
Select Committee on Culture and Recreation – 3 November 2005

Developing Performance Management in Cultural Services

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Purpose of Report

1. To consider the nature of future performance measurement/monitoring reports to the Select Committee

Background

2. The Select Committee for Culture and Recreation has been appointed by the Council with the remit relating to the provision, planning and management of cultural and recreational facilities and services within the Borough, specifically:-
 - All of the Council's functions in relation to leisure, arts, sport and recreational activities to enhance the quality of life for local people.
 - The provision and management of museums, art galleries, theatres, leisure centres, swimming pools, parks and open spaces, allotments and other like facilities.
3. As part of its terms of reference the Select Committee is charged with a scrutiny role within which the Committee may:

‘review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas’.

Furthermore the Select Committee may also:

‘question Cabinet Members, Committees and Directors about their decisions and performance whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects’.

4. In the context of performance management the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process incorporates a specific section against which the Council's approach to performance management is tested.
5. Specifically the CPA test looks at performance management against the following headings:-
 - i) Is there a consistent, rigorous and open approach to performance management?
 - ii) Do the Council and partner organisations know how well they and each other are performing against planned outcomes?
 - iii) Is knowledge about performance used to drive continuous improvement in outcomes?
6. For each of these questions there is then a set of exemplars which would demonstrate the level attained for performance management in the context of the Council's approach to performance management the Council would have to demonstrate that:-

'Members have a track record of active, focused involvement in performance management, either through Executive, Scrutiny or Council meetings. Executive and Scrutiny Members make use of information on performance to manage continuous improvement. Scrutiny is outcome focused, for example, recognising the contribution that individual services can make to achieving improvement in cross cutting priority areas, and tends to operate with confidence and capacity, balancing its role as an independent critical friend with the need to work constructively within the framework of agreed community and corporate plans'.

This is just one of the numerous exemplars of a level 3 standard (good) for performance management within the CPA framework.

7. The recent CPA inspection of Cultural Services looked specifically at performance management and concluded that results were patchy. The Inspectors concluded that whilst performance management was developing with a corporate system in place and that some progress had been made in implementing within Cultural Services, this was not consistent across all areas of the service or that it was driving service improvement.
8. A key feature of the Council's performance management system is the quarterly monitoring reports which reflect the new Council Plan priorities, with delivery of these being monitored and accountability is clearly designated to named officers and Councillors.

9. That said, the performance management framework in Cultural Services is not as effective as it could be for the following reasons:-
- Whilst Service Plans are in place which have been developed in the Council's corporate style and align to the budget setting process. However, they do not yet relate to the Council priorities and targets in the current Council Plan and there are no longer term ambitions and targets for the service against which to report progress.
 - Currently the targets relating to Cultural Services are not outcome focussed and therefore do not give a sense of the impact for local people. For example, the targets include production of master plans for parks and increasing uptake of the options card amongst carers and 'looked after children'. It is not clear what improvements are expected from achievement of the targets.
 - Performance reporting is mainly narrative and relates to the delivery of activities rather than measurable progress against defined targets and outcomes.
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10. This latter point reflects the type of performance report that has traditionally been presented to the Select Committee, and supports the Inspectors view that the role of scrutiny in performance management is underdeveloped, with a greater need to assess performance against specific targets and outcomes.
11. Clearly this is a critical issue for the Select Committee to consider in terms of the information that it requires in the areas of Cultural Services in order that it performs the scrutinising role as required under the Constitution and in accordance with CPA requirements.
12. The current situation is that there are a range of key objectives contained within the Council Plan that relate to Cultural Services which have associated actions and measures that are reported on at Council on a quarterly basis.
13. A summary of these objectives is provided at table 1 below and the detail on each of these is attached at Appendix 1.

Council Plan Theme	Project	Key Objectives
Caring Matters	An Active Borough	To Create a healthy and active Borough
Caring Matters	Strategic review of leisure centres	Implementation of approved strategy
Environment Matters	Improving Parks for People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision and enhancement of parks and green spaces in the Borough • Increase skills of workforce and local unemployed through parks improvements • Stimulate community involvement to ensure the sustainability of parks groups and improvements
Learning Matters	Enhance the safety and opportunities for older people, primarily through the voluntary sector	Older people attending LEAP physical activity sessions.
Safety Matters	Provision of diversionary activities for Young People	To reduce anti-social behaviour by improving sporting opportunities and diversionary activities for young people

14. Similarly within the Directorate of the Urban Environment a new system of performance management has been introduced in this current financial year which on a bi-monthly basis assesses service performance against the following measures including:-

- Financial Performance
- Council Plan Reporting
- Audit Reports
- Risk Management Audits
- Health and Safety
- Asset Management
- People Issues
- E Government

15. Attached at Appendix 2 is a summary report of the issues raised for Cultural Services at the most recent performance management meeting and reported to the services management team in September.
16. In terms of national performance indicators, Cultural Services has had a very limited range of indicators against which to report on and in the context of the 2005 CPA the following are the only ones included:-

