



Department of the
Environment

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CORPORATE PLAN 2008-11

FOREWORD

The re-establishment of devolution in May 2007 restored local accountability and created new challenges for all departments across the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Since then it has become increasingly clear that the public expect the highest level of service from Ministers and their departments, in both the generation of forward looking policies and the delivery of key services. This Corporate and Business Plan sets out how my Department intends to meet that expectation over the coming three years.

In January of this year the Northern Ireland Executive agreed a Programme for Government for 2008-11. The document set out a range of ambitious targets which will direct the work of all government Departments until the end of the Assembly's current mandate. It will provide a driver for the policies and actions of my Department which will contribute to the realisation of its vision of a better and safer environment.

Fundamental to the realisation of this vision is the development and implementation of policies and legislation which seek to meet the needs of all our citizens.

Since coming into office I have made it clear that reducing the number of deaths and serious injuries on our roads is my top priority. Significant progress has been made over the life of the existing Road Safety Strategy but I am convinced that there is much more we can do. Earlier this year I presented the highlights of a review into road safety in Northern Ireland to the Environment Committee. I indicated the key priorities for my Department over the next 12-18 months and announced my intention to develop a new road safety strategy for introduction in 2010. This will be two years ahead of the timescale for completion of the current strategy but I believe it is important to explore new ways to build on what has been done to date if we are to see further significant reductions in road collision casualties.

Perhaps the most significant developments which are planned in the three year period of the Corporate Plan are those springing from the Review of Public Administration. My Department is now pressing ahead, in partnership with local government and other government departments, to implement an agreed and challenging package of modernisation and reform of local government. That programme will deliver strong civic

leadership and effective local democracy and put councils at the very heart of the delivery of public services to the citizen.

Recognition of the importance of providing a first class service underlies all the actions contained within this plan and my Department is committed to improving service delivery throughout the entire sphere of its activity. This ranges from increasing the speed with which applications for practical driving tests are appointed, to realising the benefits of the major reform initiative now underway in Planning Service. My Department will also take a proactive approach to building on the excellent work carried out to date by its enforcement teams, particularly in tackling the damaging environmental consequences of cross-border illegal dumping.

The goals set out in this plan are challenging, and my Department realises that improved service to the customer must be matched by improved working methods within the organisation. During 2008-11 it will continue to work hard to deliver this. As part of a wider programme within the Northern Ireland Civil Service, accounting, human resource, and records management systems will be streamlined to bring forward an integrated and future focused Department which will ensure effective use of public money in bringing the best service to all citizens.

Finally, I wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the commitment of staff throughout my Department. During a year of monumental change they have displayed diligence and resolve in adjusting to the challenges which follow from operating within a devolved administration and have consistently sought to provide excellent service for all. I am confident that this dedication will continue during the period covered by this plan as we work together towards achieving a better and safer environment.

Arlene Foster
Minister of the Environment

LINKAGES WITH PLANNING DOCUMENTS

1. The *Programme for Government 2008-11* sets the strategic context for the Executive's spending plans contained within the Budget and Investment Strategy in the period 2008-11. The document provides a high level statement of the Executive's priorities and goals, focussing on the key challenges and strategic choices to be addressed in realising its top priority of growing a dynamic, innovative economy.
2. The *Programme for Government (PfG)* is supported by a series of 23 Public Service Agreements which confirm the key actions to be taken in support of the PfG priorities, and which define the outcomes and targets to be achieved. The Corporate Plan that follows on pages 4-29 restates those PSA targets relevant to the Department together with a number of other key targets that the Department intends to achieve in the period to 31 March 2011.
3. The Business Plan included in this document on pages 30-57 specifies the actions that will be taken in 2008-09 in respect of these targets. This framework thus clearly links the departmental business plan to the Government's overall priorities and strategic objectives, and is designed to ensure clear accountability for service delivery.

CORPORATE PLAN 2008-11

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INTRODUCTION

This Corporate Plan, covering the period 2008 -11, sets out:

- the vision of the Department;
- the aim of the Department; and
- the strategic objectives, key targets, cross-cutting themes and common issues to be addressed by the Department during the period.

DEPARTMENTAL VISION – A better and safer environment.

DEPARTMENTAL AIM – To contribute to a better and safer environment which will support a vibrant and dynamic economy, and to support the delivery of a system of strong and effective local government.

DEPARTMENTAL THEMES

1. Sustainable Development

"First Steps to Sustainability", the Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy, was published in 2006. The Strategy sets out guiding principles, strategic objectives and priority areas for action by all government departments to ensure a thriving economy, prosperity, a high quality of life and a healthy environment for all.

