



# Annual Service Report 2013/2014



We care about place

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## Executive Reflections

# Year 1

Re (Regional Enterprise) the Joint Venture between the London Borough of Barnet and Capita has enjoyed a successful first year. Challenges remain to be faced but looking back over the year we have made valuable and positive steps to build our organisation. These include: working together as one business, developing and implementing new systems, improving service delivery response times and developing new business knowledge via personal development and training.

This first year has also seen significant operational change; balancing stability of service with the measured introduction of new IT platforms to continually improve performance. The existing dedication, enthusiasm and drive to provide the best possible services to the Barnet community inherited from the staff that transferred to Re has been key to the achievements made to date.

### The major partnership successes in year one include:

#### People

- ▶ Transitioning 277 members of staff into Re with each invited to undertake a 1:1 personal development discussion with a member of the Learning and Development team.
- ▶ Significantly increasing staff training with all staff now receiving an average five days training per person per year.
- ▶ Submitting three nominations for the Capita Success Awards (company-wide Staff Performance Award) with one winner and one highly commended.

#### Learning & Development

Transitioning 277 members of staff into Re with each invited to undertake development discussion

# 277

#### Training

all staff now receiving an average 5 days training per person per year.

# 5

#### Awards

Submitting 3 nominations for the Capita Success Awards (Company wide Staff Performance Award)

# 3

## Services

- ▶ Implementing a new Customer Services Hub.
- ▶ Offering new services to residents and businesses, including premium planning service and new care and repair housing modification services.
- ▶ Ranking as 2nd best performing authority in London for planning.
- ▶ Building Control team winning LABC award for partnership working.
- ▶ Increasing income and use of Hendon Cemetery and Crematorium to levels not seen since 2010 when it was at its peak.

▶ Increasing customer satisfaction with our services from an average 33% prior to partnership commencement to 65% as measured in July 2014.

- ▶ Meeting key milestones within the Regeneration Programme for the borough.
- ▶ Managing the contract process for Brent Cross Cricklewood – one of the largest regeneration programmes in Europe.
- ▶ Delivering against 78 KPI's with an average monthly performance in excess of 90%.

## Growth

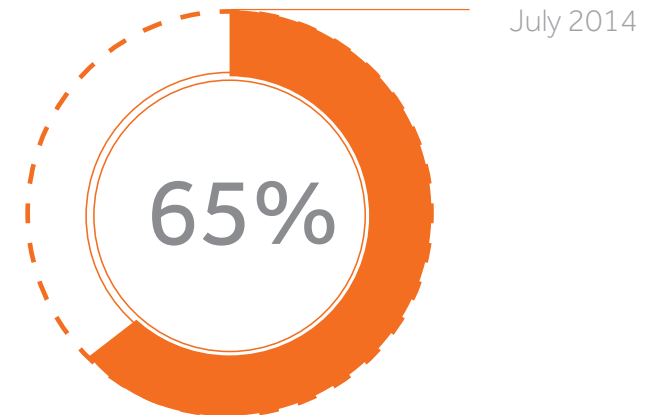
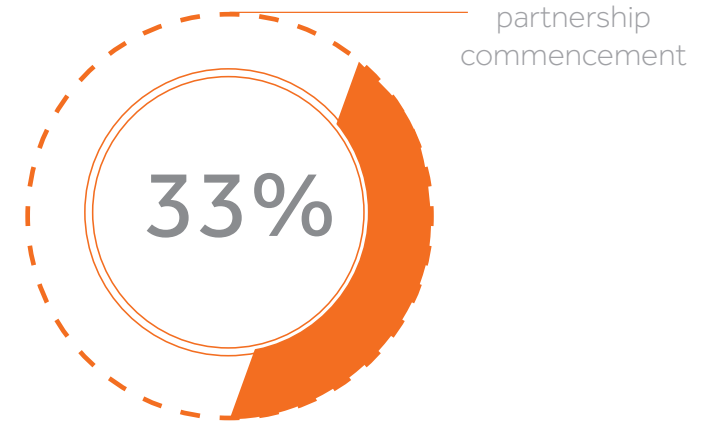
- ▶ Winning an external contract with the West London Alliance.
- ▶ Securing a commission from LoTSA (London Trading Standards Association) to provide it with consultancy services.

