

KENT AND ESSEX POLICE



The Kent and Essex Police Forces Support Services Unit delivers shared services to the two territorial UK police forces in the areas of Finance, HR, IT, Transport, Procurement, Estates and General Services. The organisation employs about 1100 employees that are based in both Kent and Essex.

The organisation engaged me to help them develop a new performance management regime based on a [one-page strategic performance management framework](#) it called plan-on-a-page. Mark Gilmartin, director of the Essex Police and Kent Police Support Service, explains “My primary reason for deciding to introduce the Plan on a Page was my observation that performance management is generally underdeveloped in support functions”. “I perceived that this framework could deliver greater rigor and step-change performance improvement in the support world and at a time when it is particularly needed.”

I was hired to help Kent and Essex Police Forces Support Services create a Plan on a Page which we then rolled out within the joint support services and then cascaded it to its seven departments. The key objective were to drive consistency in performance across the departments as well as bring greater rigor to performance management in the support world.

Support Services Plan on a Page

The Directorate’s Plan on a Page for the combined Essex and Kent Support Services Directorate is shown in the figure below. The top layer outlines the mission ‘providing vital support to operational policing in Kent and Essex by resourcing to establishment, providing fit for purpose equipment and infrastructure, fair budgets, effective and efficient business services, as well as strategic advice, information and analysis.

The blue layer then describes the key outcome deliverables, followed by the key internal business process objectives and the enabling success factors at the base of the framework.

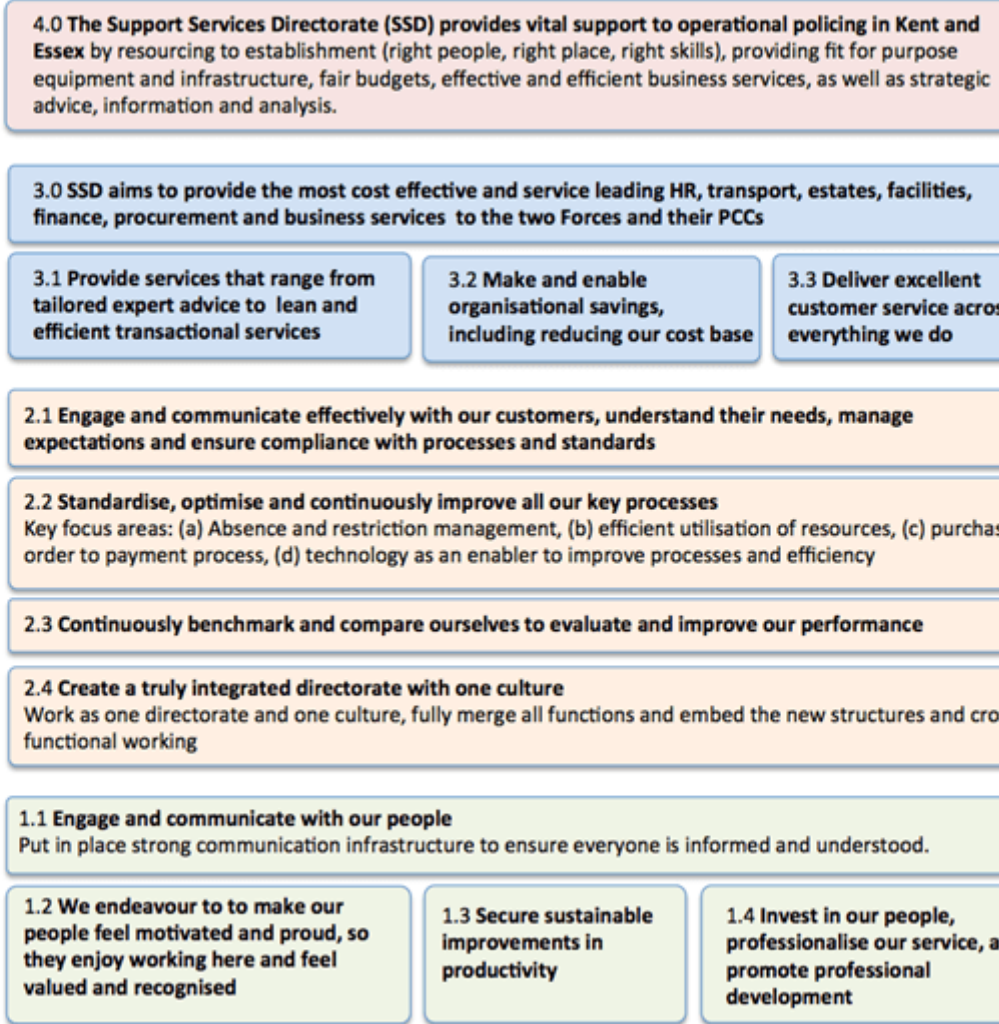
Developing the Plan on the Page followed a rigorous process that involved semi-structured interviews with key individuals, workshops for the heads of the seven departments (HR, Business Services, Finance, Transport, Estates, Procurement and IT) as well as other key staff.



