

Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Performance Management Framework

May 2017

For use by Councillors and staff

Introduction

Wanting to improve services for customers is at the heart of what we do. This common theme is shared both by the staff and councillors of the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk. Performance management is about making the best use of people and information to help us improve. It involves taking positive action to make outcomes better than they would otherwise be.

An effective approach to performance management is important to the success of any organisation. It ensures we remain focussed on what is important to our service users and communities and that we provide efficient and effective services.

We have put in place systems and processes that enable us to make decisions based on sound data, track our progress and achieve planned developments to services and performance. We will use a range of methods to tell local people about our performance, what's been achieved and how public money is being spent.

The purpose of this guide is to outline our approach to performance management in simple terms so that Councillors and staff can understand how it works and where they fit in.

Cllr Brian Long
Leader

Cllr Peter Hodson
Portfolio Holder, Performance

Background

This guide to the Council's Performance Management Framework gives background information on the different elements of performance management, why they are important and how they fit together.

The performance framework is, in effect, a summary of the key internal processes and components through which the Council sets, delivers, monitors and reports on its priorities; as such it encompasses elements of strategy, finance, performance, people and risk management, and reporting and accountability.

This framework replaces the previous version produced in 2012.

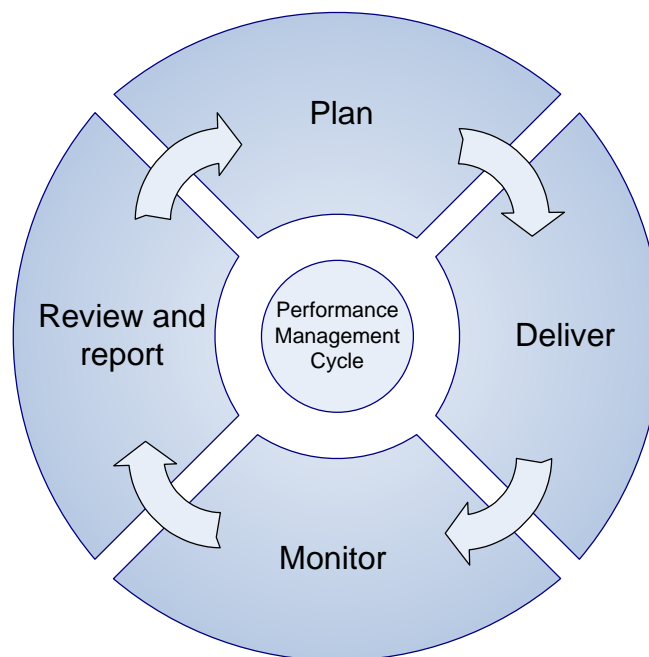
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**For further information, support or guidance, please contact
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1. What is Performance Management?
 - 1.1 Performance Management is about taking action in response to actual performance to make outcomes better than they would otherwise be. To do this, we need to know and understand both the intended outcomes and current performance levels.
 - 1.2 Performance Management happens at every level of the organisation and it involves elected councillors as well as individual members of staff.
 - 1.3 Effective Performance Management is based on a continual process, or cycle, which has the following key elements:
 1. Agree or reaffirm a set of outcomes and **PLAN** what needs to be done to achieve those aims
 2. Make sure we **DO** what's in the Plan!
 3. **MONITOR** our progress and performance
 4. **REVIEW and REPORT** what has gone well or what could have gone better
 - 1.4 **Our performance cycle**



2. The national context

- 2.1 Changes were made in 2011 at a national level that removed much of the national framework, which local authorities were previously required to adhere to. Whilst there is no national performance management framework now in place, there remains a significant duty placed on local councils to provide central government with 'data' via the single data list and also through a range of continuing inspectorial frameworks.
- 2.2 The changes mean that how local authorities organise, deliver and performance manage their services is to be determined locally, with minimal reporting to Government. The framework outlined within this document aims to summarise the approach taken at the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk.