## IT

- ▶ Significant IT implementation programme – Exor, Uniform.
- ▶ Launching the Re website.



## Customer Satisfaction



The residents of Barnet are at the heart of our organisation and this year has seen us lay the foundations upon which we will build in order to deliver long-term customer benefit in line with Re's service vision. The vision for Re is to deliver an exemplar service for the people of Barnet that enables the Joint Venture to deliver significant growth.

**Re will create a platform that delivers the highest quality, best value public services across the south-east region and beyond.**

This ambition will develop Re into a leading brand, with customer service comparable to the best in the private sector and to position it as an "Employer of Choice", within both local government and the private sector.

Looking forward, our second year as a partnership will see the hard work continue in order to complete the IT transformation

programme that will further improve the ways in which we can interact with our customers. In addition to delivering an improved customer experience, priorities for the second year include business growth and therefore the challenge of increasing the awareness of the partnership and the services we offer to the wider south-east area. Outreach work is well underway amongst the service divisions and we are excited to embark on the next step of our journey working together to achieve our shared goals for Re.



**Alun Parfitt**  
**Operations Director**

# Executive Reflections

# Year 1

# Performance & Service Delivery

The Joint Venture places the needs of the residents as its main priority therefore throughout the transfer period and the first year of operation we have focused on minimising disruption and maintaining service delivery.

There have been notable achievements with some significant improvements in service being demonstrated e.g.

**Hendon Cemetery & Crematorium has seen its overall usage and income increased to levels unseen since 2010**

when the cemetery was at its previous peak. Furthermore, a full review of expenditure resulted in an immediate reduction of operating costs by £125,000 per annum.

In February we were delighted to announce that at the Local Land Charges Awards for Excellence event held in Bristol, our own department was nominated and recognised within the top

10 Most Improved National Land Information Service category.

In addition this team has exceeded its KPI target of four days by processing Full Official Searches in an impressive average of 1.78days per application.

High levels of performance have been demonstrated this year by the planning team, resulting in being ranked as the 2nd best authority in London. In recent months, a new design agent service has been launched that improves services for residential customers, including a comprehensive package of services to facilitate residential extension needs. This income generating service allows customers to access expertise in design, planning and building control services in one place.

Our building surveyors are being trained in party wall policy and procedures to extend our suite of service delivery options to our customers. Their knowledge will be used to provide

advice and guidance to either developers or adjoining property owners for a fee – bringing in additional income that would otherwise be paid to an external provider. Until recently Barnet residents have been referred to the 'Faculty of Party Wall surveyors' for advice. Now this advice is available from our own in-house surveyors. Since launching the service in October we have received an increasing number of enquiries with several cases currently on-going.

Re has made immense effort working with the authority, developers, partners and other stakeholders to meet key milestones within the Regeneration Programme for the borough, including:

- ▶ Issuing of planning consent for the Brent Cross Cricklewood development.
- ▶ Submission of a planning application for new homes on the Granville Road estate and receiving the application for the Peel Centre; a major residential development site in Colindale.
- ▶ Opening of the main East West strategic road link at Millbrook Park, an important access road for public traffic and bus services.
- ▶ Opening of the new Millbrook Park (three form entry) School.



# Performance & Service Delivery

The hard work of the Strategic Planning and Regeneration team will continue throughout the partnership to improve the facilities and infrastructure of the borough, making it an even more attractive place to live and work in.

