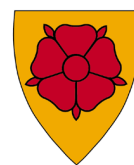


Sørum municipality

Information and a brief history



Sørum
KOMMUNE

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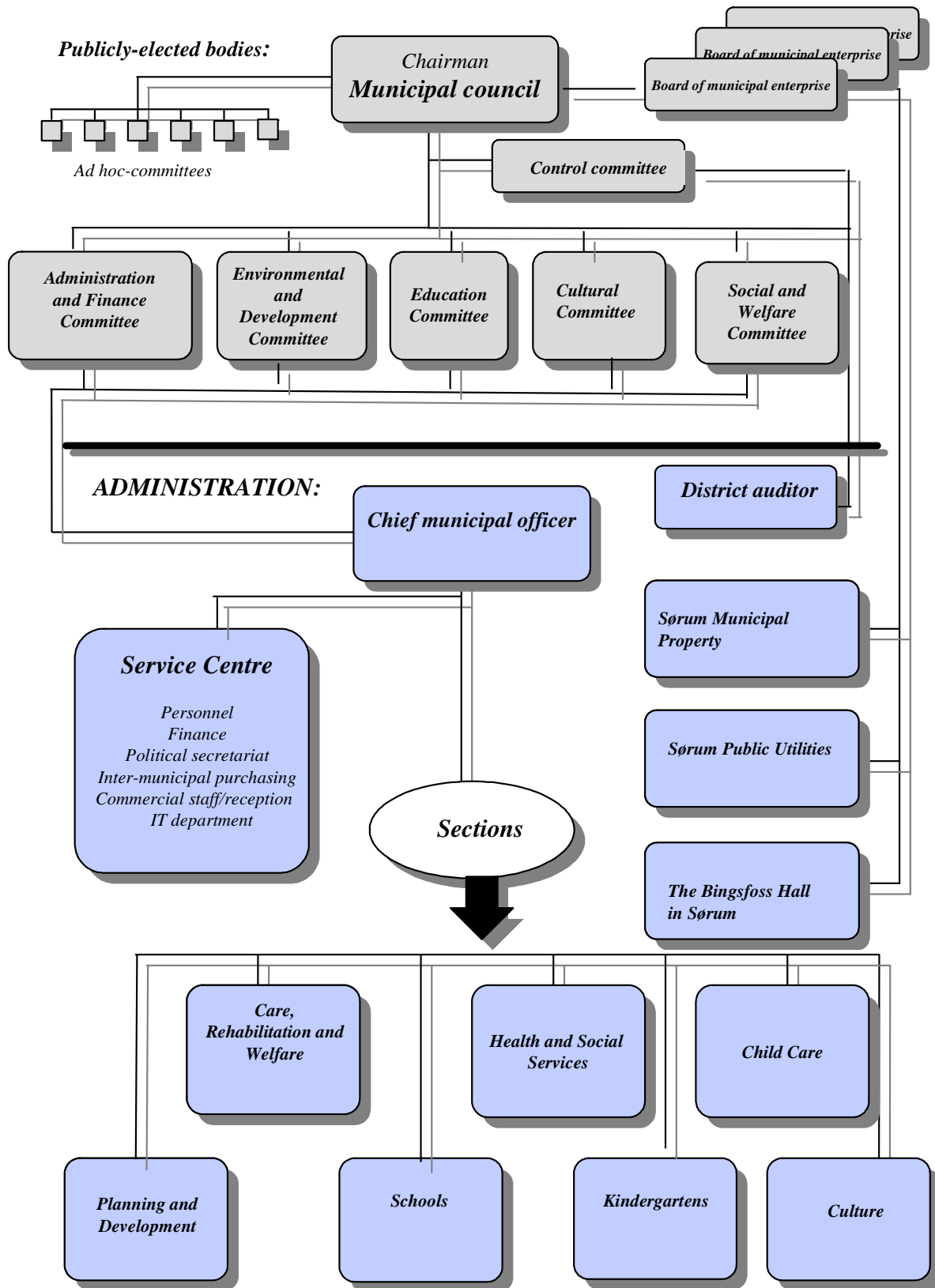
Sørum information

Annual report, financial plan, annual budget, development programme and other information are available on our website www.sorum.kommune.no or in printed form on application to the municipal offices.