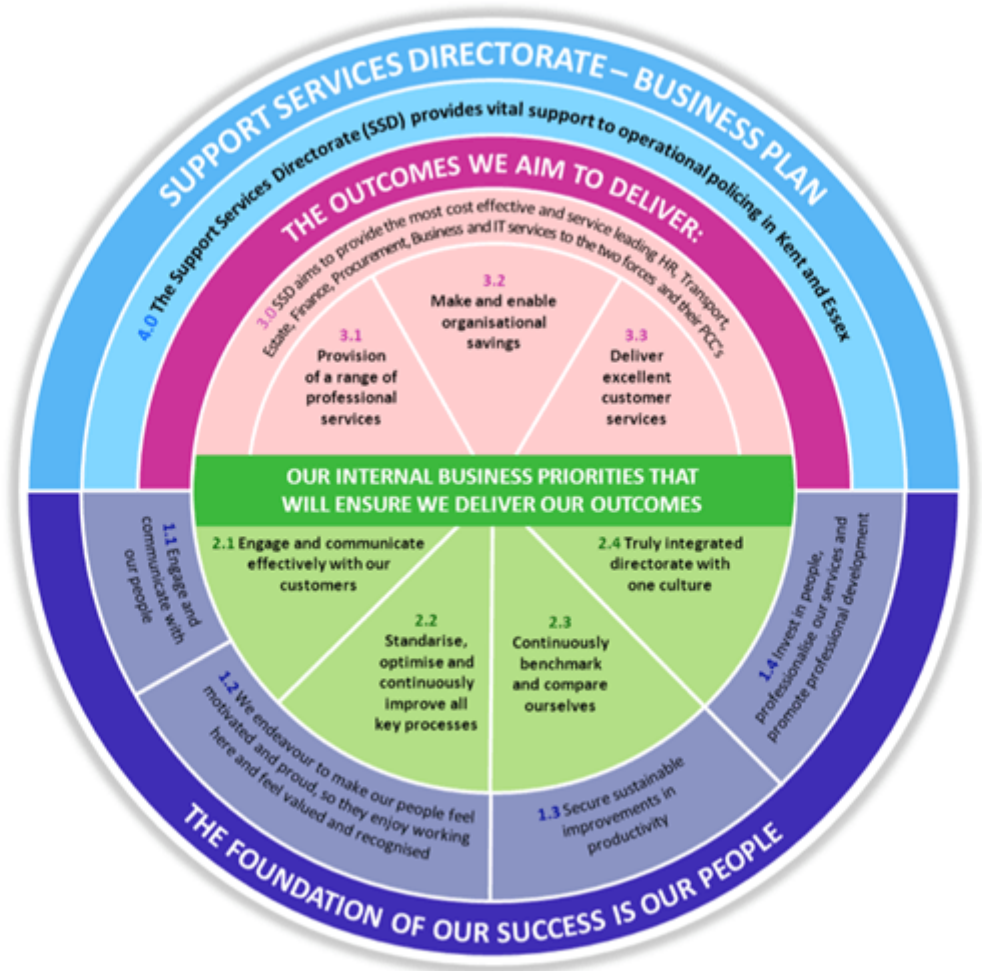
The outcomes we aim to deliver:

Our internal business priorities that will ensure we deliver our outcomes:

The foundation of our success are our people:



The Directorate Plan on a Page was then turned into a more attractive visual to make the communication even easier (see round figure below).