Managing business as usual during a time of considerable change has undoubtedly created a number of challenges. Well documented historical issues within the Highways Network Management team have absorbed considerable management resource; however with the implementation of Exor and an overhaul of the Highways System, demonstrable improvements have been made to the capture of service requests and their tracking via the new Re Service Hub.

Following the deployment of additional resources and the roll out of improved contract management processes;

**response times rose from 59% in July 2014 to 93% in August despite an increased volume of cases (698 to 741)**

September's 84% return reinforces the need for further focus to establish a consistently high performing service.

The Streetworks service introduced their 'coring' programme this year; a highways protection initiative to check that statutory undertakers have reinstated the highway to an acceptable standard. Not only does this generate income but it also improves road conditions for residents and reduces the level and cost of annual maintenance required on the authority's highway asset. Following such a successful initial period, the Streetworks team have recently presented their coring programme at the London Highways Forum.

Focus on this traditionally-viewed problematic service has resulted in the authority agreeing to invest £50m over the next five years to improve this key asset.



Streetworks 'coring' programme



An explanatory leaflet

Partywall leaflet

# Customer Experience

The vision contains a clear ambition to improve the experience of customers when they interact with Re through multiple formats. In July overall customer satisfaction was,

**65% showing a significant improvement from 33% reported prior to transfer in October 2013.**

The Re Service Hub went live in April and serves as the contact point for customers accessing Re's services; acting as the customer's advocate for service requests, resolution and responses. With extensive training having been undertaken, the Service Hub team are equipped with the knowledge to respond to many service requests directly themselves. The new Lagan interface provides a platform for enquiries to be logged and managed across the services, fostering

an improved customer service as issues can now be tracked from beginning to end. This is a major achievement.

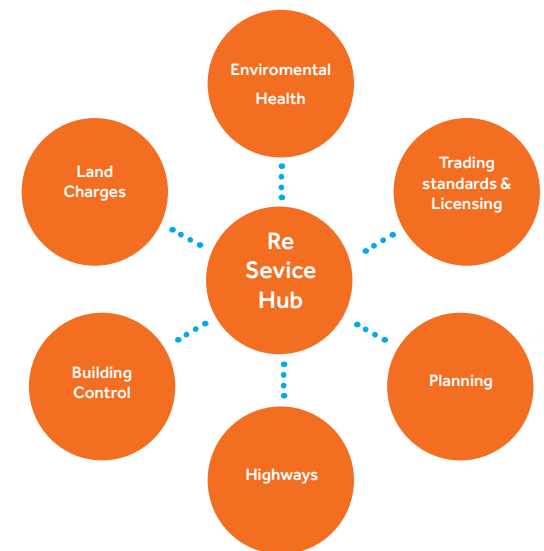
Performance in responding to complaints has steadily improved throughout the year from 68% of stage 1 complaints being responded to on time to 79% as reported in October.

The average number of complaints has also declined from approximately 45 to 17 a month during the period April to September. This is due primarily to the new Service Hub being able to provide a more responsive service so that fewer customers feel the need to make a formal complaint.

The Re website is now live and tailored to provide customer specific access points that align with our Customer Access Strategy. It aims to highlight and showcase the services offered whether the consumer is a

householder, business, developer or other local authority. As Re moves into a period of growth, the challenge will be to increase the awareness of the services that we deliver and have the potential to deliver to the wider business community across the south east of England and beyond.

The website will be continually developed and updated as new information becomes available with the aim of promoting Re showcasing the services and products we can offer to our residents and to communities beyond the borough boundaries.



Our Service hub will support all Re business areas.