First edition:	1998
Second edition:	1999
Third edition:	2001
Fourth edition:	2003
Fifth edition:	2005
Sixth edition:	2006
Seventh edition:	2007
Eighth edition:	2009

Organisational plan for Sørum municipality

ORGANISATIONAL PLAN FOR SØRUM MUNICIPALITY



1. Introduction

In 2009 Sørumsund has about 15.200 inhabitants. The municipality has 876 people (686 man-years) in its employment. In 1996 the municipality chose a new model for both its political and administrative organization. Since 2003 the local council has had 31 representatives, while each advisory committee has 7 members. The finance and administration committees have been amalgamated from the same date and contain 9 politicians and 4 staff representatives.

In Sørumsund, as in other municipalities, the basis for restructuring was determined by the expectations and demands made with regard to the supply of municipal services. These demands are constantly being adjusted in step with changes in the municipality's framework conditions. Such changes created a need for the development of new organizational systems and adjustments in the role of employer. Sørumsund has been aware of the various phases that always go to make up a process of change.

1) Recognition of the need for renewal, i.e.

- to feel that change is necessary
- to meet and overcome opposition to change
- to become involved in forthcoming changes

2) Creating momentum, i.e.

- to diagnose the problem
- to create a vision of what one hopes to attain
- to initiate a committed change of attitude and behaviour

3) Institutionalizing change. i.e.

- to create new roles
- to formulate new ways of co-operation
- to draw up new work routines

Learning by experience

As an actively-engaged, learning organization the municipality has wished to focus on achieving support for solutions, motivation, commitment and mutual goals, together with a clear expectation of results. The municipality has used a variety of development tools; some based on well-known models and theories, others on more recent concepts and often in co-operation with external networks. All these tools have been modified to fit the reality and the framework of Sørumsund. The development programme in recent years has been characterised by the following features.

- A sense of belonging arising from active participation by all those involved.
- Openness and a good working atmosphere.
- Internal and external information activity designed to support the belief that the best external information is often a product of the internal process.
- New demands on management and employees to convey the message that we are at all times in the midst of a process, that the path to follow is partly created by our own efforts and that we must be prepared to cope with unforeseen developments in addition to planned activities.
- A need to work purposefully on our user focus and our own identity as a service institution.
- An emphasis on creativity, new and non-traditional solutions (freedom of activity) combined with discipline (steady path towards selected goals).

Results

The municipality can point to satisfactory financial control and annual progress as shown by the regular surveys undertaken. Various tools have been taken into use to evaluate satisfaction among both users and staff. These results can be examined on www.bedrekommune.no and on the municipality's home page www.sorum.kommune.no

Challenges

The municipality continues to work on the development of services to the public, based on management and staff development, strategic measures, financial control, the implementation of quality control systems and existing tools, together with various arenas of participation.

2. Political basis and political tasks

The basis for organisational change was established in the spring of 1995 through the work carried out by the so-called OK-committee ("Omorganisering etter **K**ommuneloven"). The OK-committee was appointed to evaluate the organizational possibilities arising from new local government legislation. The mandate and aims of the committee were as follows.

- To stimulate interest and involvement in municipal matters among the local inhabitants.
- To improve the inhabitants' sense of identity and community feeling.
- To strengthen political control and make it more visible.
- To reduce the politicians' workload.
- To create the conditions required to ensure meaningful work for the municipality's employees.
- To improve co-operation between the people's representatives and the administration.
- To achieve overall political steering.
- To ensure uniform administrative management.
- To draw a clearer line between political and administrative decisions.
- To improve information provided to the municipality's inhabitants.
- To make the municipal political and administrative management better oriented towards aims and results.
- To achieve an efficient utilisation of collective municipal resources.

Political reorganization was commenced after the 1995 autumn election. There are now 5 advisory committees with independent reporting powers to the municipal council within the areas of education, health and social welfare, environment and development, culture, finance and administration. The finance committee is identical with the role of executive municipal committee and fulfils the requirements of the Local Government Act. Since 1995 only minor changes have taken place in the political committee structure.

3. Administrative reorganization

During the autumn of 1995 and in constant dialogue with the political administration, a new structure was planned and drawn up. The budgeting process and a defining of aims had shown that the organization lacked the necessary ability to meet new financial challenges. At the same time a survey of the work environment revealed a high degree of satisfaction and motivation among municipal employees. Taking all factors into consideration, it appeared that the organization possessed the

internal capacity to cope with extensive organizational change. Selected aims were as follows.

