stage and partners will be engaged to identify viable and deliverable solutions to ensure that the schemes are approved having regard to all material planning considerations.	Steve Ball	Ongoing	Individual schemes forming part of the VVP project will have been granted planning permission. This will be measured on the speed and quality of the decision associated with these projects.
PM20 – A new Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) will be prepared in addition to a S106 database.	The newly appointed S106 officer will, having regard to the LDP evidence base, prepare a SPG which will clearly identify the expectations of the Council with regard to	Steve Ball	March 2017	Developers will be able to identify the costs associated with bringing developments forward from the start thus allowing them to establish risk levels. The Council will in turn be able to maximise the amount of infrastructure delivered by the private sector and

	Planning gain. The new S106 database will enable thorough monitoring of requirements sought and work secured/payments received.			monitor its delivery going forward. This should in turn reduce the costs to the council. The existence of a new SPG and database will be the appropriate measure.
PM21 – Unblock the bottlenecks in the Development Management Service and ensure that Senior Officers are involved in providing advice to officers at the earliest possible stage.	Re-assess the workflow /procedures associated with the Development Management system to reflect the extensive legislative changes which have emerged since July 2015 when the Planning (Wales) Act 2015 received Royal Assent.	Steve Ball	December 2016	The end to end time associated with the determination of planning applications will decrease. Late changes in the approach to the determination of applications especially those associated with major applications will be reduced or ideally removed. This will be reflected in the performance data which should improve going forward which will be the appropriate measure.
PM22 – Continuation of Members training, building upon what has recently been rolled out.	A timetable of training will be drawn up to ensure that Members have regular training in subject areas that are necessary to enable them to undertake their planning responsibilities whether it is as a member of the Planning Committee or otherwise.	Steve Ball	Ongoing	Members will be better informed about legislative change and individual topic areas which are important to the decision making process. This will improve Members understanding of the planning system which is complex and constantly changing and will also improve the quality of decision making. This will be measured via a programme of training.
PM23 – the Delegated arrangements and public Speaking protocol will be amended	The amendments will reflect recent changes to legislation in terms of delegated arrangements, while the public speaking protocol will incorporate the concerns/constructive criticism received from elected Members and members of the public in relation to the procedure since it was introduced in November 2014.	Steve Ball	September 2016	Accountability and the transparency of the Development Management service will improve. Less complaints will be received in relation to the decision making process. This will be measured by the introduction of successful new arrangements and an appropriate protocol.
PM24 – The programme of works associated with East Pit is maintained	Officers will continue to work closely with the operator of the site and other regulators to ensure that the extraction activities and the	Nicola Pearce	Ongoing	Restoration bond payments are received on time having regard to the list of tasks within the associated s106 agreement.

	restoration scheme remain on target in terms of delivery without impacting upon the surrounding environment and communities over and above that projected at the planning application stage.			The appropriate measure will be that extraction activities and progressive restoration are undertaken in accordance with the approved plans and delivery programme.
PM25 – Planning permission for an alternative restoration scheme at the former Margam Open Cast Coal site is approved and work commences in accordance with the approved plans and conditions	Planning permission is granted subject to an acceptable legal agreement. The Council commissions the Coal Authority to supervise restoration going forward and work commences to secure completion of the restoration before June 2017	Steve Ball	Ongoing	The site is restored having regard to the identified priorities which are to make the site safe and secure. This will utilise the bond money held within the escrow account and the work will be monitored and evaluated by representatives of the Coal Authority who will ensure that value for money is also achieved. The appropriate measure is that the planning permission is granted and work commences in accordance with the agreed programme.
PM26 – The Business and Technical Support team are retrained to ensure that they are multi-skilled and therefore able to support all of the sections within the Planning and Public Protection Service	A list of different duties and responsibilities will be drawn up and the skills and abilities of each member of staff will be enhanced to ensure that they can support each of the sections.	Paul Davis	Ongoing	The creation of a multi skilled team will ensure that sufficient support is available to all sections at all times. Improved skills will also facilitate succession planning and will maintain business continuity. Improved support to the individual sections will result in a more efficient service which will be reflected in KPIs. It will also enhance the ability of staff to secure career progression. The appropriate measure will be that staff are retained and multi-skilled – This will be illustrated in the EDR's
PM27 – Deliver the Building Control service on budget	The fee structure is designed to ensure that fee income covers the cost of service delivery in accordance with the strict CIPFA rules. ie it is delivered on a cost neutral basis.	Paul Davis	Ongoing	The revenue budget allocated to the service is only required to cover the statutory non fee earning responsibilities of the service ie Dangerous Structures, Safety at Sports Grounds etc. The cost of delivering the service does not therefore impose significantly upon the Council's budget. The final out turn for the service will be the appropriate measure.
PM28 – Smooth implementation of the recent Building Control legislative changes introduced in	The recent and emerging legislative changes will start to impact on the ground shortly. Officers will need to	Paul Davis	Ongoing	Officers will be able to assist builders on site more readily. Their proactive approach should lead to a retention or even an increase in the councils market

December 2015	be appropriately trained to support the construction industry. Changes of note include sprinkler requirements and the controls relating to the increased roll out of broadband.			share of construction projects both within and outside Neath Port Talbot. The share of the market will be the appropriate measure.
PM29 – Improve the marketing and accessibility of added value services provided by the Building control section.	Added value services are currently delivered by Building Control. Knowledge of their availability is currently reliant upon word of mouth. An online presence which will include a list of fees and charges and the ability to negotiate such fees will be developed	Paul Davis	September 2016	The improved online presence should increase the number of added value services delivered which will result in an increase in fee income. An increase in fee income from added value services will be the appropriate measure.
PM30- Sponsorship is secured to cover the cost of delivering the annual Building Control Awards	Extensive marketing is undertaken at an early stage to secure the money and thus ensure that the awards are delivered to a high standard	Paul Davis	October 2016	The annual Building Control awards are an important marketing tool to secure work from local and national builders for the Council's Building Control section. They have also been successful with many entries going through and winning at the regional and national events, thus lifting the profile of Neath Port Talbot. The delivery of a successful awards, which will in turn feed through to winners at the national events will be the appropriate measure.
PM31- Develop an in-house Building Control submission portal which integrates with our back office system	Building Control officers to work with IT to enable builders to submit applications on line and to request site inspections via an app on their phones	Paul Davis	March 2017	An increased use of internet technology will reduce the demands upon both the Building Control Officers and the support staff in terms of inputting hard copy building Regs submissions onto our back office system and dealing with telephone requests for inspections. Staff time can be re-invested in delivering a better cheaper service going forward. The development and implementation of the new technology is the appropriate measure.
PM32 – Develop a procedure to deal with Building Over Sewer Agreements	Welsh Water are intending to revise procedures and are considering a withdrawal of the formal building	Paul Davis	March 2017	Welsh Water have a reputation of obstructing development projects due to their unnecessary intervention. Whilst their withdrawal from the process