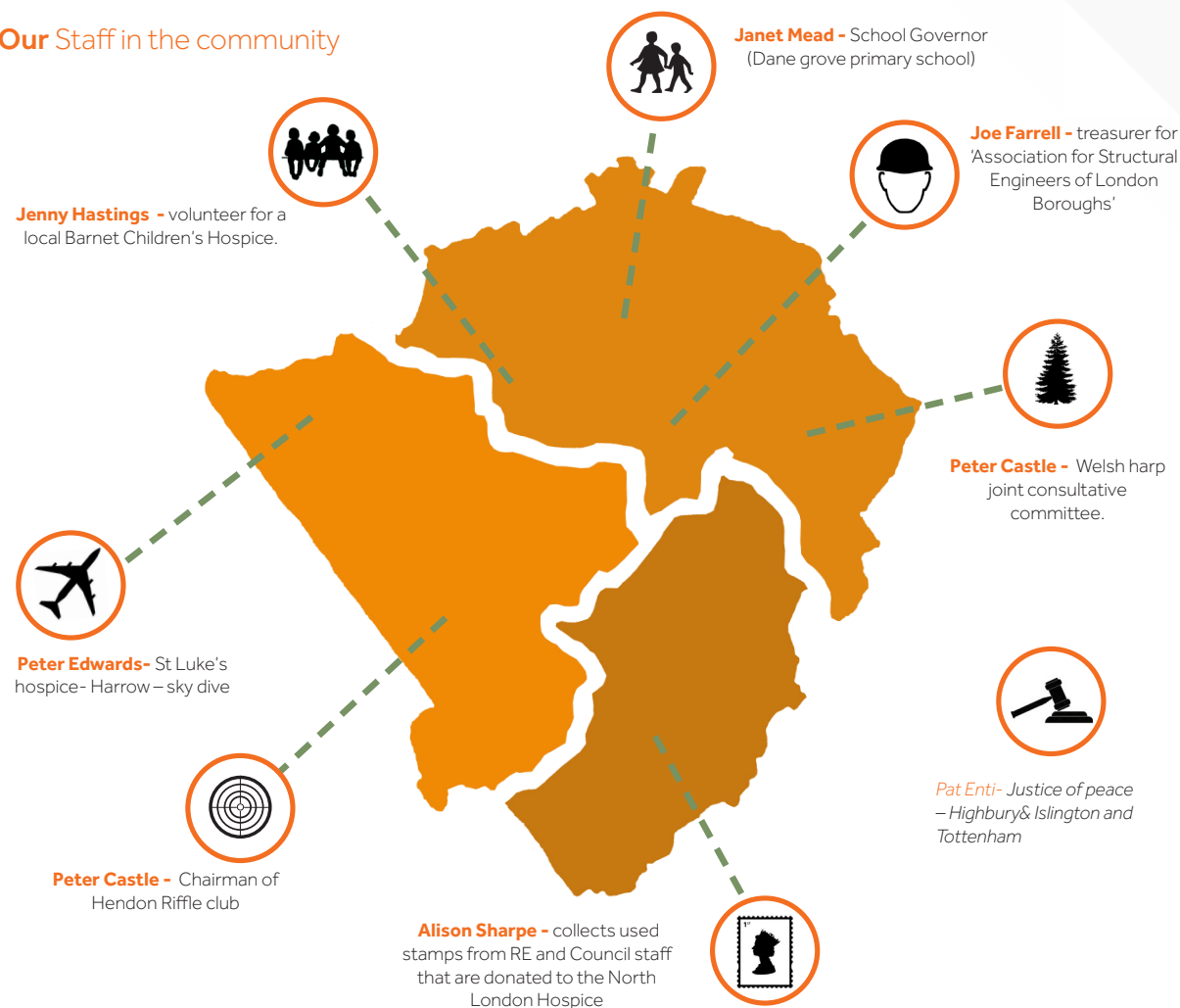
# Community Engagement

Delivering the best quality services possible to the residents of Barnet is embedded within the heart of Re's approach; and in this first year we have taken extra steps to engage with and improve the lives of those within our community.

We have worked closely with schools in Barnet to help them create and implement school travel plans that benefit their entire communities. A number of these received STARS awards from Transport for London for their work in promoting safe and healthy travel to and from school and in reducing the number of journeys made by car.