- Genuine organizational change based on an administrative decision.
- Organizational change directly affecting as few people as possible.
- A flatter organizational structure / fewer management levels.
- Improved user information.
- Increased collaboration across organizational divisions.
- More local managers in operational areas.
- Greater delegation of authority.

The new organizational structure in 1996 involved the abolition of departments and departmental heads and an upgrading of some activities into sections. Throughout the years further organizational changes have included making the agricultural office part of the planning and development section, combining what was once 3 zones into a joint nursing, rehabilitation and care section, and establishing a single social and welfare section. At present there are 7 such sections. The Sørum municipal property company, the Sørum municipal technical unit and the Bingsfoss Hall were all established in April 2004 as municipal agencies, each with its own board of directors.

The chief municipal officer's management team consists of the section leaders, the head of the service centre and departmental heads for the finance and personnel staff, altogether 11 persons. This management forum is responsible for both operative and strategic measures. The operational level consists of school headmasters, hospital managers, director of the public water supply, kindergarten managers, etc. Wider activities can have department heads, work supervisors, senior ward nurses, school inspectors, etc.

4. The Complete Balance Sheet

Our vision

The municipality's primary aims for the future have been formulated on the basis of approved political decisions and on organizational values. Our vision of *The Model Municipality* is the basis for our work in developing Sørum, both as a local community and as an organization.

The Complete Balance Sheet (CBS)

Success in achieving "The Model Municipality" depends upon efficient administration of municipal resources. Central to the way in which Sørum has chosen to focus upon sustainable development is "The Complete Balance Sheet". As a supplement to traditional accounting practices a total form of accounting has been developed which embraces several financial concepts. In this lies a recognition of the fact that economic indicators alone are not sufficient to define an organization's activities, particularly where the focus is on comprehensive community development in a perspective covering several generations. Interaction with inhabitants, staff competence and care of the natural environment are all factors which, in addition to economic considerations, have a place in the way Sørum develops. The Complete Balance Sheet is both a planning model and a structure for reporting procedures and the municipality's planning and reporting system is constructed within its framework.

THE COMPLETE BALANCE SHEET

Assets	<p>Financial capital The municipality's ability to administer the economy</p> <p>Liabilities</p> <p>Equity</p>
Reputation	<p>Community capital The municipality's ability to make an active contribution to the development of the public sector.</p> <p>Environmental capital The municipality's ability to create quality of life and to preserve and develop a positive environmental heritage for future generations.</p> <p>User capital The municipality's ability to create confidence, benefits and participation with its inhabitants and with local business and industry.</p> <p>Human capital The municipality's ability to make good use of the commitment and skills of its employees.</p> <p>Structural capital The municipality's ability to design systems and projects for the efficient use of total resources.</p>

Reporting procedures

Feedback and follow-up are the basis for the fact assessment carried out in advance of all development work and financial dispositions. The politicians must be provided with the best possible foundation on which to base their decisions concerning new goals and strategies. Inhabitants and users must be kept fully informed on all aspects of the municipality's plans and activities.

- *Management forum:* Each section leader submits monthly reports to the management forum describing the financial situation and outlining the status in 9 other areas of development and administration. All operational heads report monthly to their own section leader
- *Political:* Monthly economic reports to the municipal chairman and to all committees. Reports based on **CBS** to be submitted every four months to all committees and the municipal council.
Annual report based on **CBS**.
- *Inhabitants:* Information on the municipality's web site and through the press. Individual greeting from the municipal chairman to all newcomers to the community. All municipal documents and results to be made available on the Internet. Special booklet containing general municipal plan and maps to be distributed to every household.
- *The press:* Regular information on matters raised by the public, press releases and news items to be posted on the Internet. An open policy towards the press.
- *Outside bodies:* Documents and publications of current interest sent out to networks and co-operating partners, also to other municipalities and organizations on

request. All documents and plans to be posted on the Internet.
SØRUM MUNICIPALITY'S STRATEGIC AIMS AND PROFIT MANAGEMENT
THE COMPLETE BALANCE SHEET (CBS)

Vision: Sørum - The model municipality

Sørum's values: Transparency - Dialogue - Loyalty - Delegation - Profit management

MUNICIPAL PLAN 2008 - 2020	MUNICIPAL PLAN 2008 - 2020	ECONOMIC PLAN AND PROGRAMME OF ACTION	FOCUS AREAS 1 year	REPORTING
LONG-TERM GOALS	MAIN CHALLENGES	4 YEARS		
	NEXT 12 YEARS			

