

TEESDALE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REVIEW

Overview and Scrutiny March 2007

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**Proposal for the implementation of a comprehensive Performance
Management system engaging Members of the Council**



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Information in this document has been sourced from:-

- **Centre for Public Scrutiny**
- **IDEA**
- **LGUI**
- **Improvement Network**
- **Newcastle City Council**

INTRODUCTION

Local authorities today are faced with an immense and complex range of challenges that include the development of their new community leadership role, their involvement in Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and the comprehensive performance assessment (CPA).

These initiatives all rely on effective performance management measures for their success.

Basically, performance management is about good management.

Its only purpose is to deliver better quality services to local people.

Good performance management arrangements assist an organisation to:-

- *Achieve the goals of the organisation and the community by prioritising what gets done and ensuring there are sufficient resources to do it.*
- *Ensures the authority provides value for money.*
- *Motivate and manage staff.*

The IDeA comments that, through findings from CPAs and the IDeA Peer Review process, it appears that most councils recognise the importance of performance management but some struggle to develop effective performance management arrangements.

The Government White Paper, Strong Local Leadership, Quality Public Services makes it clear that poor management of performance can have serious consequences for services.

It is therefore essential that the Council reviews its procedures to ensure that we benefit from performance objectives.

Objective

To develop and implement a robust performance management system which is clearly understood and **used** by elected members, this will lead to more effective scrutiny and ultimately, improve the way the Council delivers its services.

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference was to review the current arrangements for reporting performance issues to members with a view to implement improvements, to engage more fully with members and to increase their participation in the scrutiny of service delivery.

The study aims to address the following key questions:-

- Do members receive sufficient support to understand their role in the performance process?
- Does this role provide Scrutiny/Executive with sufficient input into the performance process to ensure that service improvements are implemented? If not, what changes should be made?
- Are the arrangements for the involvement of Scrutiny, the Executive, Officers and Members in the process adequate to achieve improvement?
- Do members receive and discuss performance information in ways that are helpful to them?
- Does the information provided to scrutiny, the Executive and Council help members and other stakeholders understand the Council's performance?

The study, in addition to the terms of reference, will also consider the following detailed key objectives:

- To review the presentation of performance and action planning information for "red" performance indicators (PIs) and to recommend improvements to ensure effective scrutiny.
- To undertake a best practice review to identify improvements that could be made to the presentation of performance management information to ensure a fuller understanding of the performance management process by all members.

The initial review, undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Coordinating group makes the following proposals:-

- To set up a Performance Monitoring Group to identify areas of concern;
- to identify those Officers who should be interviewed to explain performance issues; and
- to discuss findings with Co-ordinating group, present findings to the full Overview & Scrutiny meeting for their examination comment and recommendation for further action.

Proposal

- a) That a Performance Monitoring Task and Finishing Group be established to comprise the 4 existing Overview and Scrutiny members of the Improvement & Performance Board.
- b) This group will select its own chair and vice chair person.
- c) The Chair/Vice Chair will sit on the Improvement & Performance Board to deal with Performance matters and to link with elected members and the Executive.
- d) In addition to this group the Assistant Chief Executive and the Chair/Vice chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will also be a members of this group.
- e) The group will:-
 - 1) study those areas which they feel need investigation or are requested to by the Improvement and Performance Board or any other source;
 - 2) will call the relevant officer to discuss those areas which need clarification;
 - 3) report their initial findings to the Overview & Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group to allow panel chairs to discuss findings with their respective panels; and
 - 4) report their findings and recommendations to the Improvement & Performance Board and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
 - 5) The Lead member will be invited to attend meetings of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
 - 6) The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can call a special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to discuss issues or concerns raised at the meetings of the Performance Monitoring Task and Finish Group.

All meetings are open to the all members of the public.