The Department recognises that sustainable development objectives are central to all activities and that its policies are key mechanisms for delivering on sustainable development. Policy-making across all areas of work will continue to be developed in line with guidance from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. The Department will continue to have significant engagement with a wide body of stakeholders on the full range of its policy issues to ensure proper delivery of all commitments outlined in the Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Strategy.

In order to contribute to mainstream sustainable development across the internal workings of government, the Department has developed and put in place a Sustainable Development Action Plan which seeks to address sustainable development issues across six main areas i.e. energy, water, waste, procurement, travel and the Departmental estate. A Steering Group of representatives from of each Agency and Division has been formed to monitor the progress on the actions and targets of the plan.

The Department continues to work closely with other departments to help build on achievements to date, and to progress in a joined up manner the key issue of sustainable development.

The key functions and linkages with the sustainable development agenda are as follows.

Environmental Policy

The Department is responsible for taking forward environmental policy and legislation for Northern Ireland. The main areas are water quality, waste management, air quality, biodiversity, nature conservation, the protection of the built heritage, and climate change. These policies contribute to many of the six priority action areas contained within the Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy. We recognise also that strong environmental governance is an important aspect of sustainable development. We continue to transpose and implement EU legislation. In a number of key policy areas of particular importance to Northern Ireland, we have a proactive approach engaging at the UK and European levels, and tailoring policy to meet the particular needs of Northern Ireland, for example, Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

Planning

The Department recognises that the planning system is a key mechanism for delivering sustainable development on the ground. All development plans and Planning Policy Statements prepared by the Department are required by law to be in general conformity with the Regional Development Strategy (RDS), which has embedded the need to accommodate development in a sustainable manner within its guiding principles. We will continue to update our suite of planning policy statements.

In order to help implement the policy directions set out in the RDS, Planning Service has an ambitious programme for the preparation of a fit-for-purpose suite of development plans across the region and is committed to making progress despite the impact of recent judicial challenges. Since 2002, Planning Service has published three adopted plans and five draft plans, including the Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 and, most recently, the Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015. Collectively, these cover 18 of the 26 Council areas in Northern Ireland. Planning Service has also been preparing three draft plans which include the West Tyrone Area Plan 2018, the Antrim/ Ballymena/Larne Area Plan 2016 and the Armagh Area Plan 2018. These plans cover a further 6 council areas. Of the two remaining council areas, Derry is covered by an up to date adopted area plan. Although the Fermanagh Area Plan passed its notional 'end by' date at the end of December 2007, Planning Service is satisfied that it continues to provide a relevant planning framework for the district.

Planning Service is currently contesting judicial challenges in respect of the Environmental Assessments of the Draft Northern, Magherafelt and Banbridge, Newry and Mourne Area Plans. The continuing legal process has the potential to delay the delivery of the development plan programme. However, Planning Service is committed to resolving the matter as expeditiously as possible and is now in a position to progress the Draft Magherafelt Area Plan to Independent Examination.

A fundamental review of the development plan process is already underway as part of the wider reform of the planning system announced by the Minister, Arlene Foster, in November 2007. Policy proposals for reform of the planning system will be drawn up by summer 2008 for subsequent public consultation.

Road Safety

The Department's objective of reducing road deaths and serious injuries is a vital element of the overall sustainable development effort and is supported by a close working relationship between Road Safety Division and the Driver and Vehicle Agency. Through its publicity campaigns, it complements engineering and enforcement measures by the Department for Regional Development's (DRD) Roads Service and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) to target the main causal factors of road casualties and improve road safety for the most vulnerable road users. Through its road safety education programme, it has a range of measures which contribute both to the objective of reducing child deaths and serious injuries, and also to initiatives in the DRD aimed at promoting safer walking and cycling as alternative modes of transport. The practical child pedestrian training scheme aims to help school children translate classroom teaching into practice in real-life road situations. The cycling proficiency scheme is actively promoted to all schools in Northern Ireland, with around 60% offering the scheme.

In 2007 the Department initiated a major review of the NI Road Safety Strategy 2002-12. The existing strategy targets reductions of 33% in the overall numbers of deaths and serious injuries on the roads and 50% in the numbers of children killed or seriously injured, compared with the averages for 1996-2000. It is envisaged that a new strategy will be in place by 2010, two years ahead of the expiry of the existing strategy.

Driver and Vehicle Licensing and Testing

A new Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA) was created in April 2007 by merging the functions of the Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency (DVTA) and Driver and Vehicle Licensing NI (DVLNI), and will carry forward their responsibilities and functions.