<p>Financial capital The municipality must be able to administer its economic resources so as to ensure that politically-approved aims for municipal services and for the development of the local community can be realised.</p>	<p>Economic consequences of population growth.</p> <p>Operating costs for services and salaries.</p>			
<p>Community capital The municipality must be able to contribute actively to the development of the community.</p>	<p>Sørum in a regional perspective. Urban development. Trade development. Inter-municipal co-operation. Belonging, identity and multiplicity.</p>	<p>12-year aims to be revised annually on the basis of the 4-yearly strategic plan. Programme of action and economic plan. One aim for each of the capital categories. These aims are also the municipality's quality objectives in accordance with ISO-standards.</p>	<p>The 4-yearly aims to be divided into focus areas, including objective indicators for each section of the annual budget. These decisions to be incorporated in each section's plan of action</p>	<p>Monthly reports to the municipal chairman</p> <p>Finance capital: Monthly reports to political bodies</p> <p>Four-monthly and Annual reports on the basis of CBS</p>
<p>Environmental capital The municipality must be able to create quality of life and ensure a positive environmental heritage for the next generation.</p>	<p>Climate and environment. Urban development and land protection. Greenbelt structure. Conditions suitable for physical growth.</p>			
<p>User capital The municipality must be able to create confidence and collaboration with its inhabitants, business and</p>	<p>Services to be provided in relation to population growth and demographics.</p>			

industry.				
Human capital The municipality must seek to make good use of the commitment and skills of its employees	Recruit and retain municipal staff. Improved competence among employees. Staff and management development.			
Structural capital The municipality must create systems and structures ensuring efficient use of all available resources	ICT-development Development projects.			

5. Revitalisation begins at management level

The dominating factor in all change and development is management behaviour. The new management forum faced a considerable challenge within the new organization, not least because of its own size. The work of the management forum has been aimed at fulfilling the following conditions.

- Developing and maintaining an overall perspective
- Definition of priority aims and development of strategy
- Close attention to overall responsibility for results
- Systematic measurement of results
- Giving substance to the underlying set of ethical values
- A good information policy

The management forum agreed upon the following **values** as a basis for all management behaviour.

- *Transparency* Open information and the ability to encourage critical debate i.e. commitment and clarity.
- *Delegation of responsibility and authority* Creating the conditions where staff and colleagues understand, are willing and able to act and evaluate i.e. ability to draw upon resources.
- *Results management* Reaching set targets within the given framework of resources i.e. awareness of responsibility for results.
- *Loyalty* Committed behaviour towards users, colleagues, managers and decisions made, i.e. procedures and resolutions
- *Dialogue* Creating the conditions for an equal, creative and committed dialogue both internally and externally i.e. flow of information and debate

The importance of management values was widely communicated at an early stage in the reorganization process and has been discussed both at management level and among all employees.

These values continue to provide the basis for attitudes and behaviour.

Management development and evaluation

The municipality has made active use of various management programmes in co-operation with the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities (KS) and also with other suppliers of similar services. The municipality continues to place great emphasis on management training at all levels by promoting awareness of values, expectations, employer responsibilities, results and the use of various types of management evaluation, (including the Human Resource Survey for all personnel, progress reviews and individual employee discussions with their immediate superiors).

Emphasis is also laid on top level management being accessible and visible. The chief municipal officer and the chairman, for example, take part at least once a year in staff meetings in all operational areas, together with the operational manager and the section head. Management development programmes are regularly carried at unit level, operational level and among top management. For the last 5 years an annual employers' conference has been held attended by the chief municipal officer, the administration committee and all union representatives.

At management level the following criteria apply since reorganization.

- Enhanced decision-making powers and ability
- Phasing out the tradition of continual negotiation.
- Improved definition of management roles
- Clearer priorities and better information
- Meeting deadlines/improved financial control
- Higher standards of reports and case presentation
- Joint action to utilise the potential of existing systems and structures
- Acceptance of the fact that management requires the will and the ability to deal with difficult and unforeseen situations.
- Focus on one's own aims and priorities

Employer platform

The municipality's employer-political aims are incorporated in a manual "Employer platform and work regulations for Sørums Municipality". This platform is meant to ensure clear guidelines and suitable conditions for the implementation of employer responsibility and for a focus on the user in accordance with politically approved aims and resources. It provides support to both management and staff and is part of the municipal quality control system. The platform includes guidelines for policy towards senior employees, wage policies, ethical rules and provision for an annual examination of the working environment

6. The relationship between politics and administration

Rules of behaviour and reporting

Specific ethical rules have been agreed upon for political-administrative interaction. Importance is attached to maintaining a high level of information and dialogue with the council chairman and the other politicians concerned. In addition to regular 4-monthly submissions, the annual report and monthly economic reports to the finance committee, information is constantly supplied to each individual advisory committee and to the control committee.

