

INFORMATION ITEM 18b

REPORT TO CABINET

15 MARCH 2007

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

INFORMATION ITEM

Corporate- Lead Cabinet Member - Councillor Coleman

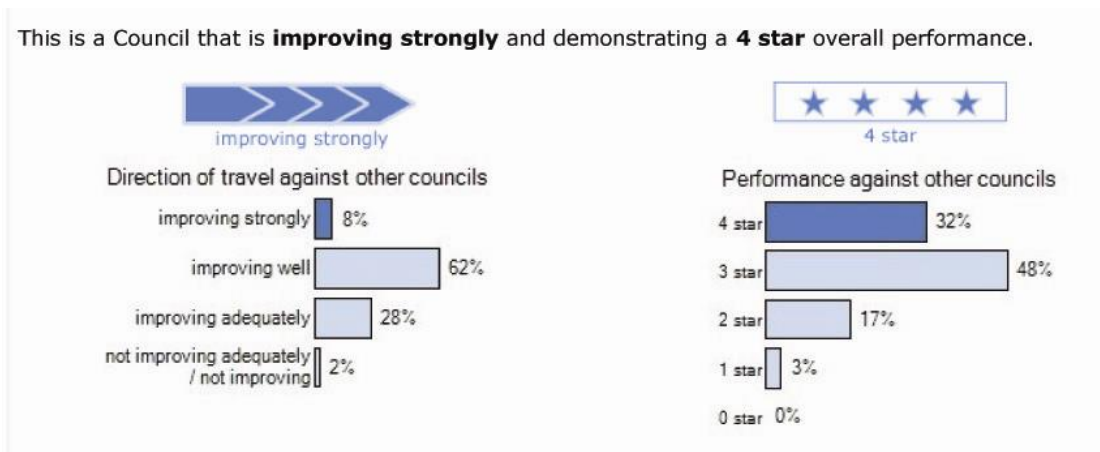
COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT 2006

SUMMARY

In February 2006, the Audit Commission rated the council as “a four star council that is improving strongly” in its Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). This report details our performance in the different areas that made up the assessment.

DETAIL

1. 2005 saw the Audit Commission implement a revised CPA framework, badged as “the harder test” and introduced a new scoring framework. Councils now receive a star rating (from zero to four stars) and an improvement judgement ranging from not improving adequately to improving strongly. Our performance compared to other councils is strong in both the star rating (only 46 councils achieved this) but especially the improvement judgement (only 12 councils achieved this). Only 10 Councils achieved both 4 stars and improving strongly – with Stockton being the only Unitary Council to achieve this.



2. The standard that must be met to achieve each of the performance levels has also been raised. In the new model each element is scored on a 1 to 4 basis:

1	below minimum requirements: inadequate performance
2	at only minimum requirements: adequate performance
3	consistently above minimum requirements: performing well
4	well above minimum requirements: performing strongly

3. Our performance against each of the elements in the model that contribute to the star rating was:

Corporate assessment (based on our 2004 assessment)	4
Social Care (adults)	3
Children and young people	4
Use of resources including value for money	4
Housing	4
Culture	3
Environment	3
Benefits	4

4. The improvement judgement, known as the “direction of travel” focuses on:
- Our performance in improving in priority areas
 - Our contribution to wider community outcomes
 - How we are improving access and quality of services for all citizens, and particularly those who are ‘harder to reach’
 - How we are improving value for money
 - Whether we have robust plans for improving
 - How well improvement planning is being implemented: are key milestones being achieved?
5. For the environment, housing and culture blocks, the Audit Commission uses a range of performance information and inspection scores where these are available. It has changed the way it deals with performance indicators so that rather than judging councils by their comparative performance against others, they set “thresholds” for minimum acceptable performance and performing well. Each measure has an upper and lower threshold and performance is collated to derive the overall PI score:

Score	Proportion of data items
4	No PIs at or below the lower threshold, and 35% or more PIs at or above the upper threshold
3	No more than 15% (or 1 PI if 15% equates to less than 1) of PIs at or below the lower thresholds, and 25% or more PIs at or above the upper thresholds
2	Any other combination
1	35% or more PIs at or below the lower threshold

6. The next section of the report summarises our performance in each of the blocks that make up the assessment.

Corporate assessment

7. The Audit Commission is carrying out corporate assessments using its new key lines of enquiry on a rolling programme. Our corporate assessment is scheduled for weeks commencing 3rd and 10th December 2007. Until this

point our 2004 corporate assessment score (4) will be used. This corporate assessment was based on 9 themes. The themes and the scores for each one are shown in the table below.

Theme	Score	Weighting	Total score
Ambition	4	1	4
Focus	4	1	4
Prioritisation	3	1	3
Capacity	3	1	3
Performance Management	3	1	3
Achievement	4	3	12
Investment	3	2	6
Learning	4	1	4
Future Plans	3	1	4

8. The new corporate assessment framework has fewer themes but it is harder to achieve scores of 3 or 4 for any of the themes. The themes are:
- Ambition for the community
 - Prioritisation
 - Capacity
 - Performance Management

 - Achievement
 - Sustainable Communities, including transport
 - Safer and Stronger Communities
 - Healthier Communities
 - Older People
 - Children and Young People
9. In last year's report to Cabinet on the CPA results we highlighted several areas of the Corporate Assessment for consideration and action. Progress has been made in each of these areas:

Area for action / consideration	Progress
Leadership development (political and managerial)	<p>Lead roles in the sub-region particularly in relation to the regeneration of the Tees Valley and in the region in relation to driving improvements across Councils via the North East Improvement Partnership.</p> <p>Distributed Leadership model adopted with a hugely effective small core and extended management team. Further cascading of this approach to be rolled out during 2007/08.</p> <p>Management development programme continues to be well received. Over 320 managers have now accessed this development opportunity.</p>
Partnerships – governance and performance management	<p>A Partnership Strategy has been established and register developed. A health check toolkit covering governance and performance issues has also been developed and piloted to assess a</p>

	number of partnership arrangements. A programme of assessment, using the toolkit, will commence across the Council in 2007/08.
Performance management including risks and project management	A revised Project and Programme Management framework has been agreed and is being integrated within the performance management framework during 2007.
Member role – in community leadership, strengthened scrutiny and role in performance management	Following the implementation of the 2005 Scrutiny Review arrangements have been strengthened with Scrutiny having a positive effect on both performance monitoring and policy development. Cabinet and Executive Scrutiny receive performance reports quarterly outlining progress against the corporate basket of PIs, plans, Gershon efficiency targets and the Local Public Service Agreement
Human Resources	<p>The Service has continued to progress the implementation of a Single Status Agreement. Tribunal proceedings have hindered progress although settlement exercises have delivered some positive results.</p> <p>A restructure of the Service combined with the further development of the HR computer system has brought about some significant improvements. A new approach to sickness absence reporting is being rolled out and the introduction of end-to-end electronic recruitment will be one of the first in the region.</p> <p>The Investor in People accreditation was maintained, the Council being externally assessed against the new Management Standards. In addition, the Council is the only North East Council to pilot the Health & Safety Executive's Stress Management Standards.</p>
Diversity and community cohesion	A Single Equality Scheme has been published meeting statutory duties, and work is ongoing to support services in ensuring equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination. A Corporate Working Group has been created focusing on organisation wide Diversity issues. The Council is leading the development of the Borough's Community Cohesion Strategy through a sub-group of Stockton Renaissance. Eight objectives for improving community cohesion have been agreed.
Older people	<p>The Adult Care Partnership has been established which has a focus on Older People. In parallel the Adult Care Planning Group has been developed to work across health and social care in the planning and commissioning of services.</p> <p>A Vision for Adults has been agreed which focuses on older people.</p>

	The coordination of corporate actions to support older people is being developed. Performance measures that support the independence of older people continue to show positive improvements such as a greater proportion of people helped to live at home and the increase in direct payments.
Organisational development – workforce planning, culture and values, access to services	An officer competency framework and revised mission statement and values have been developed. The Competency Framework is being embedded within the Council’s appraisal framework from April 2007. The Access to Services Strategy has been agreed and plans are in place to achieve phase 1. Stage 2 of Customer First has been developed for roll-out during 2007/08.

