



Report of the Chief Officer (Business Transformation)

Corporate Governance and Audit Committee

Date: 17th March 2010

Subject: Decision Making and Managing Performance

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Executive Summary

The CAA, Use of Resources Assessment places a greater emphasis on the importance of the use and quality of information in decision making and managing performance. Given this, all local authorities are evaluated against specific key lines of enquiry which provide a framework and criteria with which to assess organisations.

The Council can demonstrate that it has robust arrangements and good working practices in place which meet a number of the assessment criteria. Furthermore there are a number of improvement activities in place to ensure we continuously develop and improve our performance in this area.

This report outlines the key arrangements in place and the areas that are under development against each of the key lines of enquiry.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

- 1.1 To provide Corporate Governance and Audit Committee with a report explaining the arrangements in place to ensure the Council produces relevant , reliable data and information to support decision making and manage performance as defined by the Audit Commission's CAA, Use of Resources Assessment.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 The Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) is the new framework for the independent assessment of local public services in England. It has two main elements, the Area Assessment and the Use of Resources Assessment.
- 2.2 The Use of Resources Assessment places an emphasis on the importance of the use and quality of information in decision making and managing performance. All local authorities are now evaluated against specific Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) which provide a framework and criteria with which to assess an organisation. Given this, the relevant key lines of enquiry (2.2) focus on how well the organisation:
- produces relevant and reliable data and works with partners to ensure the quality of partnership data;
 - understands the needs of its decision makers and provides them with information that is fit-for-purpose and is used to support decision making;
 - ensures data security and compliance with relevant statutory requirements; and
 - monitors performance against its priorities and targets, and addresses underperformance.
- 2.3 The Council can demonstrate that it has robust arrangements and good working practices in place which meet a number of the criteria. Furthermore there are a number of improvement activities in place to ensure we continuously develop and improve our performance in this area. Given this, the following provides an overview of the arrangements in place to meet the assessment criteria of the KLOE 2.2 and to ensure continuous improvement.

3.0 Main Issues

KLOE 2.2 - The Organisation produces relevant and reliable data and works with partners to ensure the quality of partnership data

- 3.1 Considerable work is being undertaken to ensure that the Council is using relevant and reliable data. There are many activities being undertaken at service and team level to ensure that data used is fit for purpose. In addition data quality is being addressed corporately in order to ensure a consistent approach across the organisation and with partners.
- 3.2 The Council's Information Governance Framework covers the six broad areas of information governance including that pertaining to data and information quality. As part of the delivery of the Information Governance Framework, a Data Quality Strategy and Policy were agreed and published in March 2007 and the policy is refreshed annually. The policy will be supported by a series of other policies, standards, procedures and guidance notes that will improve the quality of data and information within the Council. To date the following policies from the Framework which contribute to information and data quality have been approved; the Records Management Policy, the Records Retention and Disposal Policy and the Information Security Policy.
- 3.3 In addition a number of the above listed policies support the ongoing work to introduce an Electronic Document Records Management System to the organisation. The system will facilitate improved quality of electronically held documents. Work to establish consistent file structures, version control and retention schedules which will support the efficient management, search and retrieval of electronically held documents is being undertaken in pilot areas.
- 3.4 To assist with the embedding of the policies developed as part of the Information Governance Framework the membership of the Corporate Data Quality Group has been extended to 25 and provides representation from across the organisation. The group provides a network of people who can share best practice and provides a mechanism for the dissemination of relevant information and consultation on corporate data quality initiatives. The Data Quality Group also has strong links with the Performance Working Group to allow data quality issues which impact on performance reporting to be addressed from as broad a perspective as possible.
- 3.5 Furthermore best practice dictates that successful data quality initiatives require top level support therefore the Assistant Chief Executive (Policy, Planning and Improvement) has taken on the role as Data Quality Champion. The appointment of a Data Quality Champion demonstrates the importance the Council places on the quality of data and provides a level of support for data quality initiatives which was previously not present.