The dividing line

The new political and administrative structure also created a political “dividing line” with the council chairman and the chief municipal officer as contact persons on each side of the line. This dividing line makes the organization clearer and serves to create greater awareness of the various roles, both political and administrative. Once a year all the members of the municipal council and the management forum meet to discuss various questions, such as the rules for delegation of work, terms of reference for financial planning, etc.

Employer responsibility

In carrying out its programme for change, the municipality has chosen a “New Public Management”-oriented approach which places considerable responsibility on the administration to provide leadership and results. The focus has been changed from management by rules and regulations to management by ethical values within an open framework. The relationship between chief municipal officer/council chairman and administration committee/council chairman must be quite explicit with regard to employer responsibility. The Local Government Act defines the scope of the administration's independent duties and rights in making its decisions, while the Administration Act provides the basis for general procedure.

“The New Public Management”-model was chosen as a starting-point but over the years several changes and new measures have been introduced as a result of collaboration between the political bodies, the administrative staff and the trade unions. Taking the best features from the model, we have established our own “best practice” for Sørum municipality.

Sørum development

Change and development draw heavily on all resources, not only financial, but also on time and human effort. The municipal council has annually approved a special budget item - Sørum development - set aside to provide support for various development projects, evaluation and documentation in different areas.

7. Network development and the sharing of expertise

The municipality has attached great importance to contact and co-operation with external Norwegian and Nordic professional and research environments possessing wide experience and advanced knowledge of practical development models and evaluation tools. The development tools used are all adapted to the reality and the framework of the municipality. Sørum has also maintained the principle of making all its expertise and experience available to others by encouraging visits, accepting invitations to give lectures, distributing material and participating in external networks and projects. The municipality's website www.sorum.kommune.no contains a summary of the various surveys and research projects where the municipality has been involved.

Collaboration and shared solutions

With the focus on the user in mind, all municipal planning is carried out by interdisciplinary groups. User services are improved by co-operation of the many and the municipality attaches great importance to the efficient completion of executive work, a joint use of resources and a sharing of expertise. Shared information and mutual access to planning processes are essential for the teamwork required to benefit users and inhabitants. The project catalogue on the municipality's website provides information about on-going projects. The strategic ICT-programme has its own important

development projects and all ICT-training is related to the strategic plan.

8. Development tools, responsibility and follow-up

Focus on the user requires the adoption of new solutions developed through collective collaboration and in relation to the common aim. Changes in organizational structure demand the development and adaptation of systems which assure authority and responsibility, user information and result-orientated follow-up. The systems and tools shall ensure that the organization achieves its overall aims. A vital precondition is that the **whole organization** introduces, uses and follows up these development tools. At the same time these tools must have a strategic and practical relationship which ensures that the results and effects contribute to the overall plan. This has resulted in continual work in developing the following systems and structures.

- *New rules concerning delegation of work and responsibility*
- *New reporting systems*
- *Development of employer's role*
- *Introduction of new development tools/measurement of results*
- *Quality control system (ISO standard)*
- *Ethical guidelines*
- *Statement of ownership*

9. Establishing a dialogue with the general public

All development of municipal services must be based on facts. The degree of public satisfaction is not measurable by the municipality's financial profits. In order to measure development the systematic collection of information is required, i.e. a variety of surveys and arenas for dialogue and participation. The municipality has taken steps to improve user access by creating various types of public arenas, including the use of new information technology. Active dialogue requires 2-way communication, the following-up of results and the assessment of feedback.

The results are incorporated in reporting procedures, strategic planning, the financial measures and aims of the Complete Balance Sheet and in various projects and initiatives.

A. Evaluation and measurements

- The municipality carries out regular user surveys by means of the Efficiency Network and the School Portal. Results from the Efficiency Network are available on www.bedrekommune.no.
- Administrative practice / Municipal Compass. About every third year Sørums is measured against the criteria of the Municipal Compass in comparison with other Nordic municipalities

B. Arenas for user participation and response

- *Neighbourhood meetings:* General municipal plan, care of the elderly, etc.
Presided over by the council chairman.
- *Theme meetings:* Meetings for building developers. Parent meetings in schools and kindergartens. Parental courses arranged by child care services.
- *Town committee:* Political committee to discuss local matters
- *Business committees:* Breakfast meetings for trade and industry.

