Walsall Council

Audit Committee – 6 January 2014

Walsall Performance Management Framework

Summary of report

The report sets out the latest version of the Walsall Performance Management Framework at **Appendix One.** The main objectives of the Performance Management Framework set out how the council ensures the delivery of the council's vision, priorities and objectives, and secures effective and sustainable improvements for the benefit of our residents. It sets out the broad principles for how we approach our work and underlines the responsibilities of everyone working for the council.

Recommendations

Audit Committee are requested to review the Walsall Performance Management Framework giving consideration to how this framework provides effective performance management processes and to provide feedback for inclusion in the report to Cabinet.

Rory Borealis
Executive Director

19th December 2013

Governance

The Audit Committee has a key role in the council's governance arrangements by ensuring that an effective internal control environment is maintained and for considering arrangements for, and the merits of, operating quality assurance and performance management processes. The role includes an assessment of compliance with the council's governance processes and procedures. This is inextricably entwined with the council's overall corporate planning and performance activities. The responsibility for scrutinising the council's overall performance management arrangements lies with the Corporate Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel. The council has had such a framework in place since 2002 which is updated as required to reflect the evolution of the council and changes to the national regulatory environment. The learning from our experience of operating the framework and of the Working Smarter Programme is reflected in this version.

Resource considerations

Financial: Effective performance management is key to efficient service delivery and effective allocation of resources. The framework should inform the medium term financial strategy and budget setting, enabling services to develop measures to track activity and identify potential savings.

Changes to national requirements with the coalition government 'lifting the burden' together with service improvements through the delivery of Working Smarter initiatives have potentially led to the reallocation or reduction of dedicated resources to produce reports to assist with the management and oversight of performance.

Legal: There is no legal requirement but the framework supports good governance and helps to evidence that the council meets its statutory and regulatory responsibilities.

Staffing: The performance framework underlines the importance of a well motivated workforce which is achieved through:
- Having a clear and constant purpose that everyone can work towards
- Empowering staff to give their customers the help they need in the way that they need it
- Acting on blockages that are stopping them from doing their work
- Listening to their views and involving them in change
- Being open and transparent about performance in a way that promotes learning rather than apportioning blame

Learning since the changes to national reporting requirements and from the continuing inspection regime in some areas mean that there is a better understanding of how services are performing and that data and information regarding performance is automatically captured as part of systems and processes and used more intelligently by services then previously. The level of resources needed by directorates to deliver their responsibilities as outlined in the framework (section 4.3) will vary and they need to consider how best to meet these requirements with guidance and support from the corporate team.

Successful delivery of the framework will require staffing changes within the corporate team, including changes to some existing job descriptions. The team has listened to directorates and is adapting its role to support, for example transfer of social care and inclusion and children performance staff into the business. Further assessment of required capacity to meet demand will regularly reviewed to identify any shortfalls that impact on delivery.

Risk Management

A thorough understanding of how the council is performing is essential to identifying and effectively managing risks and will be reporting risks through this process.

Equality implications

The Performance Management Framework helps ensure the delivery of the Council's equalities duties, through promoting a thorough understanding of the needs of our diverse communities and robust action planning to close identified gaps.

Consultation

The framework has been presented to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and there has been discussions with the AD forum as well as specific conversations with the Chief Executive and key governance services including legal, hr, internal audit and finance.

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Corporate Governance

Performing and Improving

Performance Management Framework

Appendix 1

Contents

1. Introduction

The council operates to serve the people of Walsall and as it is funded by public money must always work to make sure resources are used responsibly and efficiently, that spending is done wisely and savings maximised wherever possible. Using available service information to measure how services are performing, identify where improvements can be made and taking appropriately and timely action to address areas of underperformance will help the council ensure resources are used efficiently and responsibly.

Whilst the council operates to serve local people it does so in the context of the wider environment and must understand the implications of changes in environment on how the council and partners operate.   To this end the council's approach to performance management has undergone review, reflecting the significant changes that have occurred since 2010 with the change of government and learning from internal change initiatives. The removal of the requirements of the National Indicator Set enabled services to focus more specifically on their purpose from the perspective of customers, whilst also continuing where necessary to meet the reporting and inspection requirements placed on them from regulatory bodies or central government departments.

In these instances it is important that the council's obligations are fully met to ensure the council's reputation and standing is not compromised.   In these areas there are often measures that are collected nationally and this provides an opportunity to benchmark against statistical or regional neighbours.   This can provide additional information for services to utilise and analyse when considering the levels of performance being achieved and to capture learning in relation to systems and processes.   This can be used alongside customer data and their experience of services as this provides valuable qualitative information.