- 3.6 In addition, in order to address the quality of data contributing to the Council's performance indicators, the Planning, Policy and Improvement Team has developed data quality checklists which are completed with the submission of each performance indicator. The data quality checklist are also used for data supplied by partners with a focus on ensuring that the checklists are completed for the high priority indicators within the Leeds Strategic Plan.
- 3.7 A review has recently been undertaken of the criteria used to inform the data quality judgments that are drawn from the checklists for inclusion in Accountability Reports for each performance indicator. The objective of this initiative is to work closely with Directorates and partners in order to adopt a more robust, consistent and over-arching approach that provides a wider based data quality judgment.
- 3.8 To continue improvements in this area, a revised data quality checklist with a built in scoring mechanism to determine the traffic light rating, has been produced. This is currently being piloted in Children's Services and Environment and Neighbourhoods in order to ensure that it is fit for purpose and that the scoring criteria are effective. Once agreed the new approach will be rolled out prioritising the Leeds Strategic Plan /Council Business Plan indicators and then followed by national and local indicators. This does mean that the data quality traffic lights during 2009/10 may change as this more rigorous approach starts to be used.
- 3.9 The success of the initiatives undertaken to improve the quality of performance data is evidenced by the fact that it has been five years since the Council has last had a performance indicator qualified due to data quality concerns.
- 3.10 In response to recommendations from the Audit Commission following the 2008/09 self-assessment exercise for KLOE 2.2, further work is being undertaken to strengthen arrangements relating to data sharing and to enhance data quality assurance/compliance arrangements contained in existing partnership agreements.
- 3.11 It has been acknowledged that Leeds Inter-Agency Information Sharing Protocol which is used as a basis for information sharing across Adult Social Care and Children's Services does have a bias towards health information and is inappropriate for other Services Areas across the Council. Given this the Council is proposing to adopt an Information Sharing Protocol which has been designed for wider use across Council services. This Protocol has been developed in association with other West Yorkshire Public Authorities in order to adopt a common and consistent approach to the sharing of information across the region.

3.12 Furthermore a Corporate Information Sharing Policy is under development. This Policy will provide standard templates for use in information sharing agreements across the Council and these templates will include data quality standards. The data quality standards have been developed regionally with the West Yorkshire Information Management Forum and with the Council's Corporate Data Quality Group.

KLOE 2.2 - The organisation understands the needs of its decision makers and provides them with information that is fit-for-purpose and is used to support decision making.

3.13 The delivery of the right information, to the right people and at the right time to support decision making is often referred to as Business Intelligence (BI) and includes the array of activities required in the collation, integration, analysis, reporting and delivery of fit for purpose information.

3.14 There are a number of strong examples of where decision makers are supported by the availability of fit for purpose information. Examples include the Analytics Dashboard developed by the ESCR Reporting Team which provides colleagues in Children's Services with access to caseload and performance management information. In addition the Customer Services Performance Management Team have developed a balanced scorecard to aid colleagues in monitoring performance data within Customer Services. These and other examples of good practice are currently being collated for the 2009/10 KLOE 2.2 assessment.

3.15 In addition there have been substantial improvements made to the presentation of performance management information based on feedback received from Council officers and elected members. Key improvements include the introduction of balanced scorecards bringing together Leeds Strategic and Council Business Plan performance indicators and providing a holistic picture of performance. Additionally a corporate balanced scorecard provides a traffic lighted summary of overall performance against all our strategic indicators.

3.16 Also performance reports now capture both qualitative and quantitative information to provide a full and balanced picture of performance and the addition of action trackers to the performance management arrangements has provided further qualitative information to compliment the quantitative data.

3.17 Furthermore the Business Intelligence programme of work is a key strand of the Information and Knowledge Management Agenda. It focuses on the development of

council wide policy, technology and practice in the delivery of fit for purpose information to support decision making.

