



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
All – corporate report

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:
Cabinet
FREOPS

February 10th 2003
March 20th 2003

COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT – DRAFT IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive – Corporate Management

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** This report presents the outcome of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and subsequent requirements:
- The final judgement and the current position on the assessment of the Housing Service.
 - The Corporate Assessment Report.
 - The Improvement Plan, Best Value Review Programme and Inspection Programme.
 - Monitoring and Scrutiny.
 - The future arrangements for CPA.

2. Summary

- 2.1** The Comprehensive Performance Assessment was introduced by central government this year as part of the implementation of the White Paper “Strong Local Leadership, Quality Public Services”. It comprises:
- an assessment of the current performance of seven service areas
 - a corporate assessment of the council’s ability.

Each element of the assessment is scored on a scale from 1 to 4 (1 =poor, 4 =excellent). The scores are collated into an overall judgment, placing the council in one of five categories; poor, weak, fair, good or excellent. The focus of the CPA is the improvement of services for local people.

- 2.2** The overall judgment is that the council is “Fair” with an above average score (3) on its Corporate Ability.
- 2.3** The CPA scorecard, corporate assessment report and contributory assessments were published on the Audit Commission website on 12th December 2002. These are attached at Appendix 1 and 2.

2.4 Improvement Plan

The Draft Improvement Plan is attached at Appendix 3. The plan is based on the council's ongoing improvement priorities, as identified in the Chief Executive's Annual Report 2001:

- Service Improvement
- Revitalising Neighbourhoods
- Community Cohesion

The Plan incorporates existing improvement processes, builds on the council's self assessment and responds to the recommendations and weaknesses identified in the CPA. The Improvement Plan is subject to the agreement of the Inspection and Audit Service. Further outcome measures and targets will be included following completion of business plans for 2003/04.

2.5 Best Value Reviews

The requirement under Best Value to review all services over five years has been removed. The Best Value Review Programme has been reviewed each year to reflect changes in priorities and performance. This year, the programme has been reviewed to include the findings of the CPA. Authorities in Fair and above categories will face fewer reviews and inspections providing they continue to improve. As a result we have focused our reviews on four new areas, given that other areas of weakness have already been addressed by previous reviews or inspections.

Proposed Reviews 2003

- E government - to complete phase 2 of the ICT review 2002/03.
- Property Services - the review begun in 2002 to be completed applying Best Value principles.
- Legal Services – brought forward from year 5 due to internal customer issues.
- Housing Management – brought forward from year 5 as performance continues to be low in comparison with other councils. The review will be carried out prior to the proposed inspection in February 2004.

Deferred Reviews

- Operational Finance phase 2 - level of performance is acceptable.
- Lifelong Learning - pending completion of the implementation of the Youth and Community Review.
- Regulatory Services - there are no identified performance issues.
- Health and Community Care - now addressed through the Adult Commissioning Strategy
- Corporate Governance (including performance management and democracy). The weaknesses identified in the corporate performance report will be addressed in systems reviews of Political Management and Policy and Performance (see section 2.6).

2.6 Other Reviews

In addition, there will be system reviews of internal processes:

- Political Management, to address issues raised by the corporate assessment report, particularly about Scrutiny and Member development.
- Policy and Performance, to address issues within the report relating to accelerating performance management, corporate decision making and evaluation and learning.

2.7 Inspection Programme
Scheduled Inspections

- An Ofsted Inspection of post 16 Education was completed in December 2002.
- A Social Services Inspection of Children's Services will be carried out in April 2003. This will incorporate services reviewed within the Services to Vulnerable Children Best Value Review in 2001 and services for Vulnerable Children and Families, originally planned as a year 4 review.
- The ongoing regular programme of Inspections in Education and Social Services will continue.

Proposals for the future inspection programme.

- Refreshment of Benefits Inspection (October 2003) to verify the service improvements and provide evidence to refresh the CPA scores.
- Environmental Services (reviewed 2002) during 2003.
- Housing Management in February 2004
- Crime and Disorder which has been identified as a national priority for 2004.

