Harborough District Council

Performance Management Strategy

Version 1 August 2011

Introduction

Performance Management at Harborough District Council has been developing over a number of years, but principally since the Comprehensive Performance Assessment in 2004.

Our performance management principles, systems, roles and responsibilities, and procedures have developed based on experience and the needs for reporting results locally and nationally.

It is important that everyone who works for the Council recognises that they have a responsibility to improve performance. The Council links Business Planning to Team Plans and individual appraisals.

This document formulates all of the above into a single strategy; the aims of which are to identify a clear approach to performance management and ensure that this is embedded and applied at all key levels of the organisation.

Performance Management Principles

Our approach to performance management is to:

- Integrate and embed performance management into the culture of the Council.

- Achieve corporate objectives and priorities through effective performance management. This will involve deciding and communicating what needs to be done (aims, objectives, priorities and targets) and an action or improvement plan for ensuring that it happens

- Conduct annual appraisals to reflect delivery of corporate objectives and individual competencies.

- Carry out regular reviews on how effective our performance is against achieving our expected outcomes (performance measures)

- Ensure effective indicators and measurements of performance are captured through SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant & Timely) principles. This means that they must not be used for reporting, monitoring and justification only. They should be relevant, add value and contribute to decision-making processes.

- Identify best practice and manage performance accordingly to deliver improvements to services.

- To maintain and ensure that performance management reflects changes in social, environmental, legislative and local requirements.

Overarching Process

Performance Management is a key element in the Council's overall strategy to inform and help to plan, monitor and manage effective delivery of our services. The overarching process will help us to:

- Gain business intelligence and customer insight to allow informed decisions

- Focus on achieving the right outcomes for our community

- Track our progress in delivering our priorities, so that outcomes are delivered in line with local needs and expectation

- Improve the delivery of services and outcomes for our end users

- Provide an audit trail to demonstrate that our services deliver value for money

- Communicate and engage with staff and ensure that they understand how their individual roles fit into the overall framework.

Central to the Council's performance management framework is the TEN Performance Management System. All performance items identified as part of the Annual Business Planning Process, in Portfolio and Team Plans, are captured within the TEN system in order that progress can be monitored. These items include national and local indicators, planned actions, Equality Impact Assessments and risks. The TEN Performance Management system is available to all officers and Councillors via the Intranet.

Data that is currently captured in TEN includes:

- Planned Portfolio and Team Actions. Items arising from the Business Planning Process, delivered by service areas and teams within the Council.

- National Single List Data. Data that the Council is legally obliged to provide to Central Government.

- Local Indicators. Locally determined performance indicators and targets that are used to monitor and inform service delivery and outcomes. These indicators should not only measure effective service operation, but also customer satisfaction and complaints. It is important that that any problems with its operation are acknowledged and resolved satisfactorily and lessons learned used to improve service delivery. Indicators may also be provided from partners to ensure effective contract monitoring and to ensure that resources put into partnerships are identified and their effectiveness is measured

- Equality Impact Assessments. The Council is legally obliged to consider equality issues every time a new public strategy is written or revised, or there is a major change to service delivery.

- Risks. Strategic, business, operational and partnership risks that are identified in service plans.