DVA will continue to contribute to sustainable communities through the provision of accurate data that helps to combat crime and create cleaner, greener and safer communities. The licensing of passenger transport facilitates the provision of public transport links within and between communities, improving social inclusion and reducing environmental impacts and dependence on private transport.

DVA also contributes to sustainable development by:

- improving road safety through driver and vehicle testing and activities aimed at increasing compliance with vehicle road worthiness standards;
- reducing negative impacts on the environment through the control of emissions;
- supporting fair play for motorists and commercial operators; and
- supporting crime reduction through its ongoing testing and enforcement procedures.

Local Government

The Review of the Local Government aspects of the RPA has been concluded and its findings have been agreed by the Executive: the agreed findings were announced on 13 March 2007. The Department will now move forward in partnership with the sector and other departments to implement the agreed structural reform package and to develop and deliver modernisation proposals for the local government sector. Eleven new councils will be created to replace the existing 26 councils. This package will add to the existing range of functions carried out by local government by transferring functions from central government, and so place councils at the centre of local service delivery. It is the aim of the Department to complete the task to allow elections to take place to the new councils in 2011. In parallel with the restructuring and transfer of functions, the Department will be working closely with the sector to deliver a significant programme of modernisation within councils.

2. Better Regulation and Enforcement

Since 2001, Northern Ireland Departments have been operating under the Northern Ireland Better Regulation Strategy. The Strategy was introduced by the then Northern Ireland Executive to minimise the burden of red tape on business. The Strategy requires Departments:

- to undertake and publish a Regulatory Impact Assessment when considering new policy proposals, or amendments to existing policy which may impact on business;
- to carry out a micro business test to assess the impact on business of less than 5 employees; and
- to provide guidance to business on new legislation at least 12 weeks before legislation comes into operation.

The Department is committed to reducing unnecessary burdens on industry and is following better regulation principles in the policy development, regulation and implementation of its activities. In particular, we have engaged with the Department of Agriculture and Regional Development (DARD) in appointing an independent Better Regulation and Simplification Panel to seek to reduce the administrative burden on the agri-food sector. The Ministers of both Departments will receive the Panel Report later this year.

The Better Regulation Strategy also introduced an Enforcement Concordat to serve as a blueprint for fair, practical and consistent enforcement based on existing practice. The Department continues to employ the terms of this Concordat in the furtherance of its enforcement duties. In addition to this, the Department is currently finalising an Action Plan in response to the Criminal Justice Inspection (NI) Report on Enforcement by DOE, published in October 2007.

3. Equality of Opportunity, Human Rights and Anti-Poverty Strategy

Building a society based on partnership, equality, inclusion and mutual respect remains a strategic priority. The Department remains committed to ensuring that equality of opportunity, good relations and, where applicable, targeting social need, are important elements of its policy development, legislative activities and operational programmes. The Department is also committed to ensuring that Human Rights implications of proposed policies and legislation are reviewed to ensure that proposals are compatible with the requirements of the Human Rights Act 1998.

The Department's Equality Scheme, and the government's new Anti-Poverty Strategy "Lifetime Opportunities", reflect the importance placed on ensuring that the development of major departmental policies, operational programmes and legislation are measured against Section 75 and social need indicators, and take account of examples of good practice in this area.

To achieve these aims, equality considerations continue to be mainstreamed into policy-making processes across the Department. This is in line with our commitment to implement the statutory equality duty to eliminate or minimise any unintentional adverse consequences of policy decisions in respect of equality of opportunity. The views of key stakeholders who represent Section 75 groups and voluntary and community organisations are continually sought as part of all consultation exercises whilst the Department's annual progress reports to the Equality Commission highlight the progress made in ensuring that equality is mainstreamed into policy development.

The Department continues to develop relationships with the Voluntary and Community Sector through membership of the Joint Forum and by contact with a number of voluntary groups who provide services on behalf of the Department. In relation to departmental policies and actions which have the potential to impact on rural areas, the Department continues to ensure that rural communities are consulted to provide them with a meaningful opportunity for input to decision making and policy development.

The Department, in carrying out its functions, continues to consider how the policies it makes and implements affect relationships between people of different religions, political opinion and racial groups. The Department contributed to 'A Shared Future' which sets out

the Government's vision for Northern Ireland, its policy and strategic framework for good relations in Northern Ireland. It is represented on the Good Relations Panel chaired by the Head of the Civil Service. The Department also continues to comply with the requirements set out in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

4. NICS Reform

The department will continue to support and implement the major programme of NICS reforms designed to deliver better public services.