Brookland Junior School won the prize for 'school of the region' (north) for demonstrating the highest level of commitment to active, safer and responsible school travel.

## Our Staff in the community



# Community Engagement

Eight Members of staff have trained to become Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) Ambassadors, a platform from which they can support the development of this skill set in the local community and encourage young people to aim high for skilled employment.

They have attended and presented at careers fairs in addition to participating in other community events. Further to this, a number of staff members have undertaken full training as part of the East Barnet Schools Bee a Mentor programme that sees them guide students through their challenging exam periods.

At the commencement of the Re Partnership, the whole team were involved in selecting the North London Hospice as our Charity Partner. The Hospice cares for local people with potentially life-limiting illnesses and, over the past year Re has carried out regular initiatives with all colleagues to raise valuable funds.



Supporting local businesses to prosper and grow is a key priority for Re and The Expo included keynote speeches from the Leader of the Council and the authority's Lead Commissioner for Enterprise and Regeneration, along with a number of workshops.

**October 2014 saw Barnet's second Business Expo, with over 60 local business representatives attending.**

The Expo kick starts a series of events for the business community that together with support, expertise and knowledge from Re, the Council and its strategic partners aims to make Barnet the best place in which to set up and operate a small business in London.

# The Technology

The first year of operation has seen a concerted focus on the implementation and subsequent stabilisation of key IT systems and the business processes they enable to drive service quality and improvement. Specifically, 2014 saw Re take on and improve the Exor solution used previously by the council in Highways, replacement of Acolaid with the Uniform solution in Regulatory Services, consolidation of paper based Traffic Management Orders onto the map based ParkMap system and presentation of that data to the public via the web based TraffWeb solution.

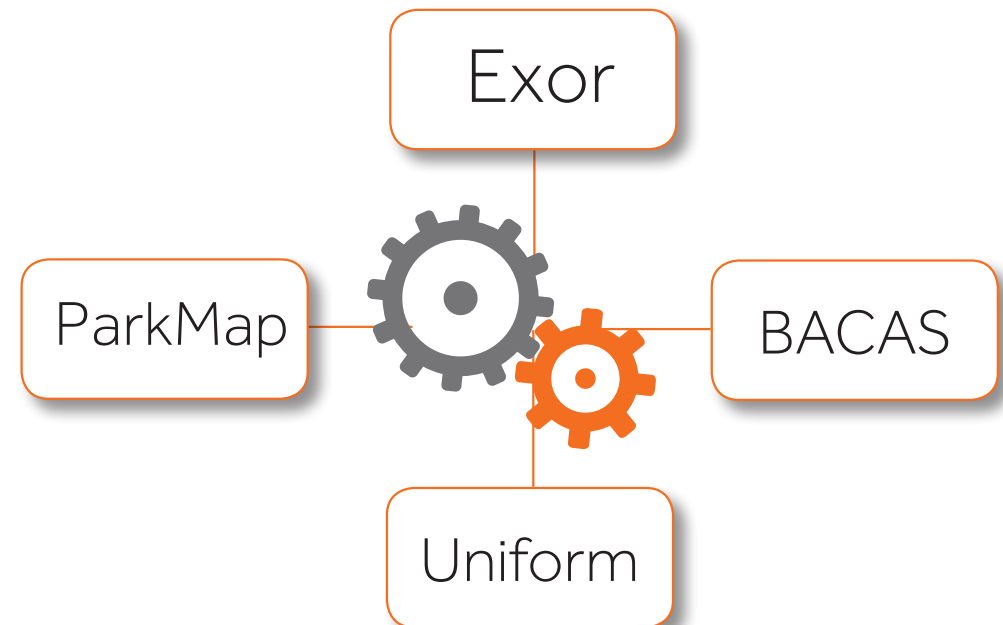
In addition, a series of smaller implementations have been successfully delivered including BACAS in the Cemetery and Crematorium, refresh of desktop equipment, provision of remote access and a recovery programme to ensure information security and data protection act compliance. Re has also managed and delivered dependencies with CSG programmes including the Customer Gateway.