1.1 Purpose – why have a framework?

 "A system must have an aim. Without an aim, there is no system. The aim of the system must be clear to everyone in the system." Deming

In general terms the framework serves as a support or guide for the delivery and improvement of services to ensure the appropriate level of governance is maintained.

This framework:
- Creates clarity and constancy of purpose for all services
- Builds an intelligence led / informed approach to strategic and operational decision making - **no change without profound knowledge of what needs to change**
- Helps to promote a cultural shift to learning and improvement through trust and transparency
- Champions and creates learning loops for continuous improvement (based on check, plan, do)
- Clearly defines the responsibilities of all engaged in delivery of council services

- Helps to identify and manage risk for the council

The main objectives of this framework are to set out how the council ensures the delivery of the council's vision, priorities and objectives, and secures effective and sustainable improvements for the benefit of our residents. It sets out the broad principles for how we approach our work but is not overly prescriptive, recognising the different needs of different areas at different times.

1.2 Definition

Performance management comprises the systems, processes, structures and supporting arrangements established by management to identify, assess, monitor, and respond to performance issues, and to allow actions to be taken which will contribute significantly to the achievement of agreed priorities and ambitions. In order to successfully deliver as an organisation corporate performance and risk management must be of upmost relevance to our strategies, objectives and goals, and assist the organisation in making informed decisions.

Embedding effective performance and risk management will:

- Ensure goals are prioritised and resources are allocated effectively
- Help improve services and outcomes for local people
- Provide and environment that helps motivate staff as they are aware of what is expected from them and understand how they contribute to the delivery of council priorities.
- Provides Leadership with assurance regarding service delivery and a mechanism to take corrective action where performance is poor
- Ensure the council and partners achieve what they set out to do
- Provide a strong evidence base for improved decision making and the effective use of resources

1.3 Scope

Recognising that there are different demands placed on services from both statutory and regulatory requirements and changes in customer demand, it is for individual service areas to decide how they wish to deliver the principles set out in this document with support and quality assurance from the corporate centre as appropriate. For this reason this document sets out broad principles and expectations but will be supported by specific procedures or reporting arrangements devised by services, service clusters or directorates, and quality assured by the Corporate Policy and Assurance Team. This enables them to fulfil their responsibilities regarding reviewing and monitoring how they are performing and where improvements can be made to ensure our organisational priorities and objectives are met. Together with this overarching framework, this suite of documents will form the Walsall Performance Framework.

In order to achieve the overall vision for Walsall, the council must also work effectively with its partners, and for this reason our Vision, Values and Priorities are those agreed with partners operating across Walsall and services must properly consider partnership working when devising delivery plans and apply the same standards of performance management when trying to achieve shared outcomes:

Where this document refers to 'customer', it is meant in the widest sense as anyone who accesses council services, whether or not through choice, other terms such as 'resident' 'service user' 'client' or 'stakeholder' may also be appropriate to particular scenarios, but for the sake of simplicity 'customer' has been used as a universal term for any person with whom the council has to deal and who is impacted by our work.

This framework applies to all directly managed services of the council. For those that commission services it is important that they ensure the service providers meet any information requirements to enable services to track the performance measures developed in local frameworks and that contractual arrangements cover the performance of providers.

2. Our Vision and Values

The framework is designed to ensure delivery of our vision, objectives and priorities in a way that is underpinned by our values. These are expressed in the Corporate Plan 2013 and summarised in figure 1 below.

Figure 1- vision, priorities and values

Vision
Walsall is a great place to live, learn, work and invest

Objectives

| Staff feel empowered and involved in change | Improved services to residents and business in Walsall | The Council saves money |

Priorities

| Supporting business to thrive and supporting local people into work | Improving Health and well being, including independence for older people | Improving Safeguarding, Learning and the Life Chances for Children and Young People | Creating Safe, Sustainable and Inclusive Communities |

Support for delivery

Values

| The community is at the heart of what we do. We practice inclusion and value diversity. | We empower ownership at all levels across the partnership to enable the swift and effective delivery of services | We are committed to all our stakeholders and champion innovation and enterprise | Working positively in partnership, we deliver opportunities and prosperity for people within the wider community | We manage available resources responsibly for the benefit of our community |

Our approach is one of 'outside-in', we put ourselves in our customers shoes to understand things from their perspective, recognising that failure to meet what they value leads to poorer services and pushes up costs through an increase in repeat demand. Priorities have been developed based on understanding the needs of customers and communities.

Our objectives have been developed as part of our application of systems thinking and the development of our approach to change. It is recognised that staff that feel empowered and recognise how they contribute to achievement of priorities are more motivated which leads to improvements in services for local people and ultimately saves the council money as processes and systems are streamlined and efficiency increases.