In relation to Workplace 2010, it is planned that departmental HQ will temporarily transfer in 2009 to another city centre building. The current HQ, Clarence Court, will be refurbished to Workplace 2010 standards primarily using open space, but also engaging modern technology to support improved working practices and efficiencies. The recanting into Clarence Court is planned for 2010 and will allow the unification of all departmental HQ functions.

DOE will become integrated within the Account NI system, a financial shared service centre, in 2009.

HRConnect is the Human Resource service for Northern Ireland departments and the Northern Ireland Office which will be introduced in DOE in phases. The process commenced in 2007 with completion due in late 2008.

Records NI aims to improve information and records management within the NICS through the introduction of an electronic document and records management (EDRM) system. This new system has been rolled out within DOE although further work will be undertaken to optimise usage.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

Departmental Structure

The structure of the Department comprises a number of central policy divisions and three Executive Agencies, namely the:

- *Environment and Heritage Service;*
- *Planning Service; and*
- *Driver and Vehicle Agency.*

The work of the Department is co-ordinated and monitored by the Departmental Board, whose role is to provide corporate leadership within policies determined by the Minister.

The Board comprises the Permanent Secretary; the Deputy Secretary for Planning, Environmental Policy and Local Government; the Directors of Corporate Services and Road Safety Division; and the Chief Executives of the Planning Service, Driver and Vehicle Agency and Environment and Heritage Service. Two Independent Board Members were appointed to the Board in January 2008. The structure of the Department is illustrated at Annex A on page 26.

In addition to the work of the Departmental Board, the Permanent Secretary provides direction and leadership to the senior management of the Department's business areas through bilateral relationships.

The Department is assisted by three statutory advisory bodies – the Historic Buildings Council, the Historic Monuments Council, and the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside.

The Department also oversees the work of two Non-Departmental Executive Public Bodies – the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC), and the Local Government Staff Commission (LGSC) – and monitors their compliance with central government requirements.

Some personnel, finance and support services are currently provided by the Department for Regional Development under Service Level Agreements.

The Department for Transport (DfT), acting through its executive agency, Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), has statutory responsibility for vehicle registration and licensing in the United Kingdom. These functions are undertaken in Northern Ireland by DVA on behalf of the DVLA. There is a formal agreement between the Department and DfT specifying the services to be delivered and the funding arrangements. DVLA funds all activities in relation to vehicle registration and licensing in Northern Ireland.

IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

In pursuit of its vision and aim, the Department has regular contact with a large proportion of the population in Northern Ireland and is continually seeking to improve the services that it provides. This is illustrated by the Department's activities in the past year.

Planning and Environmental Policy Group were responsible for a number of stakeholder groups in the fields of waste management, climate change, biodiversity, the marine and freshwater environment, and planning policy. It issued 16 public consultations on environmental policy and legislation issues involving a wide range of stakeholders. Stakeholder events across Northern Ireland were held to inform the review of draft Planning Policy Statement 14 (PPS14): 'Sustainable Development in the Countryside', and the development of River Basin management plans.

DVA Testing had contact with:

- 76,000 people who took driving tests;
- 670,000 people who had their vehicles tested; and
- 58,000 people who undertook the driving theory test.

DVA Licensing dealt with:

- 1,172,377 people renewing their car tax;
- 149,123 people who registered new or used vehicles in Northern Ireland for the first time;
- 26,126 people or organisations who got new or renewed taxi and road transport vehicle and operator licences; and
- 299,376 people who received new or renewed driving licences.

Road Safety Division had contact with:

- 175,000 children in nursery, primary, special and hospital schools to support and deliver road safety education training, including child pedestrian safety training and cycle proficiency training; and
- 150,000 students in post-primary schools to deliver road safety education through support and promotional activities, interactive sessions and presentations, theatre education, or to advise on course work.

Planning Service had contact with:

- the applicants, neighbours and objectors with an interest in some 27,000 development proposals.

Environment and Heritage Service made:

- over 2150 regulatory and advisory visits to industry, farms and businesses;
- some 700 monitoring visits to scheduled monuments carried out by wardens;
- regular contact, through meetings and seminars, with the industrial and agricultural sectors.

In addition, some 1.75 million visits a year are made to the country parks and countryside centres managed by EHS. Over 40,000 of these visits are made by school children undertaking environmental education programmes or studying the local heritage.