There have also been lessons learned as a result of such large scale IT investment taking place simultaneously and these have highlighted the need for more focus on business requirements gathering in the early stages of projects to ensure alignment between systems and service outcomes.

Also, mobilisation of specialist resources where required, for example, in system penetration testing to ensure security, compliance; will in future assume more priority.

Now 2015 is about leveraging service and efficiency improvement from these technology investments as well as further integration and joint delivery of transformation projects working with CSG and being based on the Customer Access Strategy findings and recommendations.

## IT Transformation



## Staff

# Development

At Re, our people are our most important asset and are key to driving the business forward in line with the outlined growth agenda. Re fosters an environment where staff feel valued and have the opportunities to develop a successful career. We have already invested significantly in development opportunities for all staff. Initial one-to-one meetings were offered to all transferring partnership staff to discuss their future development aspirations and through the appraisal process, those that are currently, or wish to, work towards a professional qualification are identified and supported with a mentor and quarterly development meetings.

Over the course of the first year each staff member has participated in an average of five days training, a partnership commitment that is ongoing for the remainder of the contract.

In the last year, four members of staff have joined the Capita Property and Infrastructure

BusinessWise graduate business skills development programme, designed in partnership with Northumbria University. Participants complete a Postgraduate Certificate in Business Performance Management delivered by expert academics and experienced practitioners. James Langsmead describes his experience of the BusinessWise programme since joining in 2013,



**James** Langsmead

***The BusinessWise Programme has equipped me with the skills necessary to review and reflect upon the management and leadership styles observed in the day to day running of the business. This reflective process has helped me to examine my own learning and development as an employee of Regional Enterprise Ltd, and, member of the Scientific Team, and has made me aware of the opportunities where I feel I could be a better leader or team player.***

Whilst investing in our graduates is paramount, we also recognise the importance of ongoing learning. This year a number of managers were enrolled onto the Capita Property and Infrastructure Commercial Leadership Scheme. This investment in the commercial competency of our key managers supports service transformation and business development and also enables the key managers to demonstrate the values and behaviours we need to make Re an ongoing success.

Re has launched a monthly staff recognition scheme to celebrate the positive contributions our people make to improve and enhance the service we provide to our customers and each other. Furthermore, **two individuals and one team were nominated into the annual Capita Success Awards** to demonstrate to the wider business community the efforts of Re employees. Ann Graves won the 'people' award for her dedication to organisational development and Andy Milne was highly commended for his

efforts in improving the service offered at Hendon Cemetery and Crematorium. These are well deserved accolades for some of the team members that have gone that extra mile for their customers and colleagues.

# New

# Partnerships

A core objective for the Joint Venture is the ambitious growth agenda that sees us develop our commercial offering by expanding existing services and introducing new ones to benefit customers. This creates a platform to deliver the highest quality, best value public services across the south-east region and beyond.

A key challenge therefore is establishing and facilitating awareness of our brand into the wider business community. Significant steps have been taken this year to address this challenge across all service areas with new relationships being fostered and partnerships developed.

## In 2014 we unveiled the Re brand at MIPIM UK

the first UK property trade show for professionals involved in the UK property market. Delegates included investors, developers, local authorities, occupiers, hotel groups, agents and business service providers.

The platform for Re directors to network with individuals from across this spectrum of attendees is the first opportunity to take the brand out beyond the Barnet boundaries .

The Trading Standards team won a contract to provide intelligence and information to LOTSA (London Trading Standards Association) on behalf of all 32 London boroughs. This includes supporting individual boroughs by providing reports on trends and issues at a more local level and is a great opportunity to increase the profile of Re across London. The Highways Network Management team have also made significant efforts to raise awareness of the Streetworks Management Initiative being undertaken in Barnet. Re presented the Coring Programme at the London Highways Forum and has been engaged in discussions with other local authorities about the benefits and mechanics of coring and sharing best practice.