- Major Projects. Projects with the potential to have a critical impact on the Council and the community.
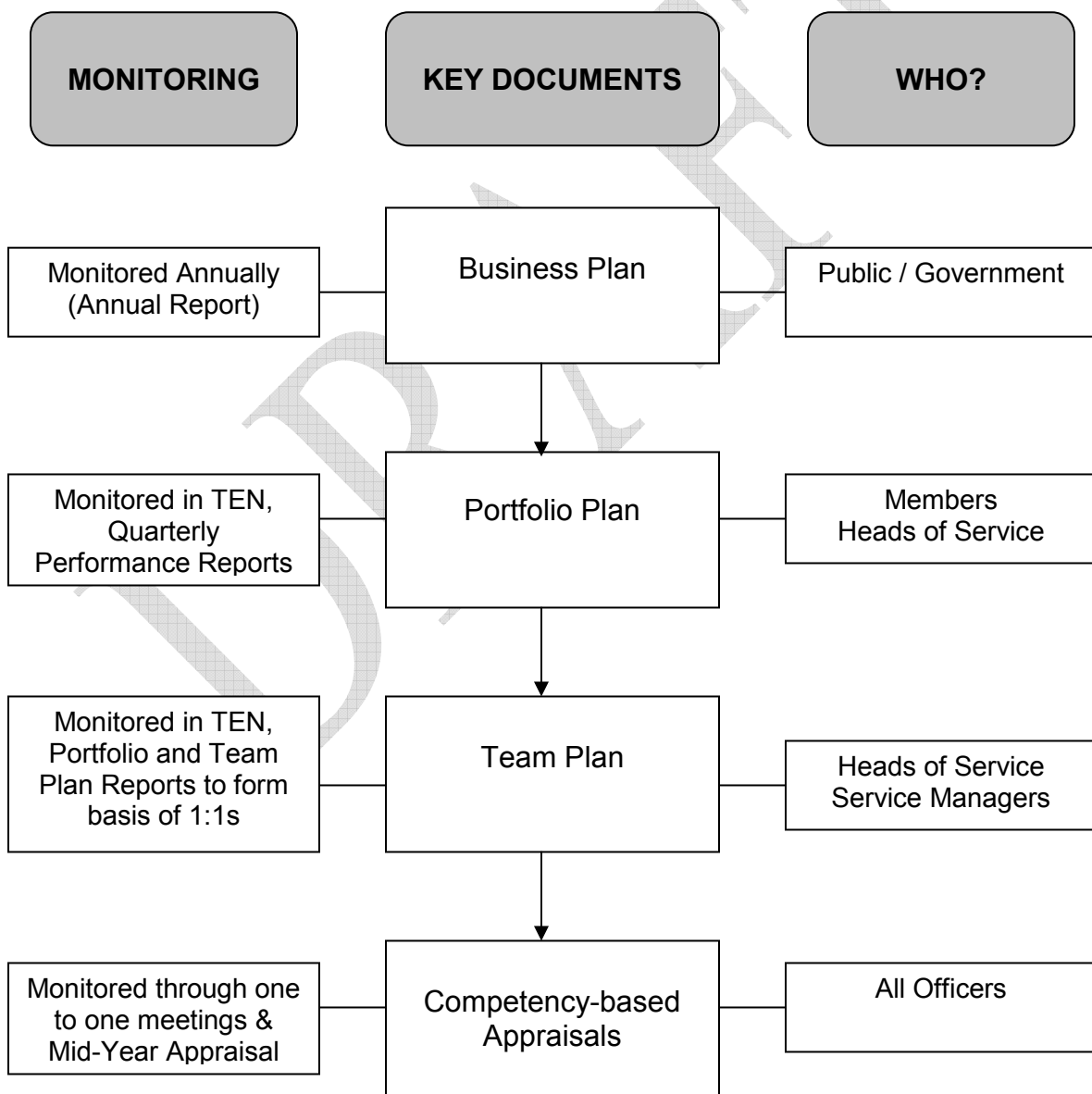
Progress against all items is monitored to ensure adherence to set timescales and effective risk management.

Benchmarking will take place where similar data is available from other Councils. This will support the active management of performance and encourage best practise to be adopted.

In order to maintain a robust performance management system, performance must be proactively managed by identifying and responding to trends and anomalies.

The diagram overleaf illustrates how the performance management process links in with the annual business planning process.

This system is designed to be flexible to incorporate and respond to unforeseen changes in legislation, corporate priorities and targets, and external budgetary pressures.

MONITORING	KEY DOCUMENTS	WHO?
Monitored Annually (Annual Report)	Business Plan	Public / Government
Monitored in TEN, Quarterly Performance Reports	Portfolio Plan	Members Heads of Service
Monitored in TEN, Portfolio and Team Plan Reports to form basis of 1:1s	Team Plan	Heads of Service Service Managers
Monitored through one to one meetings & Mid-Year Appraisal	Competency-based Appraisals	All Officers

Management of the Process

Successful management of the process is very much based around organisational culture and a positive attitude towards effective performance management. Underpinning this, the commitment of all officers, teams and service areas is required to achieve outcomes – rather than outputs - for the community.

