

National Indicators

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Recommendation: that (A) the Committee notes the National Indicators that fall within this Committee's remit,

(B) agree/edit as appropriate the proposals for items to be considered for future meetings of this committee.

BACKGROUND

A Single Set of 198 National Indicators (the National Indicator Set – NIS) was announced by the Department of Communities and Local Government in October 2007, following the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review 2007. The NIS will be the main set of indicators on which central government will performance manage local government, replacing all other existing sets of indicators, including Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) and Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) indicators, from 1st April 2008.

The national indicator set will be the measures on which central government will performance manage outcomes delivered by local government working alone or in partnerships. From April 2008, all other sets of indicators, including Best Value Performance Indicators and Performance Assessment Framework indicators, will formally be abolished.

However Copeland has been recommended by the Audit Commission to keep some of the former Best Value Performance Indicators as local indicators, where appropriate, and there will also be number of Indicators under the Local Area Agreement which are referred to below.

As the new performance framework is focused on outcomes and their delivery through stronger partnership working, the same indicators will be used for different local partners as relevant. Therefore, many of the indicators in this set will also apply to the police, primary care trusts and other local bodies.

Performance against each of the 198 indicators will be published annually by the Audit Commission, as part of Comprehensive Area Assessment and the Council will be scored against these 198 indicators.

The Committee is asked to bear these mind this committee's indicators which are identified in Appendix "A" when drawing up its work plan and reviewing progress of those items. The Cumbria Local Area Agreement also highlights 25 indicators and some "legacy" indicators that are left over from the previous Local Area Agreement and these will be included with an updated report to the next meeting of the committee.

At the moment the Appendix just shows the description of the relevant item. Work is developing across the country on how some of these indicators are to be measured and as that is progressed monitoring reports generated through the Coalvent system will be reported to the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

WORK PLAN

Officers have taken a look at the committee's work plan and considered how best it could best fit into the council strategic objectives and to help drive improvement where it is needed.

There are 5 meetings of the Committee the dates of which are 4 September 08, 30 October 08, 18 December 08, 5 March 09 and 30 April 09.

This meeting has the two items which are dealing with the Decent Homes Standard and this report which deals with National Indicators and the work plan.

It is suggested that the next two meetings deal with the following items.

The meeting on 30 October deal with the item on crime figures within the work plan. This is a large item that involves a wide range of indicators. The Police could be asked to come along to the meeting to explain how they see the national indicators being achieved. Similarly the West Cumbria Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership could be asked to give the West Cumbrian perspective.

The meeting on 18 December deal with Climate Change. This is another area where there are a number of indicators some of which are new. Indicator 188 Adapting to Climate Change will be a District Council responsibility. Cumbria County Council could be asked to give a presentation to the committee on the Climate Change Strategy that is being delivered for the whole of Cumbria. This may help Officers to start drawing up proposals for the Council's own strategy.

It is also suggested that a Task and Finish Group be set up to deal with "liveability". Liveability is about having a cleaner safer environment in which to live and work. It is about the attractiveness of the area and encouraging people to use outdoor facilities. It is about the streets and how clean they are, the parks

and open spaces, sports and play facilities, it is about welcoming town centres and shopping areas.

It is also about places for children and young people to play, places for pensioners to stroll, places for families to enjoy.

It would involve the issues on the work plan covering doorstep recycling, recycling and waste minimisation, quality of parks/green spaces and litter and detritus.

The Task and Finish Group could look at the council's performance in these services, how these fit into the county council services and also involve public involvement in assessing how the public view the council services perhaps in part through the Chamber of Trade.

The work plan could then be reviewed in December to look at which outstanding issues still needed to be dealt with.

CONCLUSION

The Committee is asked whether it is happy for the proposed meeting schedule or would wish something else. Overview and Scrutiny is a member led process and the work plan will work best when members drive the process.

National research has shown that improved use of scrutiny via a focused programme of work and officer support can help the council maintain its focus. Scrutiny work is best when planned appropriately, relates activity to corporate priorities and by doing so offers a useful element of challenge.

The officer suggestions detailed above are intended to help the committee focus more specifically on helping the council deliver its priorities.

List of Appendices

A) Performance Group National Outcome and Indicator Set

List of Background Documents:

None