- 3.18 Typically data and information is most successfully delivered as intelligence through the use of technology. For this reason a significant part of the BI programme of work is to identify the most appropriate technologies to deliver intelligence and performance management information to the Council. A key focus of the BI agenda is the integration of data from multiple sources and a move away from the silo based approach that has previously been taken. Progress has been made in this area through the identification of Microsoft as the supplier of the Council's technical infrastructure.
- 3.19 Technology is an important enabler but central to the delivery of good quality intelligence is the availability of colleagues with the skills to manipulate and analyse the data and information. For this reason the skills and competencies required across the business and ICT to support the Council in the production and use of intelligence have been identified. Individuals from across the organisation with these skills and competencies are being identified and brought together in groups to facilitate joint working both within the Council and with partner organisations.
- 3.20 Further progress has been made in this area through the appointment of a Corporate Intelligence Manager to coordinate initiatives to improve the production of cross council and partnership intelligence. This coordinating role will involve bringing consistency and coordination to the processes involved in the production of intelligence. In addition, as a central role it provides a resource to support developmental work across Services and Directorates and to take a lead role in liaising with partners in the joint production of intelligence.

KLOE 2.2 - The organisation ensures data security and compliance with relevant statutory requirements.

- 3.21 As the Committee are aware Information Security and Compliance are of utmost importance to the Council. The Annual Information Security Update Report, which the Committee receives, provides information on how the Council is addressing this important issue.
- 3.22 Recently, a number of advancements have been made in this area. The appointment of a Corporate Compliance Manager in October 2009 has facilitated a number of key developments as has the Council's compliance with the Government Connects programme of work.

3.23 However as the Committee will also have received the Annual Information Security Report at this time, the Committee are referred to that report for further details in order to avoid duplication.

KLOE 2.2 - The organisation monitors performance against its priorities and targets, and addresses underperformance.

- 3.24 To ensure we report, monitor and act on performance information to continuously improve and deliver more efficient and effective services the Council has a robust performance management framework in place. In addition, performance management arrangements are regularly updated and improved to adapt to the changing environment in which we operate.
- 3.25 The performance management cycle operates at a partnership and corporate level as well as within each of the strategic directorates in order to ensure that a performance management culture is developed and embedded at all levels. Performance reports are reviewed and challenged by elected members and by senior officers both from within the council and from partner agencies. This provides a route for areas of under-performance to be addressed at the very highest level and for solutions to be developed jointly. Examples of key improvement areas which have been addressed through this partnership approach include crime and delayed discharges from hospital.
- 3.26 As evidenced above, the Council operates in an environment which dictates that we work more closely and productively with partners. Given this the performance management framework has been adapted to address these requirements with the development of more joined up and integrated arrangements. This is particularly evidenced by the performance management arrangements between the Council and NHS Leeds, with the first joint performance report presented to the Health Scrutiny Board in March 09.
- 3.27 Further improvements include steps taken to improve leadership and accountability arrangements, with each improvement priority from the Council's Business plan and Leeds Strategic Plan assigned to a senior officer, either from the council or from key partners. These lead officers have taken overall responsibility for the delivery of the priority. Part of this role is to ensure that mechanisms are in place which capture all the relevant workstreams/contributions from across the council, and the partnership as appropriate, and that progress is being made by monitoring key milestones and performance indicators.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 There is a considerable amount of work ongoing to improve the quality and use of data and information within the council. As this work progresses the Council will realise improved performance in this area which will undoubtedly be acknowledged through the Use of Resources, Key Lines of Enquiry 2.2 Assessment.
- 4.2 The self-assessment which was undertaken for 2008/09 resulted in the organisation scoring a 2 out of a possible 4 which indicates that we are performing adequately. The feedback from the Audit Commission has identified areas for development and these areas are being addressed, as are ongoing activities to ensure continuous improvement in this area.
- 4.3 The Council are in the process of providing evidence for KLOE 2.2 for 2009/10. KPMG will be reviewing the evidence provided and will be interviewing key officers in order to arrive at their new judgement.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 The Committee are asked to note the contents of the report.

Background Documents Used

- Data Quality Policy
- Data Quality Strategy
- Information Security Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Retention and Disposal Policy
- Business Intelligence Roadmap Executive Summary