The summary version of the Corporate Assessment Key Lines of Enquiry is attached at Appendix 1.

Social Care (Adults)

10. We achieved a score of 3 for the social care (adults) block in 2006. The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) rated the council as “serving most people well” with “promising prospects for improvement”. The rating is based on judgements made against the following national Adult Social Care Standards and Criteria :

- National priorities and strategic objectives
- Cost and efficiency
- Effectiveness of service delivery and outcomes
- Quality of services for users and carers
- Fair access
- Capacity for improvement

Children and Young People

11. We achieved a score of 4 in the children and young people block – the only North East authority to do so. This was based on the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) of education and children’s social care services, carried out by OfSTED and the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI). The inspectorates made three judgements:

Area for judgement	Grade Awarded
The contribution of the local authority’s children’s services in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	4
The Council’s overall capacity to improve its services for children and young people.	4
The contribution of the local authority’s social care services in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	3

12. In 2007 the APA will be supplemented by a Joint Area Review (JAR) with inspectors from Ofsted, CSCI and other inspectorates evaluating how well local services work together to improve outcomes for children and young people in the area. The services being reviewed include council services, schools, colleges, early years providers, health services, police, probation services and publicly funded services provided by voluntary bodies.

APA and JAR are coordinated with the Council's corporate assessment under Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA); they incorporate a Youth Service inspection and are aligned with an inspection of the Youth Offending Service.

The APA and JAR will focus on

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well-being
- Looked after children and care leavers
- Children with learning difficulties and / or disabilities
- Safeguarding
- Service management
- Capacity to improve

The results of APA / JAR will provide the scores for the Children and Young Peoples service elements of CPA and will contribute to CPA judgements relating to capacity to improve.

Housing

13. The housing block has two parts – managing council housing and housing the community. The managing council housing section is made up of an inspection score of two stars and promising prospects (2006 – Tristar ALMO re-inspection) and a range of performance indicators. Our PI performance for managing council housing gave us:
 - 33.3% at or above the upper threshold
 - 58.4% at or above the lower threshold
 - 8.3% below the lower threshold
14. The housing the community section score depended solely on performance indicators as our “Supporting People” inspection took place too late to be included in the 2006 results. Our PI performance gave us
 - 50% at or above the upper threshold
 - 50% at or above the lower threshold
 - 0% below the lower threshold
15. The overall score for the managing council housing section, 30% of which is based on the inspection score and the remaining 70% on the PIs was 3. The overall score for the housing the community section was 4. These are combined with managing council housing being worth 50% and housing the community 50% and the Audit Commission's weighted average aggregate score model applied (see appendix 2) to create the overall block score of 4.

Culture

16. This block is made up entirely of performance indicators:

- 38.9% at or above the upper threshold
- 55.6% at or above the lower threshold
- 5.5% below the lower threshold

This gives us an overall score of 3.

Environment

17. This block is primarily made up of performance indicators for 2006. Our performance indicators showed:

- 45.2% at or above the upper threshold
- 51.6% at or above the lower threshold
- 3.2% below the lower threshold

This gives us an overall score of 3.

Benefits

18. We achieved a score of 4 for the benefits block. This is based on a self assessment against a series of performance standards. The Benefit Fraud Inspectorate judged the service to be "Excellent", which translated into a score of 4 using the following model:

BFI Assessment	Score given to the Audit Commission for CPA
Excellent	4
Good	3
Fair	2
Poor	1

Use of resources including value for money

19. The use of resources assessment breaks down into 5 themes, performance against each of which is then aggregated into the score for Use of Resources.