	over sewer requirements. The intention is to place the onus upon Building control services. A new procedure is required which will ensure protection of the sewers without causing undue delay to developments			will place a greater burden upon Building Control, it will also speed up the development process. The appropriate measure will be that the speed in the delivery of projects affected by sewers will increase.
PM33- Complete work on the six strategically important SPGs required to support the Local Development Plan (LDP)	Work has commenced on the preparation of the SPGs. This will continue and will also involve consultation prior to their adoption.	Ceri Morris	November 2016	The SPGs will be adopted and will provide further clarity to developers and Development Management staff when interpreting policies within the LDP. This will reduce risk and should encourage good quality development within Neath Port Talbot. The adoption of the SPGs will be the appropriate measure.
PM34- Commence work on seven further SPGs: Port Talbot & Town Centre Development Framework; Open Space & Greenspace; Biodiversity & Geodiversity; Renewable & Low Carbon Energy; Design; The Historic Environment; Development & the Welsh Language.	Produce drafts, consult and prepare for adoption	Ceri Morris	March 2017	The SPGs will be adopted and will provide further clarity to developers and Development Management staff when interpreting policies within the LDP. This will reduce risk and should encourage good quality development within Neath Port Talbot. The adoption of the SPGs will be the appropriate measure.
PM35- Undertake research in respect of a 'Biodiversity Compensation Scheme' to support the planning process feeding into the development of SPG	Funding secured through RDP LEADER and Natural Resources Wales Competitive Fund to employ a consultant to deliver the project.	Ceri Morris	March 2017	A draft SPG will be prepared ready for consultation. This will secure longer term opportunities for off-site biodiversity compensation which will speed up the implementation of projects which would otherwise be stalled due to ecological constraints. The adoption of the SPG will be the appropriate measure.
PM36- Complete the joint SPG for the regeneration of the Fabian Way corridor	The 8 week consultation exercise was completed on the 25 <sup>th</sup> January 2016. Work is now underway on assessing the representations received and updating the SPG if necessary.	Ceri Morris	December 2016	The SPG will be adopted by both Neath Port Talbot Council and the City and County of Swansea. It will direct developers to deliver the regeneration aspirations of both councils in addition to securing S106 money to improve essential infrastructure along the corridor. The adoption of the SPG will be the appropriate measure.

PM37 – Establish systems and procedures for monitoring the performance of the LDP	An outline of the monitoring indicators associated with the policies contained within the EIP was scrutinised and agreed at the Examination in Public. Work needs to commence on establishing a robust framework for collecting evidence to confirm whether or not the policies are working effectively.	Ceri Morris	Ongoing	There is a requirement to submit an Annual Monitoring Report, the first of which is required for submission to the Welsh Government in October 2017 and annually thereafter. This requires the collation and assessment of a significant evidence base. The evidence which will feed into the AMR will demonstrate whether the Council's policies are securing the objectives and Vision of the LDP. If not it may result in a partial or full review of the plan. The monitoring procedure will be the appropriate measure.
PM38- Undertake / publish the annual Joint Housing Land Availability Study (JHLAS).	In consultation with the building industry produce a comprehensive review of the amount of available land for housing development.	Ceri Morris	September 2016	A report outlining the Authority's current position on the amount of housing land available for development will be prepared for examination by the Planning Inspectorate. The JHLAS report will be the appropriate measure.
PM39- Complete the Active Travel Act commitment in relation to the Existing Route Map (ERM) and commence work on the Integrated Network Map (INM)	The ERM was submitted to the Welsh Government in January 2016. Further amendments have been requested by the Welsh Government in relation to the justification statements which support some of our routes. Work will then commence on identifying what improvements are required to these routes to enable for their inclusion within the INM	Ceri Morris	July 2016 for the revised ERM and ongoing for the INM	The submission of an acceptable ERM will ensure compliance with the duties relating to the Active Travel Act. The acceptance of the ERM by Welsh Government will be the appropriate measure.  Work on the INM will facilitate the ability of the council to secure additional funding in the future to undertake improvements to pedestrian and cycling routes within our eligible settlements. The commencement of work on the INM will be the appropriate measure.
PM40- Amend the management and maintenance regimes associated with our Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network and commence work on a review of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP)	Due to the reduced budgets associated with the maintenance of PRoW there is now greater reliance on the receipt of complaints to inform non-routine maintenance requirements. Following the receipt of one off additional funding in April 2016 a schedule of work to repair	Ceri Morris	March 2017	The additional funding invested into PRoW will improve the quality of our most frequently used routes, which will reduce the number of complaints submitted and will also reduce the maintenance liabilities and costs going forward for these routes. Other funding can then be diverted to the maintenance of other routes and associated structures.

	and/or resurface PRoW in urban and urban fringe areas has been drawn up and is currently being delivered with the Streetcare section			Agreed outline / timetable for the RoWIP review will be the appropriate measure.
PM41- Support and contribute to regional collaboration initiatives / studies particularly in the light of the new planning regime in Wales and the introduction of Strategic Development Plans (SDPs).	Working in partnership with SWW Authorities gathering data / information and collaborating on various projects.	Ceri Morris	Ongoing	The production of 'larger than local' projects / assessments / reports which will give strategic direction to developers. This will be difficult to measure as it is a long term project and relies on the cooperation of a number of parties.
PM42- Prepare and publish a plan on how the Authority intends to comply with the new, enhanced biodiversity duty outlined in the Environment (Wales) Act, 2016.	The Act places a greater duty on Councils in terms of enhanced biodiversity. NRW have also stopped providing services and is re-directing the responsibility to Councils without additional resources being made available. The plan will need to identify the extent of these emerging duties and protocols will need to be developed to ensure that all services within the Council are complying with this increased duty. Training of all staff will be developed and delivered.	Ceri Morris	Ongoing	A draft plan, in preparation for publication in May 2017, outlining how the Authority will comply with the new biodiversity duty will be the appropriate measure.
PM43 – Extend the sponsorship of council owned assets to secure fee income	An extension of the contract with an existing third party provider is to be pursued to enable for a pilot scheme of sponsorship for our other assets including streetlighting, parks, car parks etc. A full procurement exercise will need to be undertaken to allow us to maximise our potential	Ceri Morris	March 2017	An extension of the contract needs to be secured in line with the procurement rules and a pilot scheme associated with sponsoring additional assets shall be pursued. The appropriate measure will be whether an acceptable balance between protecting visual amenity and maximising sponsorship opportunities can be achieved together with an increase in income associated with such sponsorship.

