

**AGENDA ITEM:**

**Stockton Renaissance  
Partnership Board**

**7<sup>th</sup> April 2009**

**REPORT OF STOCKTON  
COUNCIL'S HEAD OF PERFORMANCE  
AND PARTNERSHIPS**

**COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT (CAA)**

**SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to provide some background and information relating to the new national performance framework, CAA, that has replaced Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and a number of other regulatory assessment frameworks. It also provides some early baseline information in relation to performance of the key partners who will be assessed under the new regime.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members of the board are asked to:

1. Note the information in the report
2. Cascade the information through the Area Boards and Thematic Groups
3. Agree to accept quarterly updates of progress

**BACKGROUND**

1. Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) was introduced in 2002 to provide an inspection focus on the performance of Councils. The CPA framework was made up of a number of elements in order to give a rounded judgement on how Councils performed in relation to delivery of services as well as leadership, management, governance and use of resources, alongside an assessment of the direction of travel. With greater emphasis on partnership working and new grant regimes demanding more partnership working between public sector agencies the need to introduce a new national performance framework was recognised.
2. From April 2009 CPA and associated inspection frameworks such as Joint Area Reviews of Children's Services will no longer exist. The new performance framework, Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) will be

introduced with the first reports being published in November 2009. Further detail of the framework and how it differs from CPA is presented in the table below.

CPA	CAA
Focus on local government	All sectors and partners
Institution focus	Area focus
One size fits all	Spotlight on local priorities
Collaboration across inspectorates	Joint assessment
Performance indicators	Outcomes and perceptions
Cyclical inspection	Continuous assessment/ proportionate inspection
More backward looking	More forward looking
Administrative impact linked to cyclical inspection regime	Reducing administrative impact (particularly for high performing partnerships)

3. The focus is on outcomes and what difference the local authority and its key partners are collectively making to their local communities in relation to; health and well-being, community safety, sustainable communities, economic development, housing and children and young people.
4. CAA is aiming to be:
  - a catalyst for improving outcomes for local people, through even better partnership working, more effective use of collective resources and shared public accountability
  - a means of reducing the inspection burden
  - a source of public information into how well public services are meeting their identified needs
  - a source of evidence to the inspectorates and central government.

5. The CAA framework is made up of two elements:
  - Area assessment
    - How well do local priorities express community needs and aspirations?
    - How well are the outcomes and improvements needed being delivered?
    - What are the prospects for future improvement?
  - Organisational assessment – range of frameworks; Use of Resources (Council and Fire and Rescue), Annual Healthcheck and World Class Commissioning Arrangements (PCT), Assessment of Police and Community Safety (APACS). Essentially with the same elements:
    - How effectively does the organisation manage its finances and deliver value for money?
    - How well does the organisation govern itself and commission services that deliver better outcomes for local people and provide value for money?
    - How well does the organisation manage its natural resources, physical assets and people to meet current and future needs and deliver value for money?
    - How well does the organisation manage its performance - How well is the organisation delivering sustainable improvements in its priority services and outcomes that are important to local people? Does it have the leadership, capacity and capability it needs to deliver future improvements?
6. Scoring and judgement ratings have also changed. For the area assessment judgements will be made through the use of narrative and red and green flags. The inspectorates do not expect to allocate a lot of flags to any given area.
7. The use of red flags will be based on a rounded judgement of performance, improvement progress, how inequalities are being addressed, how well the needs of the more vulnerable in local communities are being met balanced against how aware the local partners are of the issue and the robustness of the plans in place to tackle it.
8. Green flags will be used to indicate where practice is “exceptional and sustainable” or “innovative with promising prospects of improving outcomes”. These will be used to identify where others could learn from particular examples.
9. Progress in relation to CAA will be determined through an ongoing dialogue, rather than a single ‘point in time’ inspection, with the Tees Valley CAA Lead from the Audit Commission, who will draw on the information and data from other inspectorates such as Ofsted, the newly formed Care Quality Commission, HMI Probation, HMI Constabulary. This will provide an opportunity through discussion and presentation of

supporting evidence to challenge and change emerging views of the combined inspectorates.

10. Whilst CAA is intended to replace major 'all service' inspections such as Corporate Assessment and Joint Area Reviews, a number of service-specific regulatory inspections will remain and these will feed into the overall assessment. These include; schools, housing, children in care, health and social care establishments and an annual inspection of children's social care, contact and assessment.
11. In September/October inspectorates will jointly draft their assessments and share them with local partners. The first formal reports for all areas and organisations will be published on the CAA website in November 2009. A demonstration version of the public reporting tool is available via [www.audit-commission.gov.uk/caademo](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/caademo)

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