

Response to Scrutiny Review recommendations – Council’s Use of Performance Information, Phase 1

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Response</i>
Recommendations specific to Adults’ Services	
In order to supplement the changes to nationally–required reporting, we:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that the directorate develop specific local indicators for areas such as waiting time for major adaptations where the current indicator does not fully reflect service performance accurately. 	<p>A number of new indicators are being developed to support the priority areas of safeguarding, reablement and personalisation.</p> <p>New indicators have been developed to support the priority action on major adaptations. These new indicators provide a better basis for driving improvement than the old statutory measure.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endorse the directorate’s plans to develop new indicators for new areas of activity such as personalisation and reablement. 	<p>As above – the performance scorecard for Adults Services is being updated to reflect the transformation of the service and the Department of Health’s emerging outcomes framework. There is an increased focus on measuring experience and outcomes for service users</p>
Recommendations specific to Children’s Services	
<p>With regard to replacing the National Indicators we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that the directorate develop proxy indicators for a number of annual measures where in-year intelligence could enable greater transparency of current performance, particularly at the corporate level. 	<p>It should be noted that the performance framework based on the national indicators and inspection results is still in place for Children Services and provides the basis of Ofsted’s annual performance assessment. The framework is currently under review but is unlikely to change significantly for 2010-11 and possibly beyond. We are investigating proxy indicators and introducing new measures where they provide meaningful in year data.</p>

Recommendation	Response
	<p>For example, local indicators monitoring attendance and exclusion for Children Looked After (CLA) are being developed alongside the existing indicators. In addition, a new indicator for total absence has been developed which will provide better in-year data. New social care indicators relating the important contact and referral process have also been introduced to provide early warning.</p> <p>It is more difficult to develop proxy indicators for attainment due to the variety of approaches taken by our schools in tracking their pupils' progress.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that the directorate consider how schools might be encouraged to continue to make use of the data support offered via the council and to participate in tools such as APP, thereby allowing greater comparison and benchmarking opportunities. 	<p>We are currently reviewing our 'Use of Performance Data' SLA in association with the emerging "Harrow Schools Improvement Partnership" (HSIP) and Academies. We are also investigating the possible use of APP or alternative tools to track attainment more frequently, eg termly. However it should be noted that it is highly unlikely that it will be possible to collect data from all schools as assessment is a school responsibility and there are a variety of approaches used across Harrow schools.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that the directorate consider resource implications for measuring indicators that the council is not primarily responsible for delivering and explore opportunities for sharing resources with partners and schools where appropriate. 	<p>Measurement resource is being focused on indicators which the council is responsible for delivering. However, the authority is still held jointly accountable for a number of indicators over which it has limited influence e.g. admissions to hospital for injuries, school PE, prevalence of breastfeeding. The performance framework for Children's Services is under review by Ofsted and DfE and we await the results. In the meantime, we are working with colleagues in other organisations to improve data sharing and co-ordination.</p> <p>The potential emergence of academies could mean a loss of data</p>

Recommendation	Response
	within the LA as academies are not obliged to share data. However, we are already engaged in a positive dialogue with the schools which are considering conversion. We will aim to work with academies through an SLA which will enable all parties involved to effectively pool resources.
Recommendations specific to Community & Environment Services	
<p>With regard to replacing the National Indicators we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that the directorate investigate using customer perception data to inform assessment of performance in areas such as street and environmental cleanliness. 	We agree. We are awaiting feedback on the replacement Place Survey, and are also formulating plans for more consultation/survey based work.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that the directorate explore opportunities to use customer relationship management (CRM) intelligence (contact data) to inform understanding of performance in this area. 	We are reviewing this, and are working to develop local indicators.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that, in order to improve on the National Indicators, the directorate replace measures for areas such as use of cultural facilities (for example parks, libraries, museums and so on), with a suite of locally specific indicators which would enable services to measure their objectives. This would better reflect use of Harrow facilities such as the leisure centre, Headstone Manor and the Arts Centre. Where necessary these measures should be broadened to reflect developments in service delivery such as online use of library facilities. 	<p>Some of these recommendations form part of our Directorate Service Improvement Plan for 2011/12, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of transactions that are self service HAC geographical spread of audience against target post codes/ segments Income generation from wedding/ conference/ function areas of HAC business Number of hours recorded for use of public computers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that the directorate add indicators relating to Licensing. 	We will review this with the service team.