Local Government Policy Division

This Division is responsible for:

- General grant (funding to support the existing 26 district councils);
- Two Executive Non-Departmental Public Bodies i.e. Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee and Local Government Staff Commission;
- Best Value issues (e.g. guidance to councils, performance indicators and residents satisfaction survey);
- Code of Conduct for Councillors;
- Councillors' Allowances;
- Bringing forward the Local Government Bill; and
- Local government legislation on:
 - Pension scheme for local government employees;
 - Compensation scheme for local government employees in respect of redundancy; and
 - premature retirement.

The Review of Public Administration (RPA) has had a major impact on the work of the Department in relation to local government. The division is responsible for co-ordinating the development and delivery of a major programme of work required to implement the decisions of the RPA as they relate to local government. The outcome of the review of local government means that the current 26 council areas will be rationalised to create

11 new council areas. As part of the new structures, the functions to transfer to local government would include:

- Local development plan functions, development control and enforcement;
- Local public realm aspects of roads functions including streetscaping; town and city centre environmental improvements; street lighting; off-street parking; and permitting local events to be held on roads etc ;
- Urban regeneration and community development delivery functions including those associated with physical development, area based regeneration (such as Neighbourhood Renewal) along with some community development programmes and support for the voluntary and community sectors;
- A range of housing functions; and
- A number of functions associated with driving forward local economic development, local tourism and local arts, sports and leisure.

Arrangements will also be developed whereby local government will have a formal input to the decisions in relation to a number of responsibilities that are remaining with central government.

Local Government Policy Division will work closely with other Departments and the local government sector to agree and put in place appropriate implementation structures.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES 2008-09 – 2010-11

The table below sets out the Department's budgets for the three forward years (2008-09 to 2010-11). The 2007-08 figures are also shown for comparative purposes.

Spending Area	Total 2007-08 £m	Total 2008-09 £m	Total 2009-10 £m	Total 2010-11 £m
Environment and Heritage Service	66.0	57.6	57.0	56.0
Planning and Environmental Policy Group (PEPG) ⁽¹⁾	7.8	10.9	21.7	188.9
Planning Service	34.5	35.7	33.4	32.4
Road Safety Division	4.6	5.0	5.6	5.9
Driver and Vehicle Agency ^(2&3)	21.0	22.3	15.8	15.7
Local Government Policy Division	50.7	52.0	52.9	52.2
Corporate Services Division	3.5	4.0	3.8	3.8
Total Gross Expenditure	188.1	187.4	223.1	389.3
Receipts ⁽⁴⁾	43.6	44.6	37.7	37.7
Total Departmental Expenditure Limit	144.5	142.8	152.5	317.2

Note: some figures may not tally because of roundings

1. The significant increase in the PEPG budgets between 2008-09 and 2009-10 (£10.9m) and 2009-10 and 2010-11 (£167.2m) relates to the additional capital funding secured as part of the Budget 2008-11 outcome to assist the district councils in taking forward their waste management plans to ensure compliance with the EU Landfill Directive targets.
2. The driver and vehicle testing function of DVA operates as a Government Trading Fund with full cost recovery. In addition, DVA undertakes roadside enforcement activities, which are outside the scope of the Trading Fund regime and therefore score against the Department's budget. The investment in the Trading Fund is shown in the Department's Balance Sheet which gives details of the Public Dividend Capital and Long Term Loan created by the DVTA Trading Fund Order (NI) 1996.
3. The costs of the vehicle licensing function of DVA (£13m) are fully recouped from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), Swansea.
4. The total receipts figure includes income from Planning Service charges relating primarily to development control. This function of the Planning Service is progressively moving towards full cost recovery.

Efficiency Programme

The Department has a target to deliver cash releasing efficiencies of £3.9m, £7.7m and £11.4m respectively over the period 2008-09 to 2010-11. Included in these overall targets are targets for the reduction of the Department's Administration budgets (£0.6m, £2.3m and £3.9m). In the main, these efficiencies will be delivered by the cessation of low priority activities, a reduction in consultancy spend, a reduction in corporate services functions, an increase in fee income and at least a 15% reduction in the Department's non-salary running costs. Efficiency Delivery Plans (EDPs) have been developed by all the Department's business areas and set out how the Administration efficiencies will be delivered over the three Budget years (2008-09 to 2010-11). These will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the Departmental Board and by DFP. They detail both vacant and currently filled posts to be suppressed in addition to surplus staff who may need to be redeployed. The likely impact of the Comprehensive Spending Review on the Department is a reduction in headcount of 120 by 2010-11. At 31 March 2008, this includes 70 vacant posts and 50 currently filled posts. The EDPs will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the Departmental Board and by DFP.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND KEY TARGETS

In support of its aim, the Department has set a number of key medium-term strategic objectives. Agencies and divisions have further strategic objectives set out in their respective corporate plans. Medium-term targets have been set for each objective and are also reflected in the Department's Public Service Agreement.