**Mandatory Corporate Measures Table** (other than CM13 these mandatory measures are also required in the service report cards prepared by your managers):

Mandatory Measures (2016-2017)	2014-2015 Performance (if available)	2015-2016 Performance (if available)	2016-2017 Performance Outlook
<p><b>CM01</b> % (no.) of transactional services that are web enabled</p>	<p>Difficult to quantify in % terms. However the UDP was available on-line. All consultations in relation to the emerging LDP were undertaken online, Planning applications could be submitted, consulted upon, and paid for on line. Whilst information relating to other service areas was also available on-line although it is debateable as to whether this is a transaction.</p>	<p>Difficult to quantify in % terms. However the UDP was available on-line. All consultations in relation to the emerging LDP were undertaken online, Planning applications could be submitted, consulted upon, and paid for on line. Whilst information relating to other service areas was also available on-line although it is debateable as to whether this is a transaction.</p>	<p>The Planning service has always embraced the digital agenda and for this reason our LDP is fully interactive, customers can submit planning applications, pay for them and can be consulted and respond to those consultations on line. Information can also be downloaded for the Environmental Health and Trading standards services, although transactions cannot be undertaken as yet. The Building regulations service is still heavily reliant upon phone call demands from builders. It is therefore proposed to concentrate on the latter two areas going forward to improve their digital presence.</p>
<p><b>CM02</b> % (no.) take up of the above web enabled transactions</p>	<p><b>*34.15%</b></p> <p>*This relates to the number of planning applications submitted online</p>	<p><b>*40.48%</b></p> <p>*This relates to the number of planning applications submitted online</p>	<p>The number of planning applications submitted on line is increasing year on year. The restricted number of hard copy LDPs available will also force customers down the digital route. The improvement of the digital presence relating to the Environmental Health service will also ensure that customers will submit information electronically in the future which will in turn improve the ability of officers to fully investigate the complaint rather than receiving and transcribing vague complaints into the back office system.</p>



<b>CM03</b> % of revenue expenditure within budget	Unavailable	99.45%	100%
<b>CM04</b> % (amount) of FFP savings at risk	0%	0%	Work is underway to secure the delivery of 100% of our FFP target for 2016/17 which amounts to £268k. However £200k of the target for this year is associated with the merger of the EHTS service into planning. This was a target which was reliant upon a full transfer of resources from SSHH and withdrawal from the lease associated with Milland Road. There have been issues in relation to the former whereby a reduced resource was transferred. This has been amplified by the fact that we have been unable to withdraw from the lease prior to the break period which is April 2017. This will potentially result in a risk that 26% of the target is at risk. Whilst efforts will be made to claw back savings in other areas it is important at this stage to confirm that there is a risk that the full £200k will not be delivered at the present time.
<b>CM05</b> Average FTE (full time equivalent) days lost due to sickness	Unavailable	8 days	The average number of days lost to sickness within the Council is 9.7 days. It is therefore proposed to maintain our position going forward although best endeavours will be used to further reduce this level of sickness.
<b>CM06</b> % (no.) of services measuring staff engagement	0%	0%	It is understood that a scheme to measure staff engagement is being piloted elsewhere within the Council and will be rolled out in due course. 100%
<b>CM07</b> % (no.) of staff performance appraisals to be completed during 2016-2017	100%	100%	The staff appraisals will be undertaken in a rolling programme. 100%
			It is difficult to measure this on the basis that learning

<b>CM08</b> % of learning & development requirements identified via the performance appraisal process met within 12 months	It is difficult to measure in % terms	It is difficult to measure in % terms	can be achieved through a variety of means including the attendance at courses and learning from colleagues. The restricted budget available to undertake training means that there is more reliance upon the latter. However appropriate budgets need to be maintained to ensure that the staff who are required to receive a defined minimum level of CPD without which they cannot practice, are able to attend the appropriate courses going forward. 100%
<b>CM09</b> No. of employees who left due to unplanned departures	1	0	0
<b>CM10</b> Total no of complaints:  Internal External	0 11	0 16	The very nature of the service provided results in the receipt of complaints. More often than not this is from a restricted number of complainants. For example 3 complaints were received in 15/16 relating to EHTS and they were from one person. It important to note that none of the complaints were upheld and as such there is no need for action to address this going forward.
<b>CM11</b> Total no of compliments:  Internal External	0 0	0 0	It is clearly evident that the service is not recording compliments formally. The nature of the service delivered often dictates that there is a disgruntled customer regardless of the outcome. However on the rare occasion that thankyou cards and letters are received, we have not historically recorded them. There will be greater emphasis on recording such compliments going forward.
<b>CM12</b> % (no.) of services measuring customer satisfaction			Customer questionnaires are regularly sent out for Development Management and Building Control. This is a useful source of feedback to enable for continuous improvement. In relation to the former a national survey is also undertaken by the Wales data Unit which in turn allows benchmarking to take place. Customer

	50%	50%	surveys will be rolled out to other front line services in due course 100%
<b>CM13</b> % (no.) of service report cards to be produced by 31.03.17	100%	100%	Report cards have been prepared for the sections within the planning Service since their initial introduction. It is however evident that report cards have not in the past been developed for the Environmental Health and Trading Standards service. This needs to be addressed. 100%

## Principle 2 - continued

### Why are these priorities?

- The need to build a resilient and skilled workforce is essential to deliver the Councils Corporate aims and objectives within a decreasing budget. The need to support and up-skill staff has never been more important, as the lack of turnover in our workforce cannot be allowed to be responsible for the regurgitation of old ideas and procedures and the stagnation of our service. The need to motivate and nurture staff to ensure that they deliver their potential, is key to ensuring that the Planning and Public Protection service remains proactive and responsive to service needs. It is necessary to ensure that all staff are appropriately experienced, trained and qualified to ensure that they apply the appropriate regulations and ensure that they advise all customers on the current legislation thus ensuring that quality developments are delivered and the legislation relating to Environmental Health and Trading Standards is appropriately enforced. A skilled workforce is also more likely to deliver and improve upon demanding Welsh Government KPI's.
- The statutory plans and functions associated with Environmental Health, Food hygiene and communicable diseases, Trading Standards, Development Management, Building Control, Policy Formulation, Maintenance of Rights of Way and the Management of our Protected Habitats, places a responsibility on the Planning and Public Protection service to ensure that our citizens are protected from fraudulent activities, they have safe food to eat, clean air to breath, safe land to live and work on, varied and sustainable places to visit and enjoy, and access to all the services required to sustain a viable and healthy community.
- Following the devolvement of Building Regulations to the Welsh Government, LABC is becoming more influential with the Minister. The need to have a presence on each of the work streams pursued by LABC will ensure that we influence Policy going forward. It will also ensure that the problems that we are experiencing as an authority, for example, the different operating practices relating to Local Authority Building Control sections and Approved Inspectors is appropriately addressed to ensure that there is equality across the board. Partnership working as is currently undertaken within this authority also needs to be more widely embraced at a National level in the pursuit of the collaborative working agenda.
- Collaborative working at a national level must also be supported by collaborative working at a local level. Whilst Building Control and Development Management