Theme	Score
Financial reporting	4
Financial planning and management	4
Financial standing	3
Internal control	3
Value for Money	3

20. These individual scores are then aggregated into the overall Use of Resources score using the model below:

- 4 = Two or more themes with a score of 4 and none less than score of 3
- 3 = Three or more themes with a score of 3 or more and none less than a score of 2

- 2= Three or more themes with a score of 2 or more
- 1= Any other combination

21. This resulted in us achieving an overall score of 4. Only 15 councils achieved a block score of 4.

Direction of travel

22. This assessment feeds the improvement rating of the council. It focuses on:
- our service improvements in priority areas,
 - our contribution towards wider community outcomes,
 - improving access and quality of services for all citizens, and particularly those who are “harder to reach”
 - improving value for money
 - robust plans for improvement
 - how well improvement planning is being implemented, whether key milestones are being achieved
 - corporate governance
23. Councils could be rated as improving strongly, improving well, improving adequately or not improving adequately / not improving. We were rated as “improving strongly” – one of only 12 councils to achieve this.

The future of Comprehensive Performance Assessment

24. The local government White Paper has discussed changes to performance arrangements for local authorities. CPA will continue until 2008. From 2009 the LGWP indicates that there will be a new area based assessment; the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). The CAA will not simply be CPA with a wider focus, it is likely to include:

- Annual publication of national PI results
- Direction of travel
- Use of resources
- Inspection judgements
- Annual risk judgements

25. The annual risk judgements will cover risk to outcomes, services and organisations in the area, as well as to what extent risks are being effectively managed. This represents a different concept from CPA corporate assessment as there will be no on-site inspection “event” required unless this is triggered by an observed risk. The Audit Commission will retain regular contact and engagement but high performing council’s will be allowed to be more risk taking and innovative.

There will be a number of challenges both for the Council and our partners in moving towards the new performance arrangements. Officers will continue to assess the implications of the new model, giving particular attention to the proposed framework due to be published in the spring, and report to Members accordingly.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

CPA includes assessing the council against legal duties and judgements about our use of financial resources

RISK ASSESSMENT

Low

COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

CPA cuts across all Community Strategy Themes

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD COUNCILLORS

A copy of this report has been circulated to all Members of the Council, for information

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CPA 2005
Key Lines of Enquiry
for
Corporate Assessment
Summary Version

INTRODUCTION

Corporate assessment is part of the Audit Commission's comprehensive performance assessment (CPA) framework. It focuses on the importance of a sound corporate 'engine' to drive good services. It measures how effectively the council is working corporately, and with its partners, to improve services and deliver improved outcomes for local people.

Corporate assessment uses key lines of enquiry (KLOEs) to provide a framework through which to gather and assess evidence about how effectively the council is working. The corporate assessment KLOEs for CPA 2005 measure how well councils understand their local communities and neighbourhoods; how this understanding of local people and places translates into councils' ambitions and priorities; their capacity to deliver these; and what councils are achieving.

Headline questions, themes and sub-themes

The KLOEs provide a framework to assess the council against five themes arranged under three headline questions:

<i>What is the council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?</i>		
	Theme 1	Ambition for the community
	Theme 2	Prioritisation
<i>What is the capacity of the council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?</i>		
	Theme 3	Capacity
	Theme 4	Performance management
<i>What has been achieved?</i>		
	Theme 5	Achievement (divided into five sub-themes)

Achievement is assessed by examining how well councils are delivering local priorities and outcomes across five sub-themes. These are based on the 'shared priorities' agreed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's central and local government partnership. The five sub-themes are:

Sub-theme 5.1	Sustainable communities and transport
Sub-theme 5.2	Safer and stronger communities
Sub-theme 5.3	Healthier communities
Sub-theme 5.4	Older people
Sub-theme 5.5	Children and young people

The key questions for each theme (and, for achievement, each sub-theme) can be found on the following pages.