- *Complaints procedure:*
 - a) In accordance with the Administration Act all management staff and executive personnel have received instruction in administrative legislation and public law. Establishment of a separate health complaints system in accordance with municipal health regulations.
 - b) Any type of communication from the public which can be characterised as a complaint or an expression of dissatisfaction shall be registered on a special form. A reply shall be given in accordance with the terms of the public guarantee. This facility is also available on the Internet.
 - c) Warning system with regard to possible corruption, etc. exists within the ethical guidelines, contact between auditors and control committee, together with the role of the politicians as “ombudsmen” for the inhabitants.
- *Public guarantee:* The municipal reception office shall ensure that all telephone/telefax enquiries are forwarded without delay to the relevant department. The enquirer shall receive a reply as soon as possible and no later than within one week.
- *IT-arenas:* The municipality’s own website on the Internet with special pages for praise/criticism, questions and answers. The municipality's E-mail address and direct addresses to members of staff. Most application forms available on the Internet. Electronic building applications and kindergarten applications. Electronic user services are under constant development. Internet access for public library users. All municipal documents and plans posted on the Internet.
- *Question time:* Every advisory committee meeting and council session to open with 15 minutes of question time for both politicians and the public.
- *New inhabitants:* All newcomers receive a welcome letter from the council chairman.
- *Information* Information on the municipal website. Individual brochures available for users of municipal services.

10. Staff participation and follow-up

The municipality wishes to ensure the stability of its working force by offering opportunities for personal and professional growth through active use and development of the organization's collective resources, structure and system. Participation involves shared responsibility and presupposes clear objectives and flexibility of means. All initiatives to be based on the municipality’s code of values.

Good examples

Following up and exploiting the results achieved are important elements, also the highlighting of good examples. Recognition and token rewards for good work take the form of a bunch of roses for individual persons (the municipal coat-of-arms contains a rose) or a marzipan cake for everybody in the canteen or in the staff rooms involved. Every year the work environment committee makes a donation on behalf of the staff to a charitable organization, such as Norwegian Church Aid or the Salvation Army

Employer platform’s management tools and areas of involvement

The employer platform contains management tools, reporting indicators and areas of involvement which are featured in the CBS and require following up. Examples include

- *Working environment:* Annual Human Resource Survey embracing all activities and all members of staff. All sections maintain their own HRS/working environment programme.
- *Management evaluation:* The annual review of the working environment also includes a special evaluation programme for section heads and operational managers.
- *Control of aims and results:* In 1993 the municipal council agreed to a project for control of aims and results. Introduced in 1995 throughout the whole organization. Every employee is involved and is allotted annually individual work objectives derived from the overall programme of strategic aims. Follow-up and reporting every month at all employee levels. A special guide manual has been produced to assist both management and staff in achieving their aims and following up results.
- *Absence due to illness:* Monthly check on statistics for absence due to illness together with special follow-up routines. The municipality is approved as a non-discriminatory workplace.
- *Turnover:* Number of staff who give notice or retire.
- *Improving expertise:* Overall strategic plan for development of expertise together with plans for improvement at sectional level.
- *Days of training:* Number of participants and days devoted to various training and competence-enhancing programmes.
- *Employee interviews:* Internal employee discussions held at least once a year for all members of staff throughout the whole organization. Probationary interviews for all new members of staff and “personal contact” arrangement for newcomers at management level. Follow-up implemented by means of the working environment survey.
- *Newcomers’ day* Every 6 months with council chairman and chief municipal officer. Lecture on the municipality followed by a bus trip.
- *“Personal contact” arrangement:* A system of guidance for newcomers at management level..
- *Internal management recruitment:* Management recruitment conducted largely internally as part of the expertise and management development programme.
- *Suggestion box:* An internal scheme in which staff can make suggestions for improvements. Considered every month/4-months/year
- *Quality control system:* The municipality has an ISO-certified quality control system where both management and staff participate in improvements.
In addition to an external auditor, internal auditors are attached to the development of the quality control system.
- *ICT:* The municipality has both Intranet and Internet pages where sections themselves can post and update information. All activities are connected to the Internet by broadband. Internal IT-training in accordance with the programme for greater expertise.
- *Co-operation with trade unions* The council chairman holds regular meetings with all union representatives. There is also close co-operation in