maintain a close working relationship there is always room for improvement. Collaborative working in terms of shared intelligence, and procedures is embraced within the Environmental Health and Trading standards service which in turn improves the efficiency of service delivery and as a consequence the protection of our citizens. The use of Building Control staff to undertake enforcement responsibilities was introduced approximately 3 years ago as a pilot. This is now being rolled out to cover other service areas to reduce the number of staff called out to the same complaint. If successful this will free up capacity for staff to concentrate on other priorities.

- The introduction of mobile devices and the increased use of online services will enable officers to spend more time on the front line investigating and addressing complaints rather than undertaking back office duties.
- There is considerable 'in house' expertise in relation to a whole host of technical areas, including contaminated land, ecology, building control etc. This expertise is used to facilitate the delivery of other functions in the Council including our regeneration aspirations. The provision of such services to external customers has also secured fee income for the council, to the benefit of the FFP.
- The extension of the scheme for the sponsorship of Council assets is essential to deliver the FFP targets for the Council. A balance needs to be struck however in relation to creating additional income but also protecting vehicle and pedestrian safety and the visual amenity of our assets.
- National legislation and policy together with local policy requires the Council to preserve and enhance areas of Biodiversity and thus reinforce the sustainability agenda in addition to providing wider environmental benefits to the local communities in which they are located. This is being reinforced following the introduction of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which places a greater duty upon the Council to secure improvements to Biodiversity. The sustainability agenda has also received greater attention following the introduction of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Services will need to contribute towards the goals identified within this Act in addition to completing their existing duties. Furthermore the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 has increased the burden on local authorities in terms of mapping, auditing and improving cycling and walking routes. This has and will continue to impact upon staff and financial resources.
- The need to continue to improve service delivery by further front loading services and thus minimising waste is essential to ensure that performance improves whilst minimising costs. This will require an improved relationship with all stakeholders with enhanced agents' forums to ensure that our customers submit quality applications thus enabling the delivery of quality outcomes. Services are also being merged internally to reduce the number of officers called out to deal with the same complaint.
- The need to improve the services digital presence will maximise the ability of customers to self-serve which will also facilitate the population of backoffice systems where possible thus reducing the admin responsibilities for staff. This will allow staff to concentrate on delivering front line services as required statutorily.
- The need to address the restoration requirements associated with East Pit and Margam is essential in order to ensure that the risk to human health which could arise as a result of flooding and the scars upon the landscape are mitigated to an acceptable level. This is currently one of the more serious risks on the Corporate Risk register.
- The Council is currently pursuing an ambitious regeneration agenda and the role of the planning service is critical to deliver that agenda.

- The need to monitor the delivery of necessary infrastructure to support development proposals together with any financial contributions is essential given the position that any unspent monies need to be repaid within five years. The failure to secure appropriate infrastructure and/or spend submitted payments appropriately will place unnecessary pressure on the Council to provide the infrastructure out of our own budgets. The Council is also receiving an increased number of FOI requests relating to the types and value of facilities and infrastructure secured via S106. It is becoming increasingly difficult to respond to such requests in the absence of an appropriate database.
- The role of trained elected Members on the Planning Committee is key to the delivery of more transparent, accountable and appropriate decisions, thus ensuring that the Council remains at the vanguard of regeneration not only at a regional level but Nationally. It is this work which will secure the economic growth required to build economically sustainable communities.
- The Food safety and Feed and Food standards functions must satisfy the framework agreement with Food Standards Agency to provide official controls recognised under European legislation.

#### **How are you going to secure the achievement of these priorities?**

As explained earlier within this plan, the majority of the functions provided by the Planning and Public Protection Service are statutory, mainly associated with the regulatory functions of this Authority. These functions are measured by the Welsh Government and directly impact upon our communities.

Whilst a number of these functions have been outsourced in some Authorities, there is evidence to suggest in such circumstances that the quality of the service delivered has decreased whilst the cost to the public purse has increased. In a number of cases the service has been recovered by the Councils concerned and delivered in house as a consequence of these impacts.

Notwithstanding the regulatory nature of the work delivered within the Planning and Public Protection Service, much of it is intrinsically linked to the democratic role played by elected Members. As a result the outsourcing of services is more difficult to deliver whilst also maintaining that democratic link. Notwithstanding this, due to the loss of an experienced mineral planner in 2014 and the lack of suitably qualified staff either internally or externally, it has been necessary to enter into a Service Level Agreement with a neighbouring authority who consequently provides professional advice to the authority on minerals planning. This was expanded last year to include the enforcement of mineral and waste sites including the completion of schedules visits. Whilst this is working successfully it is not as efficient or as effective when compared to the past when the service was delivered in-house. Nevertheless it is helping to deliver financial savings to the service.

It is acknowledged that the Environmental Health and Trading Standards (EHTS) service has been merged to form a regional service for the areas covered by Cardiff, the Vale of Glamorgan and Bridgend. Whilst there does not appear to be an appetite for a similar regional service in south west Wales, the efficiencies and savings will be monitored as that new service settles down. Notwithstanding this and as mentioned earlier in this plan, the EHTS service has recently merged with the planning service. Efficiencies are being explored as a consequence of that merger as there are a number of similar functions delivered across the service area which have previously been

delivered independent of each other.

In terms of Building Control, the Local Authority has a legal obligation to deliver a Building Control service and is obligated to accept a Building Regulations submission from anyone who wants to submit one. Furthermore there are no alternative models for service delivery in relation to non-fee earning work such as applications from disabled people, dealing with dangerous structures, dealing with relevant sections of the West Glamorgan Act and discharging the Authority's responsibilities under The Safety of Sports Grounds Act.

Whilst it is acknowledged that some of the other regulatory functions could be outsourced, the Authority would then have less control over work prioritisation on a day to day basis. Given that many of the functions delivered by the planning function e.g contaminated land and ecology can also constrain the ability of the authority to perform its planning and regeneration functions, it is far more efficient and cost effective to maintain in house expertise rather than having to rely on external providers to support us when they can.