There is, inevitably, some overlap as a consequence of the Department's wide range of statutory and other obligations, and parts of the Department may contribute to more than one strategic objective.

Strategic Objective 1:

To protect and promote the natural environment and built heritage.

PSA Targets:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% below 1990 levels by 2025 and improve energy efficiency in homes.
- Through the Sustainable Development Implementation Plan 2008-11, progress delivery, where appropriate, of the Key Targets associated with Strategic Climate Change and Energy objectives.
- By 2015 achieve the environmental objectives set for all water bodies under the Water Framework Directive.
- Achieve the health based objectives for 7 key air pollutants in the Air Quality Strategy by the relevant dates.
- Compliance with EU Landfill Directive target to reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill to 75% of 1995 levels by 2010.
- Save at least 45 buildings or scheduled monuments on the Built Heritage At Risk Northern Ireland (BHARNI) register by March 2011, contributing to the target of saving 200 structures by 2016.
- To reduce significantly the loss in biodiversity by 2010, and to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2016.

Other Key Targets:

- Transpose the requirements of European Directives into Northern Ireland legislation within 2 years of coming into force.
- Introduce a new management scheme directed towards 'at risk' Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) by 31 March 2009.
- Protect the stock of listed buildings by completing the Second Survey in a further 60 wards or ward equivalents by 31 March 2011.
- Conduct 5 parallel financial investigations relating to illegal waste management activities under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, either in house or in conjunction with the Assets Recovery Agency/Serious Organised Crime Agency or Police Service of NI by 31 March 2009.
- By 31 December 2009 produce final River Basin Management Plans leading to compliance with Water Framework Directive and achievement of good status for all waters by 2015.
- By 31 December 2010 review Nitrates Action Programme to determine any necessary revisions.
- By 31 March 2011 introduce new marine legislation and other measures designed to improve and protect the management of the marine environment.
- Provide substantive departmental input to the independent Panel on Better Regulation and Simplification in the agri-food sector by deadlines set by the Panel.
- To put in place arrangements for a risk assessment on climate change and to initiate the development of a programme to deal with the issue in Northern Ireland by 31 December 2011.

Strategic Objective 2:

To plan and manage development in a sustainable way which is responsive to the needs of the community.

PSA Targets:

- Ensure a fit for purpose suite of draft or adopted development plans is in place by March 2011.
- A fit for purpose suite of Planning Policy Statements to be in place by March 2011.
- A fit for purpose legislative framework to be in place by March 2011.
- By March 2011, ensure: 60% of major applications processed in 23 weeks; 70% of intermediate applications processed in 31 weeks; and 80% of minor applications processed in 18 weeks.

Other Key Targets:

- Year-on year from 2008-2011 decide all large scale investment planning proposals within 6 months, provided there has been pre-application consultation.
- To implement the agreed programme for transferring planning functions to councils under the Review of Public Administration by March 2011.

Strategic Objective 3:

To reduce road deaths and serious injuries.

PSA Targets:

- By 2012 reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured by 33% of the average for the period 1996-2000.
- By 2012 reduce the number of children killed or seriously injured by 50% of the average for the period 1996-2000.

Other Key Targets:

- By July 2009, make the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act.
- By 2010, complete implementation of the taxi reform programme.
- By 2010, develop a revised and updated road safety strategy for NI.
- Through multi-agency operations, remove 15,000 unlicensed vehicles from the public roads by 2011.
- Maintain a programme of quality driver and vehicle testing.
- Implement the third EC directive on driver licensing - legislation to be in place by 2011 and the Directive implemented by 2013.

Strategic Objective 4:

To support the delivery of a system of strong and effective local government.

PSA Targets:

- Reduction in the numbers of local councils, and transfer of agreed functions from central government to local government control.
- Modernisation of existing processes of councils.
- Assumption of new powers for local government.

Other Key Targets:

- To have the Local Government (Boundaries) Bill 2008 made by 30 June 2008 and the Local Government Boundaries Commissioner appointed by 1 July 2008.
- To have operational the agreed implementation structures to give effect to the decisions of the Executive on local government aspects of RPA by end August 2008.
- To develop a RPA communications strategy by June 2008.
- To develop detailed implementation plans by August 2008.
- To issue for consultation the draft Local Government Bill and the draft Local Government (Contracts) Bill by 30 November 2008.
- Report of Boundaries Commissioner presented to Minister – July 2009.
- Report of District Electoral Areas Commissioner – June 2010.
- New local authorities come into being May 2011.