3. The performance cycle – our plans

- 3.1 The Council shares a common ambition with its partners to improve quality of life in West Norfolk. We are part of two Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP's) and also participate in the 'West Norfolk Partnership' – a strategic group of local organisations who work towards a set of broadly similar aims for the good of the local community. The Strategy Group of the partnership oversees the development and management of partnership working in West Norfolk, agreeing priority issues which will benefit from a combined and coordinated response. These priority issues are reflected in the Council's Corporate Business Plan.
- 3.2 The Council has in place a 'Corporate Business Plan' which sets out the broad framework for the Council's work through to 2019/20. For this period, six priority areas for the Council's focus have been identified, underpinned by 18 corporate objectives. These are summarised below:

Priority 1: Provide important local services within our available resources

1. we will deliver our 'channel-shift' programme
2. we will continue to seek new and effective ways of working
3. we will take opportunities to generate income and draw in grant funding where it helps us achieve our priorities

Priority 2: Drive local economic and housing growth

4. we will support new and existing businesses to help them thrive
5. we will meet our housing growth targets
6. we will support activity that helps drive up the skills levels of local people

Priority 3: Work with our communities to ensure they remain clean and safe

7. we will improve recycling levels
8. we will ensure that our local streets and public open areas are clean
9. we will pro-actively address anti-social behaviour

Priority 4: Celebrate our local heritage and culture

10. we will deliver an annual programme of festivals and events to attract people into West Norfolk and showcase our area
11. we will support the improvement of our built heritage, drawing in third-party funding wherever possible
12. we will support leisure and tourism within the borough

Priority 5: Stand up for local interests within our region

13. we will explore devolution options for West Norfolk to help us take more control over the services that impact on people's lives
14. we will lobby for infrastructure improvements including rural broadband and mobile coverage, road and rail improvements and coastal protection
15. we will lobby to retain the core service infrastructure – such as the hospital, appropriate medical and judicial services, education and others - that reflects the needs of local people and the importance of West Norfolk in the sub-region

Priority 6: Work with our partners on important services for the borough

16. we will continue to support improvements in the educational attainment of our young people
17. we will work closely with partners in health and adult services to improve services for older people
18. we will support 'early help' initiatives aimed at preventing problems from arising in the first place

- 3.3 There are a number of other strategies key to the organisation, such as the Local Development Framework Core Strategy, Risk Management Strategy and the Data Quality Strategy. These set out how the Council tackles specific 'cross cutting' issues.
4. The performance cycle – how we deliver
 - 4.1 The Corporate Business Plan sets out what the Council aims to achieve in addition to our core statutory services, and is aligned with the Council's Financial Plan.
 - 4.2 The Financial Plan explains how the Council will manage its resources and budgets over a four year period and how resources will be used to deliver services and meet the Council's key aims. Key priorities of each service are considered each year as part of the budget setting process.
 - 4.3 Sitting beneath the Corporate Business Plan are Directorate Plans which cover all services. The Directorate Plans contain key objectives that each service will work on over the coming year, together with higher priority objectives that are either of significant importance to the

authority, or cut across more than one service / team. The plans also outline how the objectives will be delivered. We take a co-ordinated approach to this planning across the Council, with a small corporate team providing support or guidance to Service Managers through templates and acting as critical friends.

4.4 Other plans may be produced as a result of self-assessments, peer reviews, audits or other inspections.

4.5 Project plans are produced for major projects so that timescales, milestones, governance arrangements and resources are mapped out.

4.6 Part of the effective delivery of plans involves identifying and assessing risks. The Council has an effective corporate approach to risk management and takes reasonable steps to mitigate any risks that might prevent it from achieving its aims. Risks to good quality data are also assessed and wherever possible and practicable, action is taken to address them.