### **Principle 3 – Workforce Planning**

#### **What are the key workforce challenges for this service?**

- The Planning and Public Protection Service was only created in April 2016. That merger resulted in the loss of four members of staff from the former EHTS service and a restructure was undertaken to ensure business continuity. It is too early to say at this stage whether the reduction in staff will have a long term impact upon the capacity of the service and its resilience going forward. This will however be monitored going forward.
- The Development Management and Building Control service has maintained the same level of staff since 2014/15. This is as a consequence of the service losing a large number of staff, proportionate to its size and function, prior to that date. Further staff losses cannot be sustained on the basis that the Welsh Government has introduced financial penalties if statutory time periods have not been achieved. There is also the ability under the new Planning (Wales) Act 2015 for the Welsh Government to step in and deliver the service if it is deemed to be poorly performing.
- New legislation has been introduced in the form of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, The Planning (Wales) Act 2015, the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 and the secondary legislation relating to the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013. This new legislation has introduced additional duties on the Planning and Public Protection service which cannot be delivered if staff numbers reduce further. In fact it has been identified that one additional member of staff is needed to deliver the duties associated with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 alone.
- The follow up FSA audit in August will require resources within the Food safety and Feed and Food Standards teams to be re-directed to concentrate on implementing the action plan to satisfy identified areas that require attention. This will have a knock on effect in relation to other duties delivered by these teams.
- The Housing (Wales) Act 2014 introduces the registration of landlords and the licensing of letting agents in October 2016. The Environmental Health service will be carrying out enforcement under this legislation for non-compliance, it is estimated that Neath Port Talbot has a private rented sector of 6,264 properties. It has been estimated that these duties are equivalent to a full time employee over and above the resources within the existing team. Funding is currently being sought to

deliver on this duty.

- The workforce plans undertaken in 2008 and again in 2016 demonstrate that staff numbers within the Development Management, Planning Policy (not including countryside and wildlife) and Building Control service have reduced from 56 to 38. This is a reduction of 23% of staff number over a 7 year period within what was already a small service. This reduction coincides with a period when new legislation placed additional burdens and complexities upon the service. The Countryside and Wildlife section have also lost 7.4 FTEs during this period which is a reduction in the number of staff over this period of 51%. There is no information available regarding the loss of staff within EHTS over the longer term however 4 FTEs left the service under the recent ER/VR trawl.
- The good news is that the service employs a balanced workforce in terms of the gender split and the age profile also allows succession planning to be pursued. However some of the individual service areas are dominated by part time staff and/or staff working compressed hours. This has an impact upon the continuity of service delivery and may well need to be addressed going forward.
- In terms of capabilities going forward, there are a number of members of staff within the EHTS service who are on the career grade structure. This was introduced a number of years ago to ensure that the service is suitably skilled. Officers within this service need to ensure that they complete a defined number of hours of Continuous Professional Development per year. In the absence of this they are unable to practice. It is therefore essential that sufficient training funds are made available to ensure that the staff are able to complete this essential CPD and therefore continue to deliver their statutory duties. In other areas, staff have largely relied upon free courses given by the Welsh Government, LABC and the RTPI. We will continue to take advantage of this free training wherever possible.
- In order to deliver the service with less staff the merger of the EHTS service with Planning has allowed for some services to be delivered more efficiently. In the Business and Technical Support Unit now services all of the teams, while the provision of some of the enforcement duties has also been centralised to reduce repetition of service delivery. Once the teething problems have been addressed, such changes should in time improve the capacity of the service.
- Given the amount of change recently undertaken and the associated upheaval to all staff within the service it is not considered appropriate as yet to measure staff morale. Such engagement will be undertaken once the new systems are fully operational. It is also necessary to ensure that we measure staff engagement and morale consistently. It is understood that a pilot scheme to measure morale is being implemented by Corporate Services. Once this has been completed it needs to be rolled out to all other services, thus allowing comparisons across the Council to be made in the future.
- Health and well-being – Absence levels in the service are lower than those at a Council level ie 8 days compared to 9.7. The majority of this is also as a result of a restricted number of staff on long term sick due to serious illnesses. With exception to one member of staff, they have all now returned to work. It is not therefore considered necessary to take any action in relation to these sickness levels, although best endeavours will be used to work towards a continuous reduction of this figure.

**What are the longer term workforce challenges for this service and what actions are we going to take to address these challenges?**

Given the statutory regulatory functions associated with this service area and the financial penalties associated with poor performance in terms of the planning service and the risk to health associated with the Environmental Health service, the current staffing levels cannot be reduced further.

Most recent cuts have been undertaken in relation to the back office support, which has resulted in officers having to undertake the majority of admin duties themselves. Whilst this is essential to deliver the savings targets associated with the FFP, it must be balanced against the need for officers to be out on the front line investigating and addressing complaints. This cannot be at the expense of admin duties. It is therefore proposed to undertake a systems review of the Business and Technical Support team and the general environmental health team to establish work stream priorities.

A large number of the staff within EHTS who were supported by a career grade structure will within the next 12 to 18 months have completed their qualifications, and will then be able to cover a wider remit. This will maximise the ability of staff to move between teams to support areas of work where demands are at their highest. A re-evaluation of the career grade opportunity will also be undertaken in relation to the members of staff who have either stalled and/or failed to reasonably progress with this training opportunity. Any savings secured from this exercise can be re-invested in other staff who are interested in expanding their qualifications and skills and in turn the duties they can deliver for the service.

**Principle 4 – Property Management**

**What are the property consequences of delivering the priorities you have outlined in your business plan?**

- The merger of the Environmental Health and Trading Standards function into the Planning Service has resulted in the re-location of the service from units within Milland Road and Lon Las to the Quays. Our colleagues within the Property and Regeneration section are currently negotiating with the owner of the Milland Road unit to secure a break to that lease. Failing that there is a break clause in the lease in April 2017. Following the withdrawal of the lease, the costs of delivering the service will decrease as it will be wholly contained within the Quays.

**Property Table:**

<b>Property Name</b>	<b>Required Change</b>	<b>Why</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Milland Road	The EHTS has vacated the Building and relocated to the Quays	To secure savings associated with the FFP	The lease has not yet expired and negotiations are ongoing
Lon las Unit	It is proposed to vacate the unit in May 2016	To secure savings associated with the FFP	The unit can be used by other occupiers and the savings secured from vacating the unit will contribute towards the FFP.