Corporate Services

To support the Minister, Permanent Secretary and senior management, and oversee the securing and allocation of resources to enable the Department to achieve its business aims and meet its legal and equity obligations.

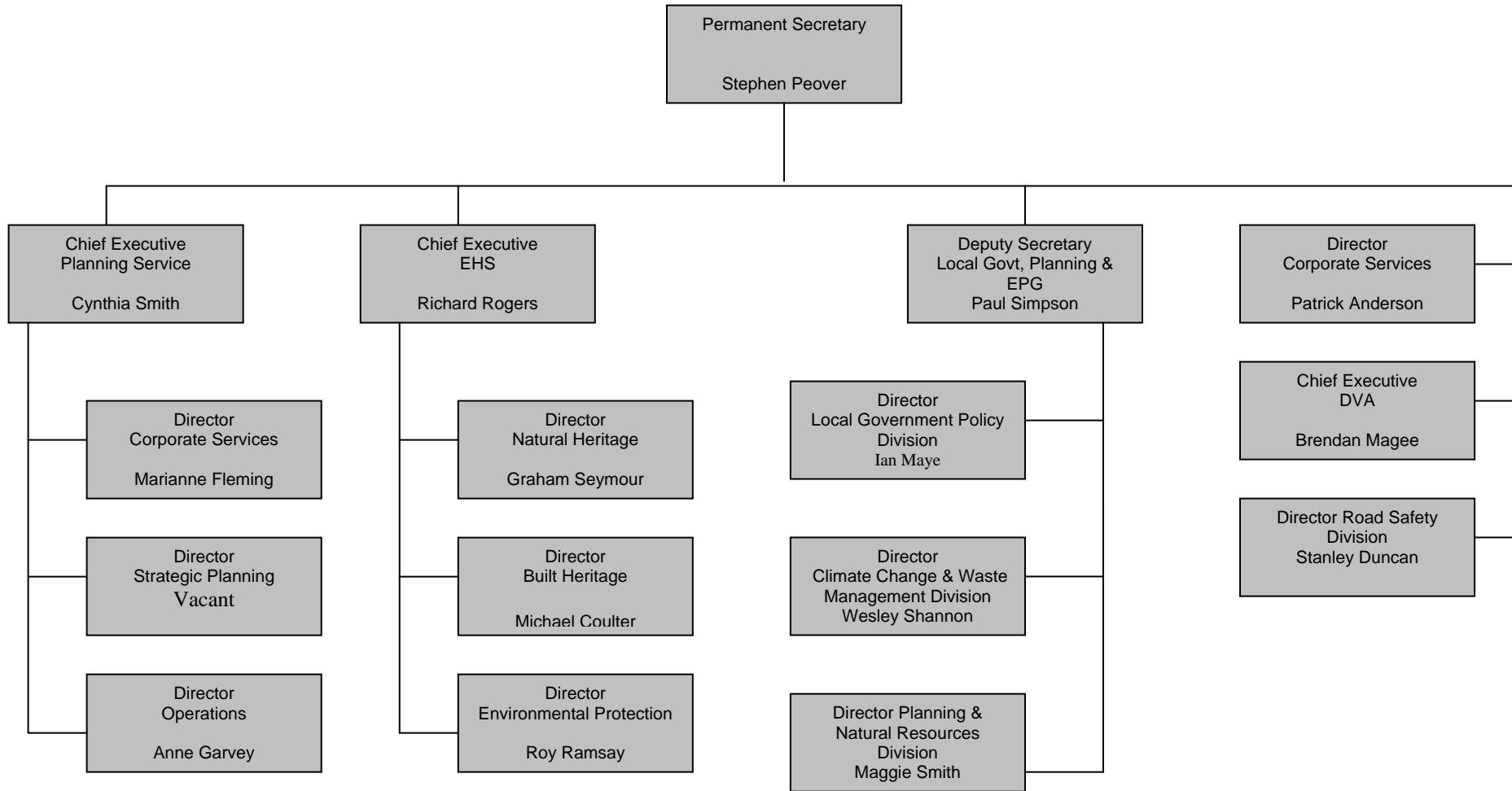
PSA Targets:

- Production of annual procurement plan.
- A minimum of 95% value of procurement to be subject to CoPE influence by 31 March 2008. If this target is not met must seek to reduce non-CoPE procurement by 25% year on year (2008-11).
- Deliver Shared NICS Corporate Services through the implementation and realisation of the benefits of the following reform programmes:
 - Financial and accounting services through Account NI by 1 April 2009;
 - Human resource services through HR Connect by November 2008;
 - ICT services through the ICT Shared Services Centre by April 2009;
 - Network service through Network NI by 30 September 2009; and
 - Office estate services through Workplace 2010 by 30 November 2008.