- *Deviation and repair initiatives* connection with employer initiatives and development projects.
- *Senior policy* The quality control system has its own deviation measurements and suggestions for improvements. Specials aims and initiatives for senior staff have been established along senior-political guidelines. These include a senior seminar when reaching the age of 58, reduced working hours with full salary and further financial incentives from the age of 62.
- *Salary policy* In co-operation with the trade unions guidelines for salary policy have been established setting clear criteria for use in local negotiations.
- *Ethical guidelines* Ethical guidelines have been laid down for both municipal staff and the politically-elected.
- *Trainee programme* In 2007 the Sørums Municipal Technical Centre established a trainee programme for engineers together with 10 other municipalities and inter-municipal companies.
- *Management training programme* A management training programme exists for all levels of management.

11. Development tools and initiatives as part of a systematic whole

Municipal efficiency is dependent upon an overall strategy and joint utilisation of resources. In addition to the various organizational tools and systems previously referred to, the municipality has made use of a number of tools, either of its own invention or developed from other models, as part of its systematic efforts to improve the whole organization. Some examples follow.

1. Suggestions box

An internal scheme has been established whereby all suggestions made by the staff are rewarded by a gift of one rose. If the suggestion is put into practice, the person concerned receives a further three roses. The number of suggestions varies, averaging in recent years between 350-450 annually, 70-75% of which have been carried out.

2. Improving competence

In addition to its overall strategic plan to improve all-round expertise, the municipality also works to improve competence within the individual sections. The aim is to ensure that all areas of operation take steps to identify their needs in order to provide a basis for a strategic, controlled planning of competence planning and development in each individual section and area of activity. The municipality makes a significant contribution to further training and education through the college and university system. Daily study and development work in interdisciplinary projects form an important part of the teaching programme.

3. ICT - Internal training

As part of the internal programme to improve skills the municipality draws on its own resources in IT-training and since 2006 has also taken into use a Norwegian version of the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL). User-support groups have been established which not only run courses for

new employees but also offer daily assistance to their colleagues. Certain individual employees have also been assisted in setting up their own home office. The ICT programme includes many projects accompanied by relevant training.

4. Internet and Intranet

The municipality regularly updates its home pages on the Internet. The pages offer the opportunity for questions, answers, praise or criticism from the local population and others. The Intranet is used as an administrative tool. All activities are connected to the Internet, together with broadband. The ICT-programme is the basis for development of net-based services in line with national intentions.

5. Inter-municipal purchasing scheme and other forms of co-operation

An inter-municipal purchasing scheme has been established for 7 municipalities in the county of Nedre Romerike. The arrangement has its base in Sørumsund and electronic trading has been introduced. There is also a joint inter-municipal refuse disposal and collection scheme. Other areas of inter-municipal co-operation, such as the fire brigade and emergency medical services, are under constant development. Sørumsund municipality participates actively in the Nedre Romerike Co-operation Council.

6. Model Municipality Project

An agreement with the Norwegian Union of Municipal Employees enabled the municipality to carry out a project for the testing and documentation of the efficiency, costs and quality of public services. The agreement meant that no competitive tenders of municipal services could be approved during the project period. Involving 31 staff-initiated working groups, together with a leader and representatives from all trade unions, the project aimed to make a contribution towards effective use of resources and greater capacity for change among employees and unions. This model municipality project had its own platform document and project catalogue. The control committee consisted of representatives from political and administrative levels and also from the unions. The project was evaluated by Asplan Viak Consultants on behalf of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, also by the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research. Their reports are posted on www.sorumsund.kommune.no and on Asplan Viak's website. After the conclusion of the project its intentions have been incorporated into the municipality's strategic aims and a continued 3-way co-operation is an active feature of all development work.

7. Quality Municipality Project

Sørumsund is an active participant in the Quality Municipality Project, a programme of co-operation between the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities and various individual communities. The model is largely based on the 3-way co-operation in the Model Municipality Project. The main focus here is on problems of work absence due to illness and on co-operation between kindergartens and primary schools to ensure a comprehensive learning environment for children and young people.

8. Quality assurance system

If the municipality is to be competitive there must be reliable quality assurance with regard to all important aspects of public services and employee functions. The municipality's quality assurance system is ISO-certified. Accessible on the municipality's Intranet, this system gives both management and employees the opportunity to participate in improving user focus where municipal services are concerned. The system has been recertified twice in accordance with the new standard NSEN ISO 9001:2000.