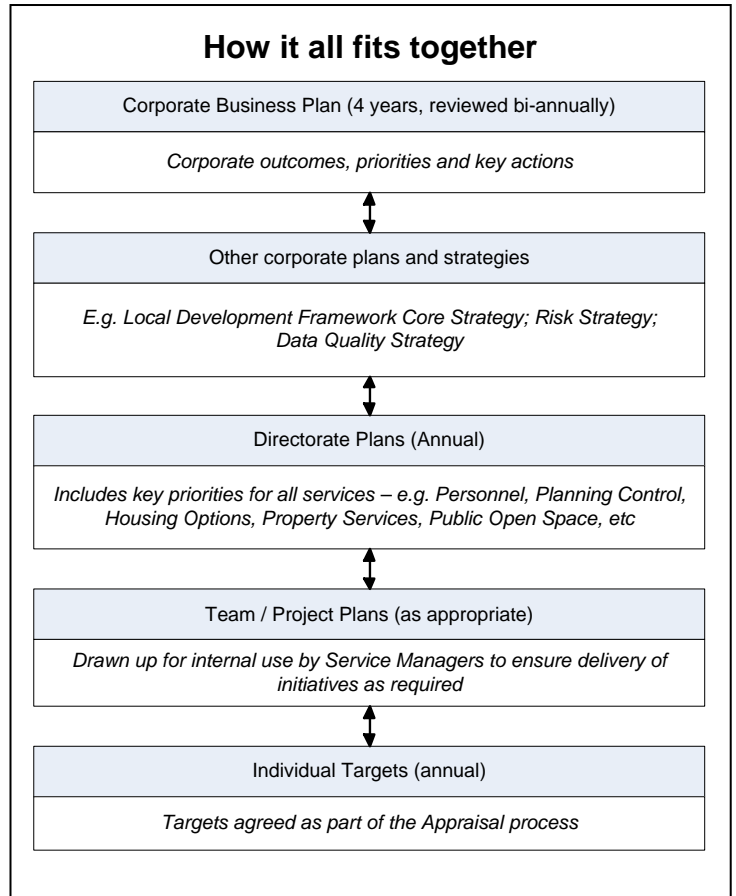
4.7 The Council's staff appraisal system results in specific targets being set for all individual members of staff on an annual basis. In many cases, individual targets are related to objectives set out in Directorate Plans, and, in appropriate cases, some of the key actions set out in the Corporate Business Plan.

5 The performance cycle – how we monitor, review and report

5.1 The delivery of all key projects, initiatives and action plans are monitored regularly through various means.

5.2 Cabinet members monitor projects and service performance through formal reports and informal progress meetings with relevant Executive Directors and Service Managers.

5.3 The delivery and performance of key services can also be reviewed by the two Policy Review and Development Panels which also fulfil a scrutiny role.



- 5.4 Management Team (the Chief Executive and the Executive Directors) receive quarterly reports on progress made against the Corporate Business Plan. This quarterly report is published on the Council's Insite system for access by all Councillors and staff¹; and on a six-monthly basis, this information is formally presented to the Corporate Performance Panel. This monitoring report also includes issues / initiatives documented in the Directorate Plans, where applicable.
- 5.5 Management Team, Cabinet Members and the Corporate Performance Panel also receive quarterly information and analysis on achievement against a suite of agreed corporate Performance Indicators. The indicators cover all Directorates and the reports highlight any specific performance issues. The Corporate Performance Panel monitor performance and approve the Action Plan put in place to correct adverse performance, where applicable.
- 5.6 Inclusion on the Corporate Performance Panel agenda means the Corporate and Performance Indicator monitoring information is available to the general public via our website.
- 5.7 Service Managers monitor their own operational performance information, including budget monitoring, service performance and progress on key projects, reporting to their Executive Director.
- 5.8 Service Managers monitor staff performance and carry out formal staff appraisals at least twice each year, checking that agreed target areas are on track for achievement. The Personnel Services team ensure that managers at all levels receive full training, including refresher training, on the scheme and Personnel also co-ordinate monitoring of adherence to scheme requirements on behalf of the Chief Executive and Executive Director, Central & Community Services, through random sampling, each year.
- 5.9 Any plans produced as a result of self-assessments, initiatives, peer reviews, audits or other inspections, are monitored by the relevant officer / Executive Director and will be reported through an appropriate mechanism – for example, to Portfolio Holders or to a Policy Review and Development Panel, etc.
- 5.10 The Council's key strategies and projects are reviewed periodically by the relevant Service Manager. An overview is maintained by Executive Directors and progress on key projects is reported through the quarterly Corporate Monitoring process.
6. Acting on performance information
- 6.1 Opportunities for development are identified by Councillors and senior managers through a range of processes. Cabinet can request