Part of this process involves entering, monitoring and reviewing performance information held within the Council's centralised performance management system.

Performance management is co-ordinated by the Research and Performance Management Officer, who is responsible for promoting the importance of performance management, development of the TEN system, and assisting in its day to day operation throughout the organisation. This Officer reports regularly to the Head of Corporate and Development Services on Performance Management issues, and liaises as necessary with other agencies (e.g. audit). The Research and Performance Management Officer is supported by the Business Planning Assistant, and maintains a close working relationship with the Business Development and Transformation Officer, who collectively will conduct the annual performance management review as outlined later in this strategy.

Officers are required to submit information by the 15th of each month into the TEN system in order that all performance data is collated into one central area for review by the Performance Team. This review process identifies performance exceptions which are then fed into the Performance & Programme Group (PPG). This Group meets on a monthly basis, reflecting back on monthly and quarterly performance data as appropriate. Accountable officers are required to attend PPG Group meetings as and when necessary to report back on proposed positive actions to improve areas of underperformance. The outcomes of this Group review are then taken to Management Board by the Head of Corporate and Development Services to determine what action should be taken and which member of Management Board is responsible for ensuring delivery.

Service Managers, Team Leaders and Officers are accountable for performance management within their teams. This includes updating all reported indicators as required to set deadlines, and cascading and encouraging performance within their individual services.

Revisions to the strategy will be made as and when necessary, following an annual review of the performance management process using a self-assessment toolkit and will be supported by an action plan. This will ensure a culture of continuous improvement is developed within performance management to support the Council's underlying priority to deliver efficient, effective services.

Recognising Data Quality & Risk Management

Data Quality and Risk Management are integral components of the Performance Management Model.

A high level of Data Quality is required to ensure that performance and financial information that supports the decision-making process is accurate. This is also an

important consideration when sharing data with partnerships and Government. Relevant regard must also be paid to the Data Protection Act where necessary.

Risks are recorded and monitored as part of the Council's approach to performance management. This process is not about being risk averse, but recognising and managing risks and opportunities.

Separate strategies exist for both Data Quality and Risk Management, which contain more comprehensive information surrounding these two areas.

Harborough's Approach to Performance

Senior officers and Elected Members are key figures in driving forward a performance culture within the Council. Commitment at a senior level will set an example to cascade down and demonstrate that it is in everyone's interests to contribute and actively seek out, adopt, deliver and share good practice.

To support this, Members and managers must be clear about what kind of performance they expect and communicate the importance of everyone's contribution towards meeting corporate and community priorities.

It is vital to take a positive and transparent approach to performance management. Good performance should be recognised and acknowledged, and through a robust performance assessment, areas identified for improvement should be supported to demonstrate measurable progress.

It should also be recognised Council-wide that customer insight, satisfaction and complaints provide essential intelligence to support the performance management framework.

Informing & Supporting Members

The Executive has responsibility for the overall performance of our services, with Scrutiny holding the Executive to account.

Performance Reports are provided to the Executive on a quarterly basis.

Portfolio Holders are accountable for the performance of outcomes within their individual Portfolios, which are linked to corporate priorities.

The Council's corporate performance management system is available for Councillors to view via the Intranet. Following discussions with Members, TEN is now able to provide report summaries on any portfolio plan, eliminating the need to wait for officers to provide performance information. These online reports contain the most up-to-date data within the performance management system and Members are encouraged to use this facility.

Support with using the system can be provided by the Research & Performance Management Officer and the Business Planning Assistant.

To achieve the desired outcomes, Heads of Service are accountable for the delivery of service in line with individual portfolio and team plans. They should ensure that their business processes are fit for purpose, and that LEAN principles are applied to deliver effective services in the most efficient manner. By embedding positive performance

management in their service areas, individual officers will feel empowered to perform. Implementation of the strategy will ensure Members have sound performance information to contribute to the decision-making process.