9. Administrative routines/Municipal Compass

The municipality considers it important to have impartial assessment of its administrative routines,

both for its own guidance in relation to municipal objectives and as a benchmark when making comparisons with other municipalities. A regular inspection is carried out in accordance with Bertelsmann criteria/Municipal Compass. These criteria relate to municipal control and administration, their aim being to illustrate that the municipality is both a politically-democratic institution administered by publicly-elected individuals and also a service organization under professional management. This inspection places an emphasis on learning-oriented behaviour and organization. Linked with user surveys and other evaluations and documentation it helps to provide the basis for development and budget planning.

10. SWOT analysis

SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) is used systematically both in the management forum and in individual section activities as a basis for involvement in the planning process to define municipal aims and in the preparation of a financial programme, a plan of action and the annual budget.

11. Interdisciplinary forums

In order to focus on user needs in practice, interdisciplinary forums are necessary in order to strengthen co-operation and commitment. The municipality has created a special forum for all the professions responsible for services to children and young people. This forum has established neighbourhood groups and network co-operation also with external partners. Where building projects are concerned, both internal and external, co-ordination meetings are arranged and attended by municipal representatives, our health and environment consultants and the department for planning and development.

12. Environmental and climate issues

In line with the nature and environment chapter in the Complete Balance Sheet, Sørum works together with its own technical department and with other municipalities with regard to environmental planning and climate issues. Public purchasing is also subject to environmental requirements.

13. Statement of ownership

Sørum municipality has drawn up a statement of ownership as a basis for strategic and fundamental ownership policy with regard to the companies owned or partly-owned by the municipality. This statement of ownership is an important steering tool for politicians and administration alike.

12. Chain of values

A systematic approach to achieving totality as a learning organization represents the starting point for the chain of values which Sørum municipality aims for in its development work. It has been shown in practice that this concept can provide room for new initiatives and ideas, often resulting in more efficient co-ordination between sections and different areas of professional activity. The chain of values is made up of several unbreakable links and can be outlined as follows.

<i>The outside world:</i>	Exterior demands for adjustment, development, greater efficiency and change.
<i>Inhabitants:</i>	Clearly expressed demands from the local population concerning questions of priority, economic progress and developments beneficial to the community.
<i>Politicians:</i>	Take a long-term view on the overall vision, aims and strategies.

Lay down guidelines for managerial, organizational and reporting systems. In the position of employers, keep a check on the organization and business culture. Maintain a harmonious relationship with management.

<i>Management:</i>	Implement strategic and operational activities. Define and firmly establish aims and strategies. Supervise and check on employees' work and results. Show the will and ability for development and change. Behave as decent employers with good management skills.
<i>Employees:</i>	View the organization as a whole and their own work in relation to that whole. Understand the need for organizational development and regard their participation in change as a positive factor. Connect their own working situation to overall aims and strategies. Experience positive personal progress and a sense of pride within the organization
<i>Users:</i>	Experience positive benefit from the use of municipal services.

Consequences and effects on the chain of values are evaluated by means of measurements, reports and documentation in the Complete Balance Sheet and as an integral part of *management control* in the ISO-9001 quality system.

14. Challenges

The challenges ahead will involve ensuring that change is a continual process necessary to maintaining a sustainable development of municipal organization and of the local community, economically, socially and culturally. The municipality programme for planning and action is the most important platform in this respect.

The aims and demands arising from environmental and climate issues will present new challenges and possibilities for the municipality, both as an organization and as a community. Regional co-operation will be decisive, if success is to be achieved.

The constant challenge exists of balancing available resources with the needs of the surrounding world and the municipality's own users. In this respect the rapid population growth in Sørum presents an extra challenge. The ability to satisfy expectations and to husband resources effectively will remain dependent upon long-term strategies and development work.

Changes in working methods, project development and greater collaboration between the various professions will constantly make new demands on management, employees and union representatives. To be of any genuine value, staff participation will demand loyal and systematic use of the tools available, including the suggestion box and the quality control system. The latter provides a sound basis for practical user services and in defining the level and quality of services.

Staff recruiting will become an ever greater challenge. Employer policy will decide the extent to which the municipality succeeds in recruiting and retaining skilled staff for its public services. Sørum's reputation in the outside world will depend on good administration and practice in relation to all the points contained in the Complete Balance Sheet.