**Principle 5 – Risk Management****How will any risks be managed / mitigated?****Risk Table:**

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Risk Description</b>	<b>Likelihood Score</b>	<b>Impact Score</b>	<b>Total Score</b>	<b>Proximity</b>	<b>Mitigating Action</b>	<b>Target Date</b>	<b>Risk Owner</b>
<b>R1</b>	Improve air quality within the Port Talbot Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) where there is a potential to breach maximum European limits. This could result in infraction proceedings being taken by the European Union.	5	5	25	1	Continued monitoring of air quality within the area to the point where it can be demonstrated that continuous improvement has been achieved and the AQMA is undeclared.	Ongoing	Mark Thomas
<b>R2</b>	Improve air quality and thus prevent the declaration of an additional AQMA in the Neath area.	4	4	16	1-4	Continued monitoring of air quality within the area to the point where it can be demonstrated that continuous improvement has been achieved and the AQMA is undeclared.	Ongoing	Mark Thomas
<b>R3</b>	Failure to reduce nickel emissions to be within the European targets within Pontardawe and Neath could result in infraction proceedings being taken by the European Union with associated fines.	3	3	9	2	Working with the industrial operators who are generating the emissions to secure the use of Best Available Techniques (BAT) as required under the regulations; continuous monitoring of nickel levels within and outside the buildings in question.	Ongoing	Mark Thomas

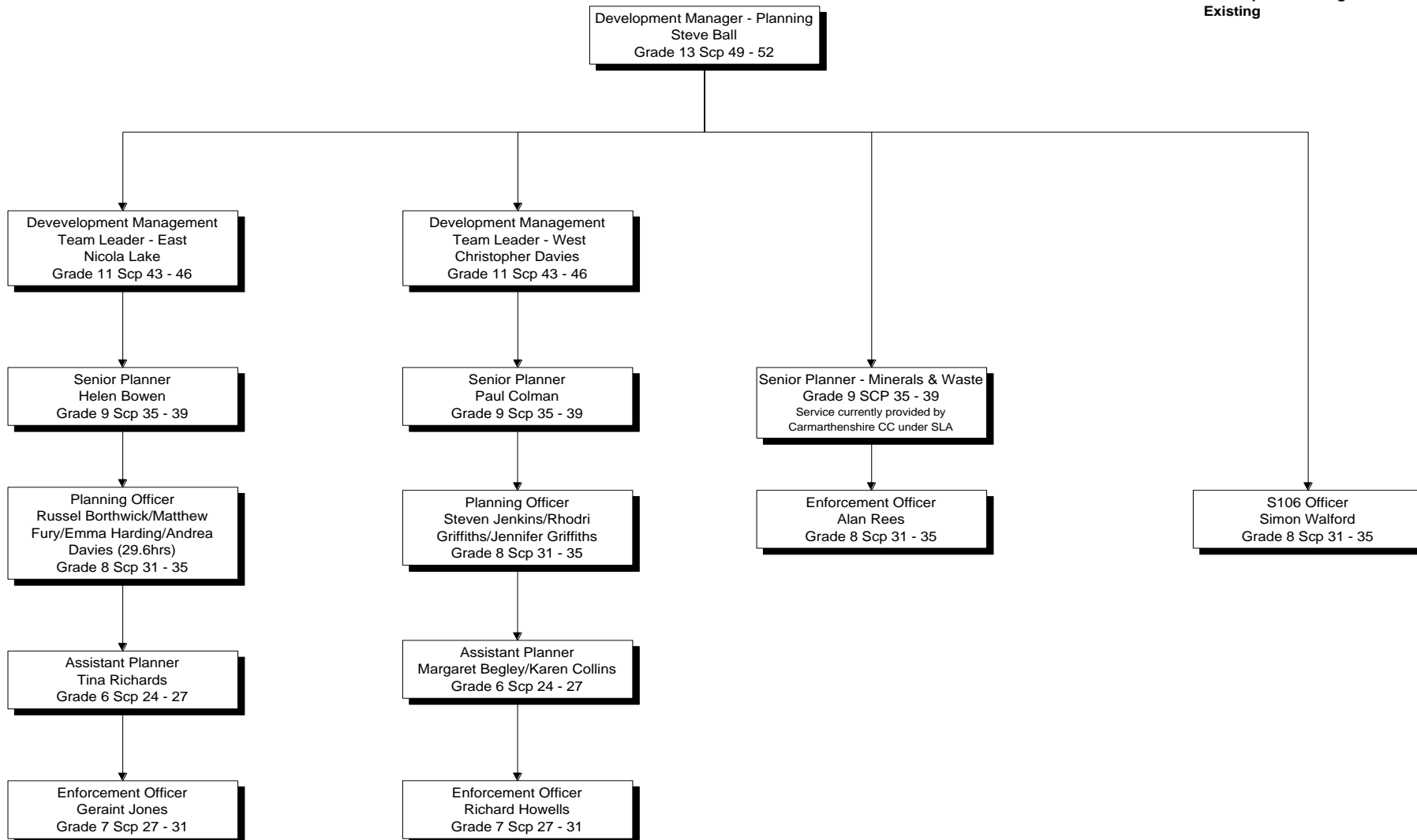
<b>R4</b>	Reduction in staff coupled with an increased workload will result in a drop in performance within the Development Management section and consequential financial penalties.	3	3	9	2	Retain a sufficiently skilled workforce to ensure that there is capacity to deal with planning submissions in accordance with the Welsh Government deadlines.	Ongoing	Steve Ball
<b>R5</b>	Planning permission is not implemented in accordance with the approved planning permission for the continuation and extension of the East Pit opencast coal site and/or due to the reduction in coal prices, the operator ceases to make regular payments to the restoration bond. This will lead to the retention of an unrestored and insufficiently bonded opencast coal site which could fill with water in an uncontrolled manner to the detriment of the health and safety of local communities.	5	5	25	1-4	Ensure that regular and constant monitoring of the site is undertaken to secure compliance with the approved plans. Hold regular meetings with the operator with regard to the financial liabilities associated with delivering completion of coaling and restoration of this site. Take a cautious approach to paying back bond monies until absolute certainty is reached with regard to completion of the tasks associated with the restoration of the site.	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2020	Nicola Pearce
<b>R6</b>	Failure of the owners/former operators of the Margam opencast coal site to complete an acceptable restoration of the site which is essential to protect the health and safety of surrounding communities which would otherwise be at risk of flooding from the void. The failure to restore will also result in the retention of a scarred landscape which has an unacceptable visual impact upon the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside.	5	5	25	1-4	A working group is established to discuss an alternative restoration scheme which will secure a safe and restored site going forward; This scheme is the subject of a new planning application which is submitted within an agreed and restricted period of time. Should planning permission be granted the escrow fund is used to deliver and implement the approved scheme.	June 2017	Nicola Pearce
<b>R7</b>	Budget/service reductions under existing	3	3	9	2	The service will need to be restructured to ensure that areas	Ongoing	All accountable