2.8 The Audit Programme will be the subject of a separate report.

2.9 Monitoring and Review

The corporate assessment identifies the availability of performance information, particularly for Members as a weakness. The scale and complexity of plans, strategies and performance indicators makes this task difficult. Revisions are being made to the Performance Management Framework to assist this:

- The production of a simplified corporate plan focusing on our Key Priorities.
- A rationalisation of the many plans and strategies required at a national level.
- A reduction in and focus on Key performance indicators.

The CPA Improvement Plan has, wherever possible incorporated existing improvement processes to avoid further duplication and overlap. The planned improvement will be seen as an annual focus on elements of our ongoing and improvement strategies already embedded in our service planning processes. The council will still be required to produce the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) in June, which will now also include progress on our Improvement Plan. The BVPP summary in the April issue of LINK will include information about the improvement plan and summary information on the council's performance last year will be included with the Council Tax Leaflet in March.

Corporate Directors Board will monitor performance on a regular basis.

Performance	Frequency of Monitoring
▪ Corporate Plan	Quarterly as appropriate and in full, annually, as part of producing the Best Value Performance Plan
▪ Improvement Plan	Quarterly
▪ Key Performance Indicators	Bi-annually

At a political level this approach will need to be mirrored in terms of both Cabinet and Scrutiny.

Cabinet

Performance	Frequency of Monitoring
▪ Corporate Plan	Monitoring and Review quarterly as appropriate and in full, annually as part of producing the Best Value Performance Plan
▪ Improvement Plan	Monitoring and Review quarterly for priorities and annually in response to CPA and as part of agreeing the Performance Plan
▪ Key Performance Indicators	Monitoring and Review bi-annually

Best Value Working Group

Performance	Frequency of Monitoring
▪ Improvement Plan	Quarterly
▪ Best Value Reviews	As required
▪ Best Value Review Improvement Plans	Quarterly
▪ Best Value Performance Plan	Annually

Scrutiny

Core Services Scrutiny

Performance	Frequency of Monitoring
▪ Performance Indicators	Bi-annually
▪ Service Inspection Reports	As required
▪ Best Value Reviews	As required

Finance, Resources and Equal Opps Scrutiny

Performance	Frequency of Monitoring
▪ Corporate Performance Indicators	Bi-annually
▪ Corporate Performance Assessment Improvement Plan	Bi-annually
▪ Corporate Inspection Reports	As required
▪ Annual Management letter	Annually
▪ Corporate Best Value Reviews	As required

This approach will form the basis of monitoring our improvement and focusing on the key areas of weakness.

2.10 Future of CPA

Guidelines for the future of the CPA have not yet been issued. The scorecard will be refreshed annually in the autumn, incorporating new inspection information and the

latest performance indicator results. It is therefore important to target the inspection programme to areas of weakness identified in the CPA if the overall judgement is to be improved.

3. Recommendations

3.1 To note the results of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, the proposed inspection programme and annual refreshment of scores.

3.2 To approve:

1. The Improvement Plan.
2. The Best Value Review Programme.
3. The Scrutiny of progress of the Improvement

3.3 To refer the report to the Finance, Resources and Equal Opps Scrutiny Committee.

4. Headline Financial, Legal and Other Implications

4.1 Financial Implications

There are no specific financial implications in relation to this report.

4.2 Legal Implications

The Improvement Plan, Review and Inspection Programme must be agreed with the Audit Commission by March 2003.

4.3 Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph Within Supporting information	References
Equal Opportunities	No		
Policy	Yes	Specific actions resulting from the Improvement Plan may result in changes to council policies.	
Sustainable and Environmental	No		
Crime and Disorder	No		
Human Rights Act	No		
Elderly People / People on Low Income	No		

5. Background Papers

Comprehensive Performance Assessment Guidelines, Audit Commission (2002)

6. Consultations

Consultation with Corporate Directors and departments in December 2002, followed by the Round Table discussion with representatives of the Inspectorates on 11th December 2002.

7. Report Author to contact:

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DECISION STATUS

Key Decision	No
Reason	N/A
Appeared in Forward Plan	No
Executive or Council Decision	Executive (Cabinet)