The Vision, Priorities and Values have been developed in partnership with other organisations in the borough that have a role in meeting the needs of local people. We work collaboratively on a day to day basis with our partners to provide vital services to residents.
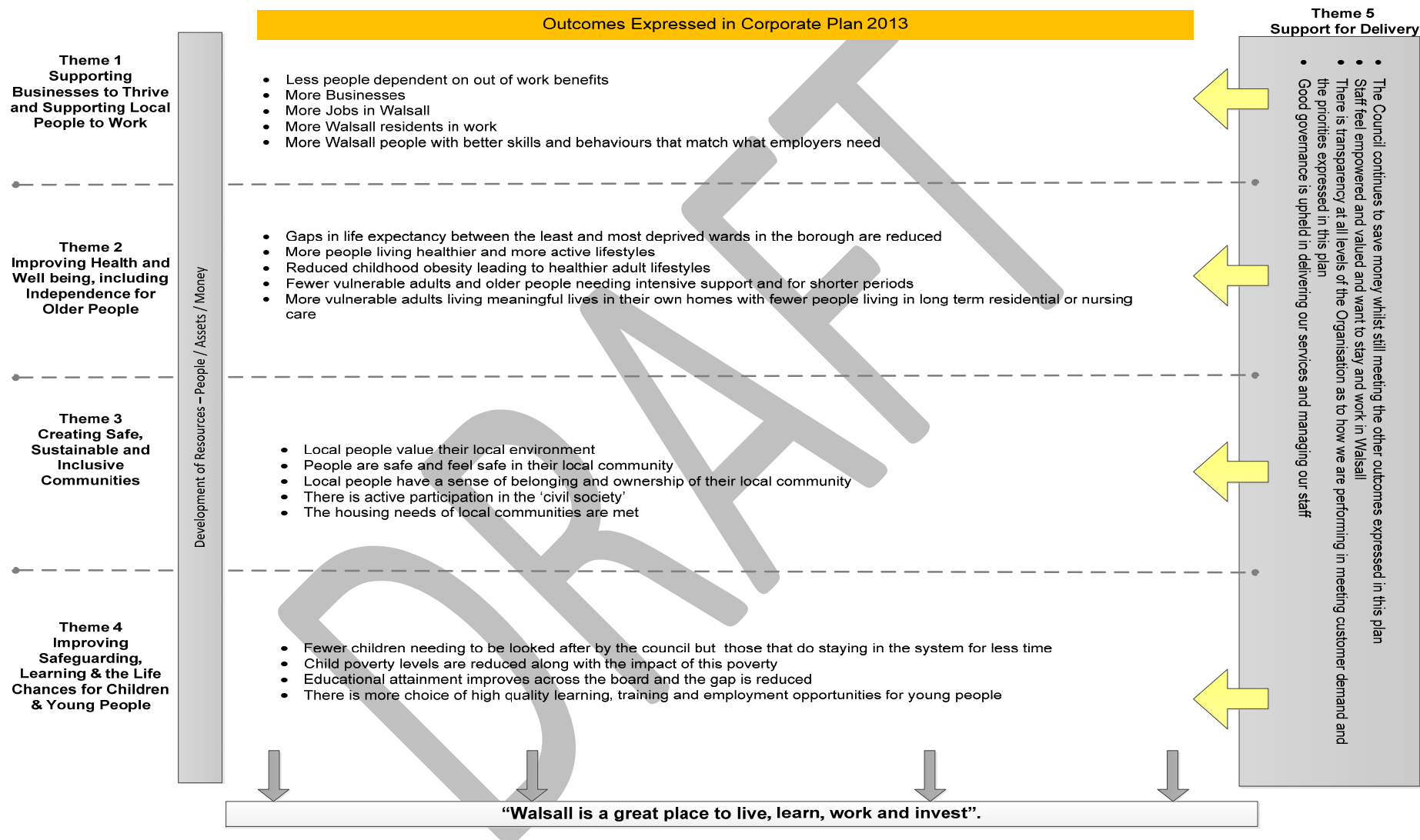
3. Outcomes Focussed, Improvement Driven

For each priority a set of outcomes have been developed which describe the difference that it is hoped will be made. Measuring against these outcomes will provide an overview of how successful delivery of the corporate plan has been and will be reported publically. The outcomes are depicted in Figure 2.

Tracking and measuring the delivery of outcomes is underpinned by measures monitored by services that will focus on the quality and timeliness of service delivery from a customer perspective. These measures enable services to understand and improve systems and processes so that performance improves.