	Forward Financial Plan.					of commonality are pursued by one service rather than multiple services. This will reduce waste in the service and increase capacity.		managers and Nicola Pearce
<b>R8</b>	Sickness – despite good progress with addressing long term sickness, a reduction in staff levels dictates that any form of sickness has significant knock-on effects in terms of workload demands for remaining staff. This is going to lead to increased sickness associated with work place stress in the future.	2	3	6	2	Ongoing sickness monitoring and implementation of formal sickness management where necessary.	Ongoing	All accountable managers and Nicola Pearce
<b>R9</b>	Succession planning at senior level – continuous downsizing, ER/VR rounds, and lack of external appointments is giving rise to reducing organisational capacity, increasing skills shortage, and inadequate succession planning.	3	3	9	2	A prioritisation of work will need to be undertaken and greater reliance will be placed on customers self serving in terms of enforcement duties. Ie the council will only investigate following the submission of sufficient information to warrant an investigation	Ongoing	All accountable managers and Nicola Pearce
<b>R10</b>	Retention of appropriately trained and skilled staff.	3	3	9	2	The career grade system available to EHTS will be re-visited to assess progress towards achieving qualifications. Resources will be re-directed if necessary. All courses supplied by Welsh Government which are normally free of charge will be attended if they will add value.	Ongoing	All accountable managers and Nicola Pearce
<b>R11</b>	A reduction in fee income associated with providing the chargeable Building Control service will prevent full cost recovery which will in turn result in the need to reduce the workforce. This will impact upon the ability to deliver statutory non fee earning services,	3	3	9	2	Fee income to be regularly monitored.	Ongoing	Paul Davis

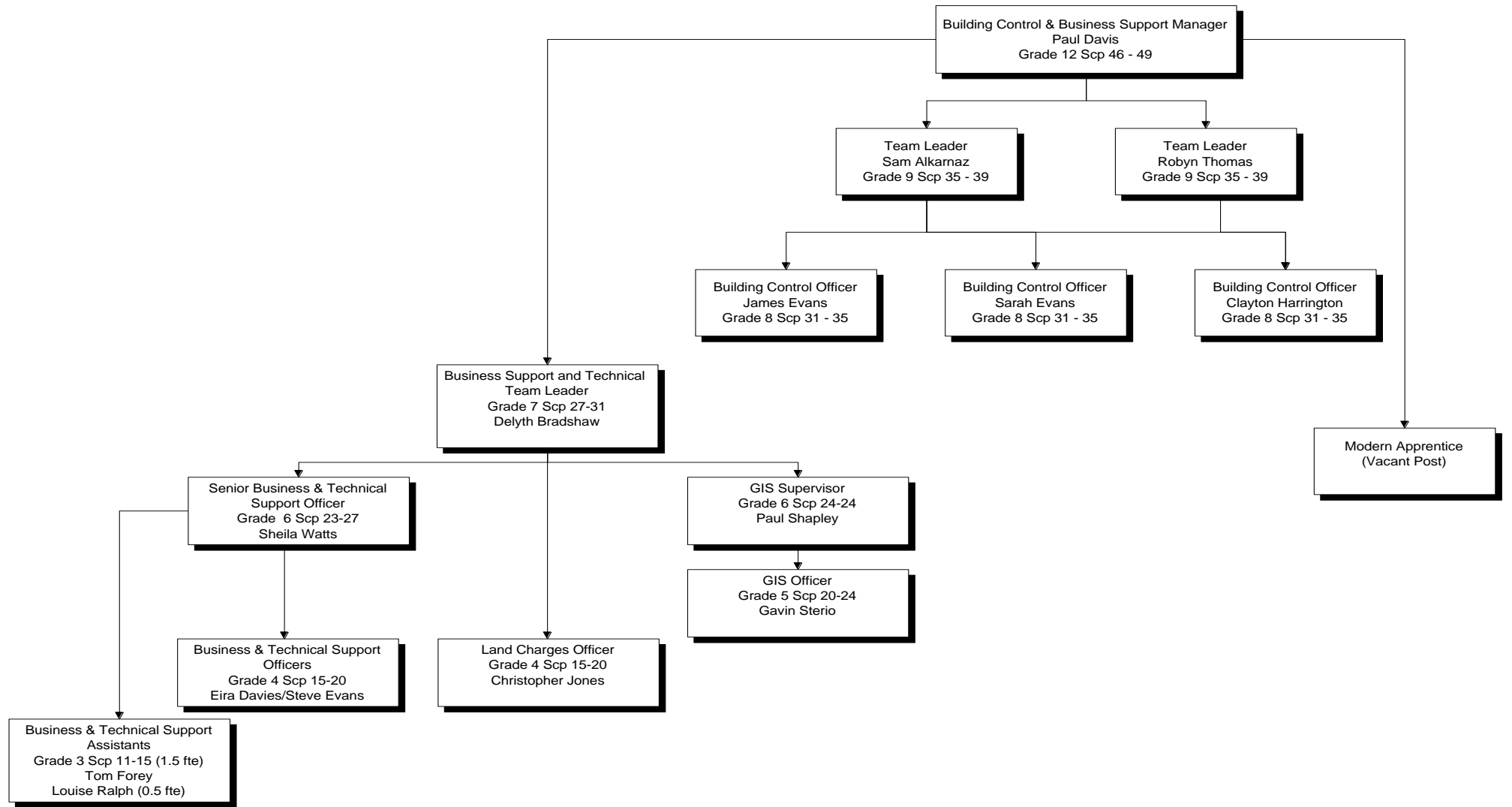
	eg. Dangerous structures, Safety at Sports Ground, alterations to disabled persons properties and enforcement duties which we are required to provide in law.							
<b>R12</b>	The failure to secure and appropriately manage S106 infrastructure could result in insufficient infrastructure being provided at the developers expense. The establishment and management of a bespoke database associated with such funds needs to be in place.	3	3	9	2	The post of S106 officer which has been vacant for some time has now been filled. The officer is working towards establishing procedures and charging schedules in addition to a database to track requested payments and infrastructure delivery.	Ongoing	Steve Ball
<b>R13</b>	A reduction in staff within the Countryside and Wildlife team could result in a failure to be appropriately resourced to comply with legislative burdens associated with the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 where there is greater emphasis on biodiversity across all Council projects.	3	3	9	2	The need for additional funding is being identified as a pressure going forward. This is required to pay the salary of a grade 8 officer who is on a temporary contract paid for by a developer. This comes to an end shortly, but the continued employment of this officer to cover these additional duties is essential.	Ongoing	Ceri Morris
<b>R14</b>	Failure to develop Existing Routes Maps and Integrated Route Maps for all qualifying settlements throughout the County Borough could result in penalties from the Welsh Government. This is being addressed through the use of an external consultant to map out our three biggest settlements with training being provided to an existing internal member of staff who will continue to map out the remaining settlements.	3	3	9	2	Whilst approximately 25% of the cost of developing these maps is covered by the Transport Grant received from Welsh Government the Council will have to cover the cost of the remaining 75% which is currently unidentified. This is to be identified as a pressure going forward.	Ongoing	Ceri Morris
<b>R15</b>	Failure to meet statutory requirements for Food Hygiene or Food and Feed Code of	2	4	8	1-4	Prioritisation of resources to ensure the statutory	Ongoing	Mark Thomas