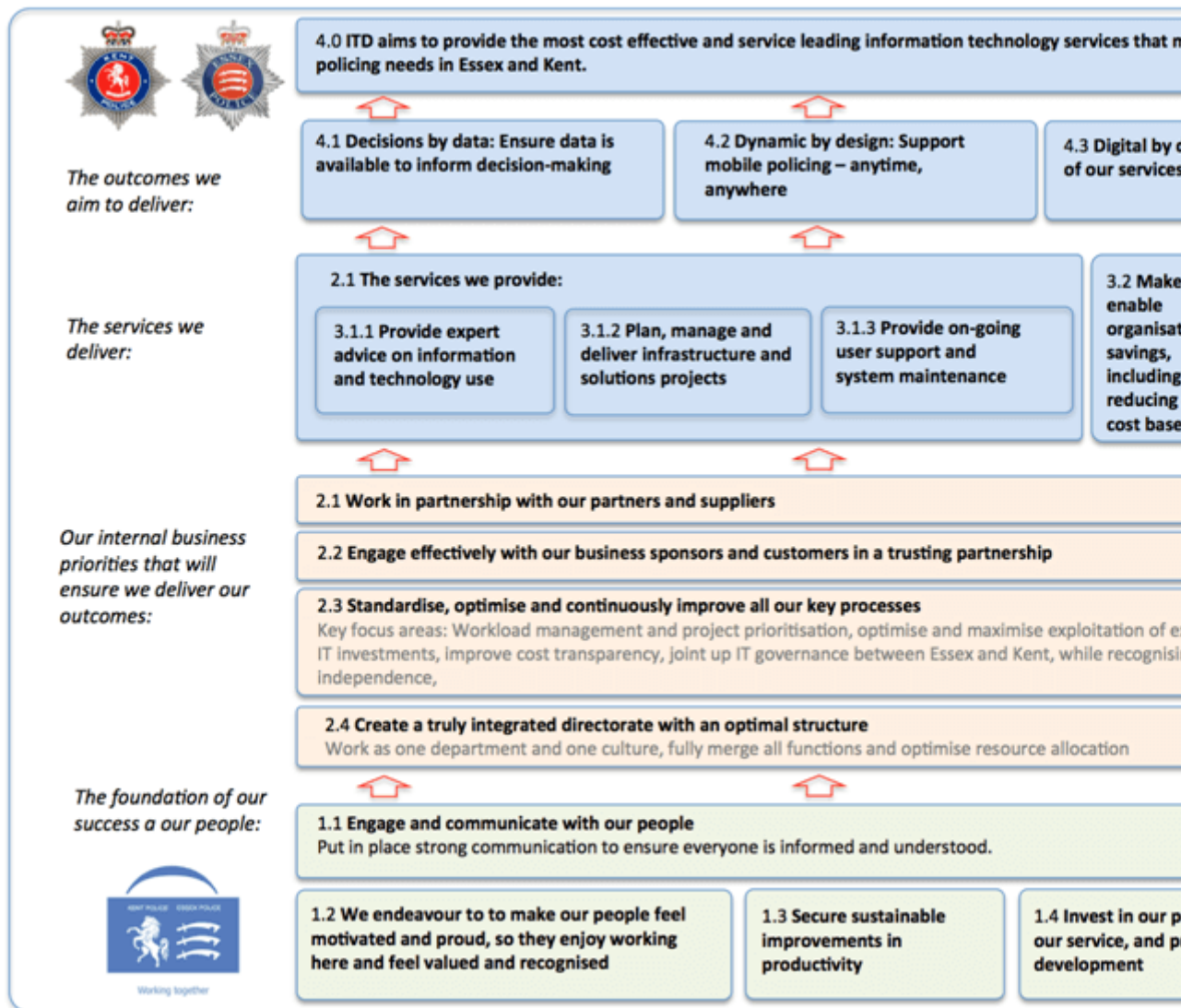
Once the Plan on a Page performance framework was agreed upon by everyone the next step was to develop performance metrics. In order to identify the most relevant and meaningful metrics Key Performance Questions were created to be clear about the true information needs of the business.

Cascading the performance framework

The same objective setting, KPQ and KPI process was used to create the Plans on a Page for each of the departments. The Plan on the Page for the IT Department (ITD) is shown below. Note that ITD, which is true for the other departments has a “mission” that supports the support services mission: “to provide the most cost effective and service leading HR, transport, estates, facilities, finance, procurement and business services to the two Forces and their PCCs”.

Moreover, many of the Support Services objectives are also devolved to the departments, such as “Standardize, optimize and continuously improve all our key processes,” “continuously benchmark and compare ourselves to evaluate and improve our performance,” and engage and communicate with our people.

This ensures alignment between what the departments are setting out to achieve and the objectives of the Directorate, which in turn align to the corporate objectives of Essex and Kent Police.



Benefits of Alignment

“Within support services generally and departments individually, our priority areas are around customer satisfaction, staff satisfaction, improving processes and achieving savings,” explains Gilmartin, who provides this example of the benefits of alignment. “As a result of cascading the Plan on the Page to all seven departments we have been able to put in place a robust and standardized approach to business partnering with customers, through which we can assess how each department is improving against customer satisfaction targets and compare with each other,” he says.

“This common approach has enabled a much more mature relationship with customers through which, for example, we may explain why one requested

solution can't be delivered – perhaps for cost reasons - but will research and present possible alternatives. We are doing much more than paying lip service to the conventional business partnering approach.”

Amongst the other achievements Gilmartin points to significant improvements in the purchase to pay process and those around the employee lifecycle from hiring through promotion to leaving.

Gilmartin believes that the Plan on a Page has enabled a much improved format for presenting the information in a way that encourages broader discussion about performance (informed by, but not restricted to, the data) and that there is now greater usage of statistical evaluation and longer term trends to provide a more measured view of performance.

He says “As we become more mature in using the performance management framework we will get better at analysing the data that we collect and in how we present those insights to senior management and others teams so that they have much richer and data-driven performance discussions”.

“And in the final analysis it is the quality of the conversations had and the decisions made that counts, not the framework itself.”

Ideas and insights you can steal

The joint Services Directorate for Kent and Essex Police was able to create a simple one-page performance framework and by cascading it into the different departments ensure strategic alignment. It is now using the performance framework and accompanying KPQs and KPIs to ensure more mature assessments and discussions about organisational performance. This is something any organisation can copy.