¹ in the Review and Report section of the Performance tab or in the Performance Monitoring section of the Corporate Documents tab

managers to provide information on performance issues and call for further work to be undertaken to address specific concerns if applicable. The Policy Review and Development Panels can also request information about performance to be provided and explained.

- 6.2 The Council's Performance & Efficiency function shares learning and good practice on a range of performance issues and makes recommendations to Management Team as appropriate.
- 6.3 Opportunities for improvement may be identified through research into best practice at other authorities, as well as by reviewing our own processes and how they can be improved. There are a number of opportunities to share learning and good practice with other local authorities and organisations through online networks and forums. The peer review process – whereby another council or an improvement group is invited to challenge areas of performance and suggest changes – is also used where it is deemed appropriate.
- 6.4 Customers, service users and other stakeholders provide an important, free source of performance information through feedback mechanisms, surveys and complaints. Information is collected, monitored and can be used to improve services. The Council has a corporate approach to dealing with complaints and monitoring complaints data.
- 6.5 Feedback from staff can also be useful in identifying opportunities to improve services and performance. Feedback comes from team meetings, staff briefings on particular topics, staff consultations, staff briefing notes (which always provide a contact name and number for feedback or questions) and staff appraisals.

7. Ensuring good data quality

- 7.1 All performance information is underpinned by good quality data and our arrangements to ensure good quality data are set out in our Data Quality Strategy. The strategy aims to ensure that across the Council's Directorates, there is a consistently high standard of data production and use.
- 7.2 All staff involved in the collection, collation and reporting of performance data have a responsibility to ensure that it can be relied upon. Departments need to ensure they have sound procedures in place and provide adequate training and guidance for staff. For more information, see the Council's Data Quality Strategy – February 2017².