Other Key Targets

- To secure sufficient human, financial (through in-year monitoring and Budget processes) and accommodation resources to enable the efficient delivery of the objectives set out in the Corporate and Business plan.
- To achieve the managing attendance targets for the DOE for the next two years, that is:
 - 9.1 days for 2008-09; and
 - 8.5 days for 2009-10.
- To report on financial performance both externally (by DFP and NIAO deadlines) and internally (to the Board and Minister), and to monitor compliance with financial propriety and corporate governance requirements.
- To monitor progress in complying with obligations in respect of Human Rights, Equality of Opportunity and the NICS Lifetime Opportunities Strategy, and provide appropriate guidance.
- To contribute to the NICS reform and modernisation agenda through culture and business process change and the exploitation of ICT in support of Departmental services.
- To make information more accessible, open and transparent, in line with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
- To ensure that effective security measures are employed to protect information held and processed by the Department, particularly personal data.
- To provide a timely and effective media service which addresses the needs of internal and external stakeholders.

DEPARTMENTAL STRUCTURE



NICS Customer Service Principles

The Department is keen to develop practical ways to improve customer service. It is fully committed to adopting and implementing the nine Northern Ireland Customer Service Principles which were launched on 1 February 2005. These are:

Principle 1 Publishing service standards

Each organisation will publish a set of customer service standards setting out the level of service its customers can expect. The standards should be challenging, relevant, measurable and meaningful and should be publicised widely. Each organisation's performance against the standards should be made available to customers.

Principle 2 Informing the Customer

Each organisation will provide clear and straightforward information about its services and those of related service providers in a variety of ways, including the Internet. The information will include a telephone enquiry number, text phone numbers and email addresses and should be timely, updated regularly, easily accessible, professional and in plain language. Where organisations require particular actions or information from customers or otherwise consider customers have certain responsibilities, they should explicitly state this.

Principle 3 Service Accessibility

Each organisation will make its services accessible to its customers by doing everything reasonably possible to make its services available to everyone including people with special needs and those whose first language is not English. Where it is necessary for customers to attend public service offices, organisations should ensure that their premises are clean, comfortable and welcoming.

Principle 4 Consulting with customers

Each organisation will consult with and will involve customers and potential customers about how its services will be delivered, the quality of service they have experienced and their level of expectation. They will consult in a variety of ways and use their views to improve the services provided. The results of consultation should be reported to customers together with plans for service improvement.

Principle 5 Polite and Helpful Staff

Each organisation will ensure that staff are polite and helpful and that appropriate training in customer care is provided when dealing directly with customers. Staff must be identifiable and the wearing of name badges where appropriate should be encouraged.

Principle 6 Seeing Callers

Each organisation will ensure that callers are seen without undue delay by setting a target for seeing callers with and without appointments. Callers should be informed of any likely delays. Procedures should be put in place to ensure that queuing systems are fair and flexible and that, where appropriate, waiting time information is provided.

Principle 7 Answering telephone calls

Each organisation will ensure that telephone calls are answered quickly. The name of the organisation and that of the person answering the call should be given and the person answering the call should be able to deal with the enquiry or arrange direct contact with an appropriate person who can.

Principle 8 Answering letters, faxes and emails

Each organisation will set targets for ensuring that letters, faxes and emails are answered quickly and clearly. Responses will include the name and address of the organisation and contact details. Unless a full and complete response is likely to be made within 10 working

days, an acknowledgement should be sent within 2 working days, which will give a target date for a full response. All correspondence, whether letter, fax or email, should be clear and presentable. (While it is the Department's intention to work towards responding to letters, faxes and e-mails within the 10 working day target this process will be introduced on a gradual basis and the current departmental 15 day target to provide a full and complete reply remains in force).

Principle 9 Having a complaints procedure

Each organisation will have a complaints procedure – or procedures – for services provided which should include its policy on redress. They should be publicised through a variety of means, including on the Internet and should be clear and straightforward with an option for independent review. Each organisation will set and report on targets for dealing with complaints.