Recommendation	Response
Recommendations specific to Chief Executive's, Corporate Finance, Legal & Governance	
<p>With regard to reviewing the Corporate Health scorecard we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that a suite of indicators be developed for consideration at the Corporate Health improvement board regarding the performance of the IT service following its transferral to Capita. 	<p>Agreed and in hand.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that given the improvement in the area of sickness, the former BV12 indicator be reported corporately on an annual basis (with benchmarking¹) and that in-year monitoring be conducted on a more frequent basis using data available in SAP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BV12 information is currently reported quarterly to Improvement Boards and separately on trends to CSB. Other, local absence data from SAP is reported to managers on a monthly basis. There is a potential that sickness absence will increase due to the extent of organisational change Recommended that the outcome of 2010/11 sickness absence performance is awaited before deciding to report BV12 less frequently.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that the indicators in the Corporate Finance scorecard be reviewed by the scrutiny review group in conjunction with the new Corporate Director of Finance as part of phase 2 of the review. 	<p>Agreed.</p>
Recommendations specific to Housing Services	
<p>The National Indicators relating to Housing continue to be required.</p> <p>With regard to the locally developed Housing Ambition Plan we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that the directorate consider the definition of 	<p>Agreed</p>

¹ Benchmarking information is available quarterly.

Recommendation	Response
appropriate local indicators reported after achievement of the current Housing Ambition Plan.	
Recommendations specific to Place Shaping	
<p>In order to supplement the changes to National Indicators proposed by the directorate, we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that the directorate make use of customer satisfaction information regarding householder planning applications in conjunction with monitoring of approvals in order to gain a fuller understanding of the resident experience of the service. 	Agreed and will be implemented in due course.
Place Survey	
<p>Based on our discussions with directorates, we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend the development of a replacement for the Place Survey in order to ensure that the council has a full understanding of resident perception. 	The Involvement Tracker, which will be based on the same methodology as the Reputation Tracker but with some different questions, will start in 2011/12.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommend that there should be greater sharing and co-ordination between directorates relating to survey activity to increase awareness across the organisation of consultation being undertaken. 	The Council has had a consultation portal for two years, which houses most of the Council's electronic consultations. A project is under way to understand how much the Council is spending on survey activity and whether there is a better way to co-ordinate this activity and get greater value for money for the current resources spent.

Recommendation	Response
General recommendations – Directorate level	
<p>In addition to the specific recommendations for each directorate we recommend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That directorates adopt a balanced approach to the development of future scorecards where the following are covered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - indicators that are required in order to ensure process/contract delivery - indicators that will measure the satisfaction of residents and their expectation from a service - indicators which enable sharing of best practice² 	<p>Agreed. The Corporate Performance Team will facilitate a review of scorecards for balance of content during Quarter 1, 2011/12.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That directorates consider including measures of data quality as part of their local management information. 	<p>Agreed. An assessment will be made in each area, based on the criticality of data quality to the service and proportionality in relation to the resource required.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That directorates make better use of proxy measures where measures are otherwise annual to enable proper sense of direction of travel in year. 	<p>Agreed. This is an extension of the approach already adopted in respect of the Corporate Scorecard.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That directorates consider opportunities to make better use of customer relationship management (CRM) data and other data sources such as MVM, Framework-I and so on – this was identified by directorates as well as being favoured by Members of the review group. 	<p>Agreed. A new report based on CRM data is in the course of design for use at Improvement Boards and at Corporate Strategic Board.</p>

² High Performing Harrow meeting, 29 November 2010.