BVPI	Description	2000/01	Quartile	2003/04	Quartile
119a	Residents Satisfaction (Sport and Recreation)	56	2 nd	50	3 rd
119c	Residents Satisfaction (Museums and Galleries)	52	2 nd	44	2 nd
199d	Residents Satisfaction (Theatres and Concert Halls)	53	2 nd	47	3 rd
119e	Residents Satisfaction (Parks and Open Spaces)	63	2 nd	68	2 nd

BVPI	Description	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 (quarter 1)
170a	Number of visits to museums per 1000 population	183.6	152.6	191.4	208
170b	Number of visits to museums per 1000 population (in person)	133.7	147.6	170.2	107
170c	Number of pupils visiting museums and galleries in organised groups	2063	4810	3698	4650

- 167 Having accepted the limitations of the current range of performance indicators within the CPA model the Audit Commission have identified a new suite of indicators to be introduced in 2006 and against which future performance assessments of Cultural Services will be assessed.
18. These indicators are grouped under the generic headings of:-
- Creating healthier and more active communities
 - Safer, stronger, accessible and enabling local environment
 - Independence and well being, participation and community sustainability
 - Value for money/service efficiency.

By doing so the Audit Commission are encouraging Councils to assess services and their performance across cross cutting issues in order that there is an 'outcome' focus to target setting.

19. For Member information a full schedule of the performance indicators and key data that will form the basis of the CPA assessment from 2006 onwards is provided at Appendix 3. As Members will recognise, data such as the percentage of adults/juniors/target groups participating in sports or arts events will be derived from survey work on an annual basis, as will the various 'resident satisfaction with services' indicators. (These are currently identified every three years via General Household Survey)
20. To supplement these and other targets such as those being developed within the Cultural Strategy the Council needs to develop complimentary indicators to ensure that there is an appropriate mix of high level 'outcome focussed indicators' such as the level of participation by a particular target group, set against more detailed analysis of service delivery.
21. The development of more detailed indicators at service level will, to an extent, allow members to drill down performance within specific service areas to identify the underlying issues affecting the achievement of the higher level outcomes. This needs to be structured in such a way as to overcome the criticism made by the CPA inspectors that 'performance reporting is mainly narrative and relates to the delivery of activities rather than measurable progress against defined targets and outcomes'.
22. This is a fundamental issue for the Committee to consider as to the level of detail that it requires in order to effectively exercise its scrutiny function. As noted earlier, in the exercising of its functions part of the Committee's role is to review and scrutinise the services performance in relation to its delivery against Council policy objectives and performance targets and in this context the respective service and operational plans for the division may prove to be a useful reference point.
23. By way of example at Appendix 4 is a copy of the 2005 – 06 Service Plan for the Arts, Heritage and Park Service, together with the draft overview of the operational plans for the individual service area (Arts Development, Countryside, Halls and Entertainment, Parks Development and Museums).
24. At Appendix 5 is a sample operational plan which relates to the Halls and Entertainment Service. This is broken down by venue i.e. Dudley Concert Hall, Stourbridge Town Hall; together with a range of performance indicators for the Service.
25. Clearly it is at the operational plan level where the detail of service performance is more readily accessible and through a careful selection of a few headline indicators linked to the outcomes that the Council is seeking to achieve by the provision of Cultural Services, the focus of the Select Committees performance scrutiny role could be developed.

26. In the context of the Council's emerging Cultural Strategy, which will be brought before the Select Committee in the New Year, the Key Strategic aims that have been identified relate to:-

- Access and Participation
- Quality, Diversity and Value for Money
- Social and Economic Regeneration

These aims correspond with the 'Heritage and Culture' priority contained within the draft Community Strategy currently being finalised by the Dudley Community Partnership.

27. It follows that the performance management framework of the Select Committee should reflect these aims within the targets/performance indicators that it chooses to measure.

28. Attached at Appendix 6 is a sample matrix of performance indicators/targets that the Select Committee could establish and utilise for 2006 – 07, in addition to the CPA key performance indicators that have been set for Cultural Services (as shown in Appendix 2).

29. This report attempts to set a new framework for performance management of Cultural Services by the Select Committee. As Members have been advised the assessment of the CPA inspectors was that performance management was patchy and not driving service improvement, and it is for members to consider the type and frequency of information that they need in order to move towards having a more outcome focused approach that relate to the priorities of the Council.

30. Clearly there is a balance to be struck between this and the more detailed aspect of service delivery which has traditionally been monitored by service committees eg income and usage levels. Members views are sought on the content of this report and the framework/performance measures proposed.

Finance

28. There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.

Law

29. Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 empowers the Council to provide recreational facilities in its area.

30. Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its functions under the 1976 Act.

Equality Impact

31. Members will need to ensure that Equality Impact is incorporated within the Performance Management Framework and that the measures proposed are sufficient for this purpose.

Recommendation

32. That the Committee considers the proposed Performance Management Framework for Cultural Services, contained within this report and determines the amount and detail of information required to ensure that the Select Committee exercises its performance scrutiny function.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Millar'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J'.

John Millar
Director of the Urban Environment:

Contact Officer: Duncan Lowndes
Tel: 01384 815500
Email: duncan.lowndes@dudley.gov.uk