	Practice in accordance with the Framework agreement could result in the Food Standards Agency taking the function off the Authority.					requirements are met.		
<b>R16</b>	Failure to adequately investigate and control a communicable or infectious disease incident or outbreak could lead to serious harm or death.	3	4	12	1-4	Prioritisation of resources to ensure rapid response is available to deal with investigation of possible communicable or infectious disease incidents.	Ongoing	Mark Thomas
<b>R17</b>	Failure to provide Environmental Health and Trading Standards advice and regulation to businesses within NPT could lead to disparity in compliance of legislation and an uneconomic playing field.	2	4	8	2	Prioritisation of resources to ensure adequate advice and regulation is provided to businesses.	Ongoing	Mark Thomas
<b>R18</b>	Failure to achieve Proceeds of crime would result in a shortfall in EHTS budget.	3	3	9	2	Continue scoping and screening for suitable POCA targets.	Ongoing	Mark Thomas
<b>R19</b>	Failure to address private sector housing conditions could result in harm to health, serious injury or death.	3	3	12	1-4	Prioritisation of resources to ensure private sector housing conditions within NPTCBC are assessed and appropriate enforcement action is taken.	Ongoing	Mark Thomas

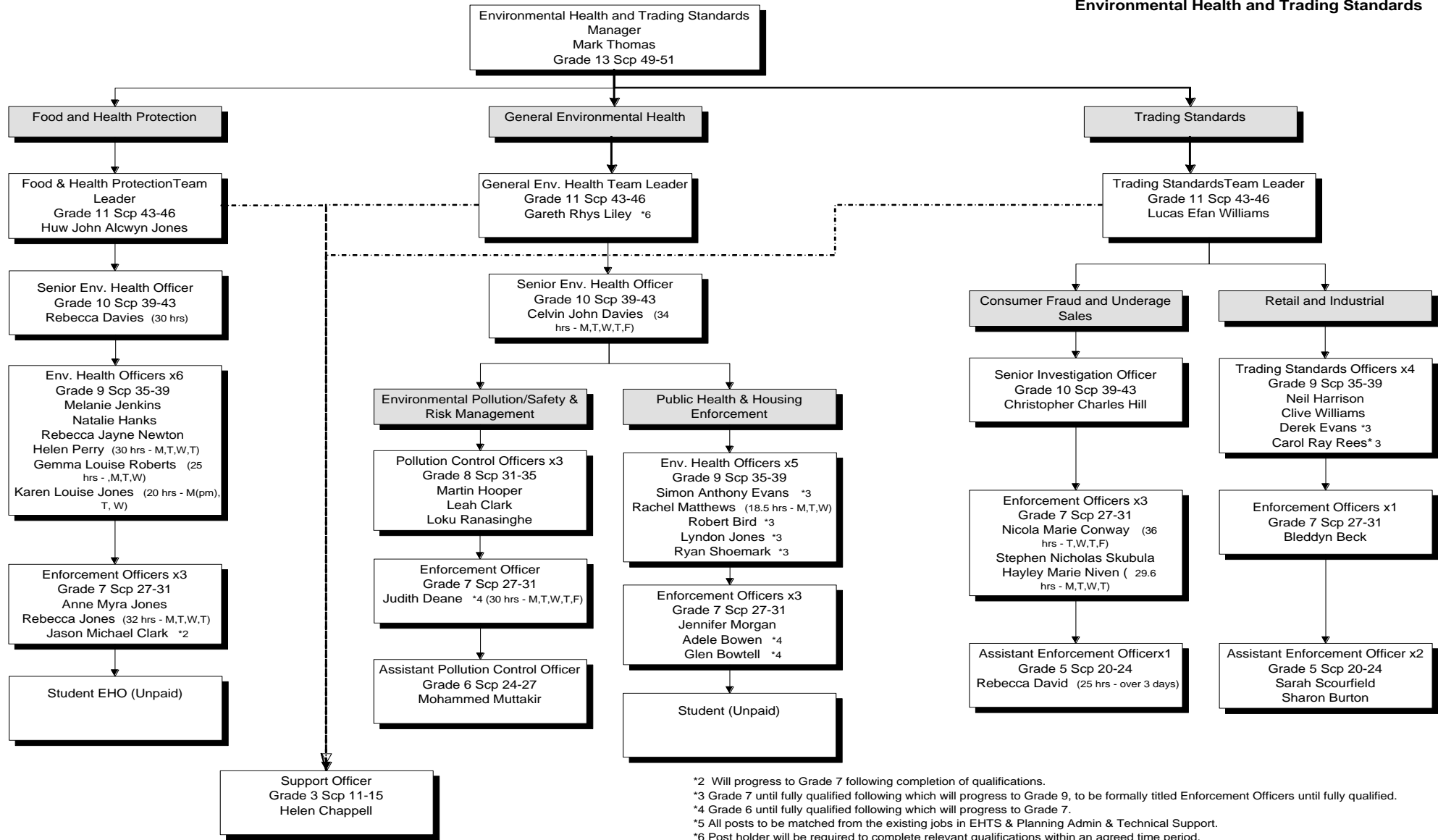
Directorate of Environment  
Development Management  
Existing



Directorate of Environment  
Building Control & Business Support  
Existing



# Environmental Health and Trading Standards



\*2 Will progress to Grade 7 following completion of qualifications.  
 \*3 Grade 7 until fully qualified following which will progress to Grade 9, to be formally titled Enforcement Officers until fully qualified.  
 \*4 Grade 6 until fully qualified following which will progress to Grade 7.  
 \*5 All posts to be matched from the existing jobs in EHTS & Planning Admin & Technical Support.  
 \*6 Post holder will be required to complete relevant qualifications within an agreed time period.



**Directorate of Environment  
Planning Policy/Countryside & Wildlife  
Existing**