Recommendation	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That where targets are consistently exceeded, directorates should consider more ambitious proposals or whether performance can be maintained while directing resources to other areas of greater priority.³ Equally where targets are consistently not achieved, consideration must be given to whether they are needed, whether the targets are appropriate or whether more resources should be directed to improving performance. 	<p>Agreed and will be made an explicit point of challenge at Improvement Boards.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the content of scorecards is subject to regular review to enable the organisation to assure itself that the performance management process is driving and supporting improvement. 	<p>Agreed. See next item.</p>
General recommendations – Corporate level	
<p>We recommend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the content of scorecards is subject to regular review to enable the organisation to assure itself that the performance management process is driving and supporting improvement. 	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The main refresh of the Corporate and Directorate Scorecards is annual, following the revision of corporate priorities for the following year. Where there are changes during the year to the Corporate Scorecard, an audit trail is kept of any changes, which are reported to CSB at the quarterly performance morning.</p> <p>No central record is kept of changes to Directorate scorecards.</p>

³ Corporate services meeting, 21 January 2011

Recommendation	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the reporting requirements for workforce indicators such as sickness be clarified in terms of whether they should be included in directorate scorecards, whether reporting within the Improvement Board papers is sufficient or whether overall performance is monitored more effectively at the corporate level.⁴ 	<p>There are a number of indicators which are probably more effectively monitored at a whole Council level than by individual Directorate - these could be optional at a Directorate level thus reducing the burden. A proposal will be made to CSB to update the corporate guidance and provide more clarity on this requirement.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That performance is reported in contexts within which they can be influenced and where the relevant portfolio holder and officer can be held to account.⁵ 	<p>This depends on the delivery cycle of the service and the risk around the service (ie how long before action is needed). There are a number of examples around the Council that align with best practice, for example, where there are weekly or monthly team performance meetings looking at operational data and planning for improvement. The overall performance over the quarter is reported at Improvement Board and potentially to CSB if there is an issue.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That operational and strategic data be better aligned – both are important at different times for different purposes and different audiences.⁶ 	<p>It is important that there is alignment between strategic objectives and monitoring of operational data. This alignment should be made clear through the link between Directorate Service Improvement Plans and underlying service plans. The Challenge Panels test the alignment between the corporate priorities and the Directorate's Service Improvement Plan.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That greater measurement of the effectiveness of corporate projects that place requirements on directorates be developed.⁷ 	<p>Agreed</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That consideration is given to the maturity of the performance 	<p>The current guidance for Improvement Boards does acknowledge</p>

⁴ Corporate services meeting, 21 January 2011.

⁵ Corporate services meeting, 21 January 2011.

⁶ High Performing Harrow meeting, 29 November 2010.

⁷ Place Shaping meeting, 12 January 2011.

Recommendation	Response
<p>management culture of the organisation, with regard to whether Improvement Boards could be driven to a greater extent by exception reporting.⁸</p>	<p>that exception reporting is appropriate. The Executive Summary is intended to allow Corporate Directors to report to the IB on key achievements and key challenges on an exception basis.</p> <p>Underpinning the Executive Summary is the Directorate Scorecard, Finance report, Workforce report etc – these of course have to be prepared in full in order that exceptions can be identified but do not need to be discussed in detail.</p> <p>Reporting to CSB from Improvement Boards is in the form of an exception report.</p> <p>The Strategic Performance Report to Cabinet is also, in part, an exception report in that it summarises key achievements and gives an analysis of underperforming measures. However, all Priority Actions are reported in full.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That more effective performance management of projects after implementation be instituted – this means that when the project becomes ‘business as usual’ the organisation monitors whether the need continues to be met. 	<p>Recommended that the Transformation Board receive a proposal on how this may be implemented.</p>

⁸ Children’s services meeting, 21 January 2011.