Other Partnership developments include:

- ▶ Numerous affiliations being established with Environmental Health through the Primary Authority Partnership Scheme.
- ▶ Building Control Partnership with Fairview Homes
- ▶ Regeneration agreements made with development partners to begin development at Dollis Valley

The Building Control team won the Partnership award at the Bricks and Mortar Awards Ceremony and is made in recognition of providing excellent service within the building, development and construction sector. Re has been working in partnership with LABC Warranty for the past few years and has taken every opportunity to pass on leads to the service resulting in many joint presentations to developers .

London MIPIM




Bricks and Mortar Awards Ceremony

# Looking Forward

As we look forward to entering our second year in partnership, building upon these relationships and working to foster new ones will be vital to achieving our ongoing objectives. 2015 sees Re enter into a phase which will deliver significant development in our service offering and a drive towards undertaking activities that will raise the profile of the Re brand across London.

Providing the best quality service to our customers is embedded within all corners of the Re Partnership and as such over the next year we have committed to achieving the ISO9001 quality management accreditation.

As we strive to achieve the Investors in People award for high performance through people, our dedicated Organisational Development team will continue to provide opportunities to ensure our people feel empowered and supported to innovate and evolve the services they provide.



**Re**

## 12 Month Vision for Service

The Re. Regional Enterprise Service Vision

- All Re. services will be high performing and delivered efficiently as measured by upper quartile performance (top 25%) when measured against other London Boroughs
- All those who contact Re. have a 'best in class' experience that empowers customers to transact with us quickly and easily through their choice of desired channel.
- Our focus will be on constantly improving the customer's interaction with us so at any stage he/she understands how, when and by whom their issues are being resolved.
- Any transaction across our services will appear seamless
- We will embed customer relationships within improved IT technology platforms
- Our people will feel empowered and be supported to innovate and evolve the services they provide

### What is the Specific Vision for our Development Management & Building Control Service

Our Vision for service improvement encompasses Members, Customers, our Staff, Service Delivery, Systems and Finance.

Our key vision outcomes are currently:-

#### Members

- Weekly list of planning applications sent to all councillors
- Ward councillors notified of major planning applications
- Ward councillors notified when an enforcement notice is served
- Responses to Member enquiries given within 5 days as a minimum with a target of replying within 2 working days

#### People

- Team structure to deliver excellent business as usual services and growth initiatives
- Getting the right people to deliver
- Multiple in-house skills with unrivalled technical expertise
- Up-skilling and training staff to high standards
- Customer focused people
- Mentoring
- Commercial know-how

#### Culture for Success

- A desire to achieve
- A sense of personal ownership
- Open communication channels
- Listen to customers and colleagues
- Take ownership and you will be supported
- The ability to recognise when you need assistance and the willingness to request it
- A culture of cross-learning
- Remove barriers and undertake tasks proactively
- Doing things at pace
- We are one team

#### Customer

- Response to applicant emails and telephone messages within 24 hours
- Response to resident queries within 10 working days as a minimum with a target of responding within 5 working days
- Investment in "self-help" tools for customers through the website
- User forums (every six months) for agents and developers.
- Customer focus - outcomes over process

#### Service Delivery

- Exceeding KPIs and PIs
- Need to be lean and deliver "right first time"
- Improvements to the website in order to ensure all services are communicated effectively to the wider customer base.
- Resource plans to deliver growth initiatives
- Creating marketing plans
- Ideas workshop
- One stop approach to deliver services
- Delivering contractual commitments
- Investment in improved pre-application advice Service
- Premium services
- Design & agent services
- Specialised services
- Private consultancy
- Public sector consultancy

#### Governance

- Managing risk
- Avoiding conflicts of interest

Re

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