Judgement and scoring

The teams judge each theme and assign a score using the following table:

Theme score	Description	Judgement
1	Below minimum requirements	Inadequate performance
2	At only minimum requirements	Adequate performance
3	Consistently above minimum requirements	Performing well
4	Well above minimum requirements	Performing strongly

Reporting

The corporate assessment report will set out conclusions on each main theme and the associated scores. It will also provide an executive summary. This provides an overall summary of the council's performance, based on the three headline questions and assessment of each theme. In addition, it will include clear statements on each of the following:

- community leadership;
- political and managerial leadership;
- user focus and diversity; and
- value for money.

For further information on judgement and scoring (including the criteria for judgement), and reporting please refer to the full length version of this document. This can be found at www.audit-commission.gov.uk

What is the council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?

Themes and key questions

1. Ambition for the community

- 1.1 Are there clear and challenging ambitions for the area and its communities?
- 1.2 Are ambitions based on a shared understanding amongst the council and partner organisations of local needs?
- 1.3 Does the council with its partners provide leadership across the community and ensure effective partnership working?

2. Prioritisation

- 2.1 Are there clear and robust priorities within the ambitions?
- 2.2 Is there a robust strategy to deliver the priorities?
- 2.3 Is robust action taken to deliver the strategy?

What is the capacity of the council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?

Themes and key questions

3. Capacity

- 3.1 Is there clear accountability and decision-making to support service delivery and continuous improvement?
- 3.2 Is capacity used effectively and developed to deliver ambitions and priorities?
- 3.3 Does the council, with its partners, have the capacity it needs to achieve change and deliver its priorities?

4. Performance management

- 4.1 Is there a consistent, rigorous and open approach to performance management?
- 4.2 Do the council and partner organisations know how well they and each other are performing against planned outcomes?

4.3 Is knowledge about performance used to drive continuous improvement in outcomes?

What has been achieved?

Theme, sub-themes and key questions

5. Achievement

5.1 Sustainable communities and transport

5.1.1 What has the council, with its partners, achieved in its ambitions for the economy and labour market?

5.1.2 What has the council, with its partners, achieved in its ambitions and priorities for the local housing market?

5.1.3 What has the council, with its partners, achieved in its ambitions for the local environment?

5.1.4 What has the council, with its partners, achieved in its ambitions for and through transport?

5.2 Safer and stronger communities

5.2.1 What has the council, with its partners, achieved in its ambitions for reducing and preventing crime and the fear of crime?

5.2.2 What has the council, with its partners, achieved in its ambitions for reducing antisocial behaviour?

5.2.3. What has the council, with its partners, achieved in its ambitions for reduction in the harm that drugs and alcohol cause to society?

5.2.4 What has the council, with its partners, achieved in its ambitions for reducing accidents and making people feel safer?

5.2.5 Is the council well prepared for internal or external emergency situations?

5.2.6 What has the council, with its partners, achieved in its ambitions for building stronger communities?

5.3 Healthier communities

5.3.1 What has the council, with its partners, achieved in its ambitions for the promotion of healthier communities and the narrowing of health inequalities and are these achievements recognised by the local population?

5.4 Older people

5.4.1 What has the council, with its partners and with older people, done to develop a strategic approach to older people as citizens that goes beyond health and social care and covers the areas that older people say are most important?

5.4.2 What has the council, both corporately and with its partners, done to undertake meaningful engagement with older people and their representative groups on all aspects of the strategic approach to older people and service provision?

5.4.3 What has the council, with its partners, achieved in its ambition to deliver a comprehensive, coordinated range of services to older people?

5.5 Children and young people

Normally (when the Joint Area Review and corporate assessment are happening at the same time), the description and judgement of the council's and its partners' contributions to the quality of outcomes for children and young people will be summarised from the JAR report. In the exceptional circumstances where the two processes do not take place at the same time, the Ofsted/CSCI annual performance assessment for children and young people's services will form the basis of this section of the report.

Weighted Average Aggregate Scoring model

Weighted average aggregate score	Overall service score
Below 1.85	1
1.85 to less than 2.5	2
2.5 to 3.15	3
Above 3.15	4