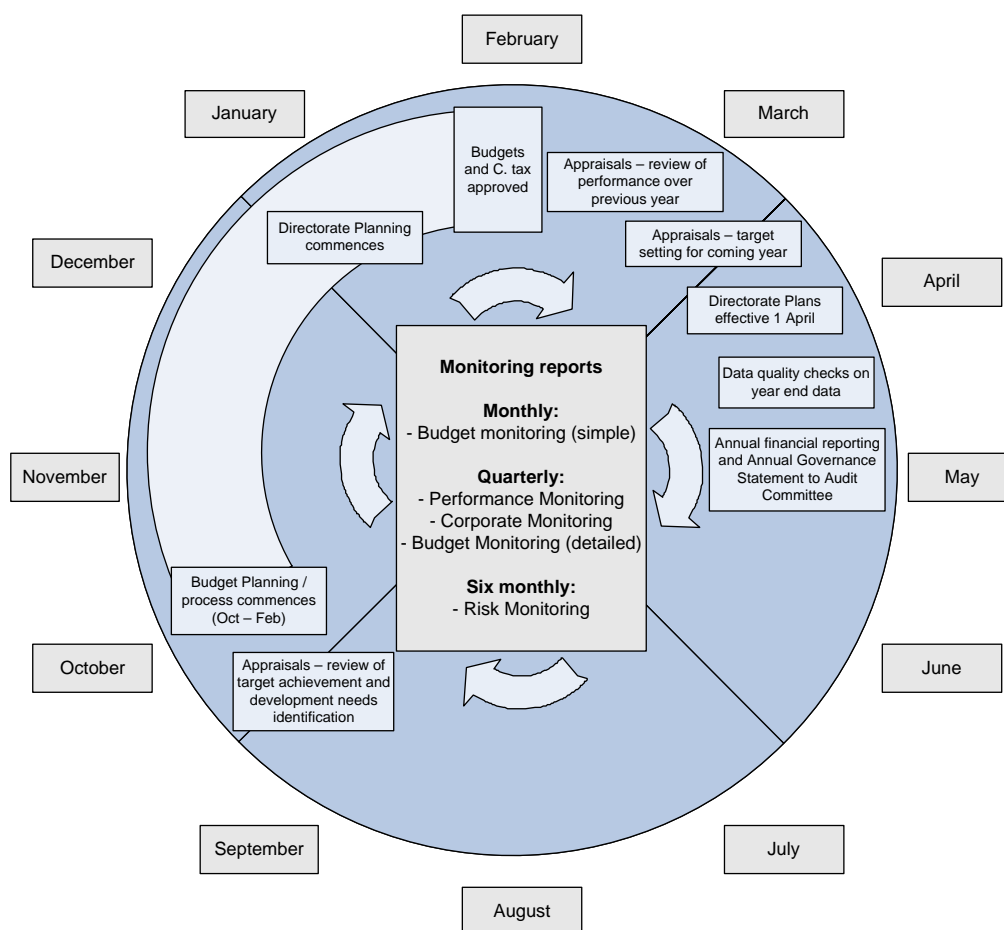
² Approved by Cabinet 28 February 2017

8. Corporate Governance

- 8.1 We are responsible for ensuring that our business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.
- 8.2 We also have a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which our functions are exercised. In meeting this overall responsibility, we are also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control which facilitates the effective exercise of the Council's functions and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
- 8.3 The Council has approved and adopted a Code of Corporate Governance³, which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*.
- 8.4 On an annual basis, a review must take place of the effectiveness of the systems of internal control and an Annual Governance Statement must be produced. We assess how well we are complying with our Code of Corporate Governance and give an opinion on whether the corporate governance arrangements are adequate and operating effectively.
- 8.5 The Performance & Efficiency function carry out the monitoring and assessment required to prepare the Annual Governance Statement on behalf of the Leader and Chief Executive.

³ Approved by Council 26 March 2015

9. The annual corporate and budget planning cycle



10. Roles and responsibilities

10.1 Our approach relies on us all to take performance management seriously and ensure the Council makes its plans, policies and decisions based on good quality information. Roles and responsibilities are outlined in the following table:

Council	Elected members are ultimately accountable to the electorate for the overall performance of Council services.
Leader of the Council	Has overall political accountability and is ultimately responsible for the Council's performance.
Cabinet	Is the executive body of the Council. Cabinet determine the policies, priorities and projects that will be undertaken by Services each year. This work is set out in the Corporate Business Plan and Directorate Plans, and the associated resources needed are within the annual budget setting and prioritisation process.

<p>Portfolio Holders</p>	<p>Each Cabinet member is given a portfolio of services and activities for which they take responsibility. This detail is set out in the Council's constitution. Portfolio Holders are actively involved in reviewing performance in relation to their portfolio. The Portfolio Holder for Performance has responsibility for the Council's performance management and data quality arrangements. However, performance management is an integral part of every portfolio holder's responsibilities.</p>
<p>Policy Review & Development Panels</p>	<p>The role of these bodies is set out in the Council's constitution. The groups identify areas of the Council's work that need to be scrutinised and challenge performance and service improvement initiatives. The Corporate Performance Panel receive reports such as the quarterly Performance Monitoring reports and agree the associated Action report which outlines actions being taken on issues identified.</p>
<p>Audit Committee</p>	<p>The Audit Committee monitors the risk management and governance arrangements at the Council to help ensure the effective delivery of services and the achievement of objectives. The Audit Committee, through the work of Internal Audit, ensure the Council has adequate controls in place. The Committee review and should contribute to the development of the Annual Governance Statement ahead of its formal presentation to the Committee for approval.</p>
<p>Chief Executive and Executive Directors (individually and/or collectively)</p>	<p>Management Team advise members regarding the setting of strategic direction and performance improvement priorities. Executive Directors set targets and standards for performance, and identify and manage strategic and performance issues and opportunities facing the Council. They are responsible for ensuring a Directorate Plan is in place, covering the services in their area, and will ensure that high profile / priority / cross-cutting initiatives / issues are captured within the Directorate Plan accordingly. The Directorate Plans incorporate Service Plans which evidence how the Council plans to achieve the priorities set out in the Corporate Business Plan. Executive Directors receive regular information on performance from Service Managers and consider reports on key strategic performance issues, including</p>

	<p>achievement against the Corporate Business Plan.</p> <p>Executive Directors have responsibility for ensuring that their Directorate has effective data processes for monitoring performance indicators and ensuring that operational responsibilities for data quality have been delegated to individuals.</p> <p>Management Team have responsibility for promoting the integration of performance management into the culture of the Council and for ensuring that performance information used in decision making is 'fit for purpose' and reliable.</p>
<p>Service Managers</p>	<p>Service Managers are responsible for the overall operational performance of their service and for the contribution that their service makes to the outcomes and objectives within the Corporate Business Plan. They are responsible for contributing to the integration of performance management into their area and for ensuring the quality of all data collected and reported within their areas of responsibility.</p> <p>Where performance targets/standards are not achieved, Service Managers are required to explain this and consider what remedial action is required; for corporately monitored performance indicators this is reported in the quarterly monitoring and action reports.</p> <p>Service Managers are required to provide assurance on the effectiveness of controls in place to mitigate/reduce poor performance in their service and ensure the involvement of staff in setting relevant and appropriate targets through the annual Service Planning and appraisal process.</p>
<p>Performance & Efficiency</p>	<p>This function supports performance management and data quality within the Council by co-ordinating the corporate approach to performance management, Directorate and Service Planning. Support and guidance is provided to Executive Directors and Service Managers in delivering the performance management framework, and on elements such as performance indicators, monitoring of achievement against corporate priorities, benchmarking, research, Directorate and Service Planning, and inspection requirements.</p> <p>The area produces the Annual Governance Statement on behalf of the Leader and Chief Executive, which is</p>

	<p>approved by the Audit Committee, and also facilitates the corporate risk management process on behalf of Management Team.</p> <p>Support is also provided to Directorates in the creation of data processes that support monitoring including advice and guidance regarding the collection and calculation of performance indicators and the maintenance of the performance sections of the Council's intranet system, Insite.</p>
Internal Audit	<p>This team deals with the provision of audit and fraud services, they operate under the statutory requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations and relevant Benefits and Council tax legislation. If data quality issues are identified through the course of an audit, whether linked to performance indicator data or not, this will be raised in the audit report. Internal audit also provide an independent review of the corporate approach to performance management and data quality.</p>
Managers / Supervisors / Team Leaders	<p>All levels of staff with managerial responsibility are responsible for the operational performance of their team and for the two-way communication of corporate initiatives and performance issues. This group of staff are responsible for ensuring their staff have regular appraisals and reviewing the training and skills needed to carry out their roles. They should also ensure that their staff have access to and are familiar with corporate and departmental policies and procedures on performance management and data quality.</p>
Individual staff	<p>All staff have a responsibility to manage their own performance. Each member of staff will be set specific targets as part of their appraisal every year, which staff members will be involved with agreeing. As well as identifying actions and targets for the current year, relevant training / personal development needs are identified through the appraisal process. Formal procedures exist to address continual and serious cases of under-performance.</p>

11. Other relevant documents

11.1 There are a number of other documents which support the Council's Performance Management Framework. These are available on either the Council's Insite system or the CiphNet Personnel system:

- Annual Governance Statement (Insite)
- Code of Corporate Governance (Insite)
- Corporate Business Plan (Insite)
- Data Quality Policy & Strategy (Insite)
- Data Protection Act – Staff Guidance (Insite)
- Performance Management Scheme Guidance Notes (CiphNet)
- Risk Management Policy & Strategy (Insite)