To track the delivery of outcomes it is necessary to ensure there are sufficient amounts of service data and information that is of robust quality to provide assurance that activity is addressing the challenging areas (priorities) of the borough and services are as efficient as possible to ensure resources aren't being wasted and customers are receiving the services they need. To achieve both an operational and a strategic view of delivery there is a need to develop measures at different reporting levels that connect frontline services with the strategic direction set by the organisation's leadership.

Appendix 1

Figure 2 – Walsall Council Outcomes.

Outcomes Expressed in Corporate Plan 2013

Theme 5 Support for Delivery

Theme 1 Supporting Businesses to Thrive and Supporting Local People to Work

- Less people dependent on out of work benefits
- More Businesses
- More Jobs in Walsall
- More Walsall residents in work
- More Walsall people with better skills and behaviours that match what employers need

Theme 2 Improving Health and Well being, including Independence for Older People

- Gaps in life expectancy between the least and most deprived wards in the borough are reduced
- More people living healthier and more active lifestyles
- Reduced childhood obesity leading to healthier adult lifestyles
- Fewer vulnerable adults and older people needing intensive support and for shorter periods
- More vulnerable adults living meaningful lives in their own homes with fewer people living in long term residential or nursing care

Theme 3 Creating Safe, Sustainable and Inclusive Communities

- Local people value their local environment
- People are safe and feel safe in their local community
- Local people have a sense of belonging and ownership of their local community
- There is active participation in the 'civil society'
- The housing needs of local communities are met

Theme 4 Improving Safeguarding, Learning & the Life Chances for Children & Young People

- Fewer children needing to be looked after by the council but those that do staying in the system for less time
- Child poverty levels are reduced along with the impact of this poverty
- Educational attainment improves across the board and the gap is reduced
- There is more choice of high quality learning, training and employment opportunities for young people

Development of Resources – People / Assets / Money

- The Council continues to save money whilst still meeting the other outcomes expressed in this plan
- Staff feel empowered and valued and want to stay and work in Walsall
- There is transparency at all levels of the Organisation as to how we are performing in meeting customer demand and the priorities expressed in this plan
- Good governance is upheld in delivering our services and managing our staff

"Walsall is a great place to live, learn, work and invest".

3.1 Measuring Performance

Previously the national context created the need for councils to report on specific performance indicators for government purposes. This created a command and control system in which the measures, particularly the targets against those measures created a de facto purpose as effort was placed into improving performance against the targets. Consequentially, as measures are divided into functions the targets drive each function to deal with a customer in ways that meet their targets, not customer needs and so the method of reporting on performance is constrained by the measure.

The removal of many of the national reporting requirements that were target focussed created the opportunity to reconsider performance measures and reporting. Building on the growing recognition that targets only tell part of picture from specific perspective our evolving approach is to identify 'purpose' from a customer/client perspective and derive the measures from this. This generates a natural appreciation for development of both system measures (i.e. is service delivery within acceptable boundaries) and qualitative measures based on experience and perspective of the customer.

In many circumstances the measure reported at the strategic level may be the same as before (e.g. Number of 'X' completed within timescale) but at service level timescale for completion of tasks by team or individual team members can be examined alongside levels of demand over a period of time to identify peaks and troughs and possibly flaws or waste within systems or processes that need to be addressed. Collectively this data is the source of the strategic level measure, illustrating the connection between frontline delivery and delivery of strategic priorities.

3.2 Planning Service Delivery

Priorities are delivered by services taking action to address the needs of customers. Measures provide an indication of how well the service is being delivered but it is important that there is clarity regarding what is to be delivered, by whom and to what timescale and cost. Therefore delivering planning beneath the Corporate Plan level is an important component of the performance framework.

Whilst there is no prescriptive style for the development of a business plan they should:
- Connect the vision and priorities, developed based on an understanding of the needs of customers and communities to action being taken and planned (actual service delivery)
- Provide staff with sufficient detail so they know what is expected of them – use SMART objectives with clear measures of success, connecting to outcomes where possible
- Consider and allocate the available resources (you can only deliver what you have the money and capacity to do)
- Connect activity with measures at both the operational and the strategic level

Where services are commissioned contract arrangements must ensure commissioner receives sufficient details regarding delivery of the commissioned service.

3.3 Performance Hierarchy

The translation of outcomes to delivery creates a hierarchy or pyramid of information, activity and resources – the successful delivery of such a cascade is often referred to as 'the golden thread'. It is important if staff are to be motivated and feel valued that they understand how they contribute to delivery of outcomes and to addressing the priorities of customers and communities. This golden thread is depicted in the diagram below

Figure 3 – Performance Pyramid
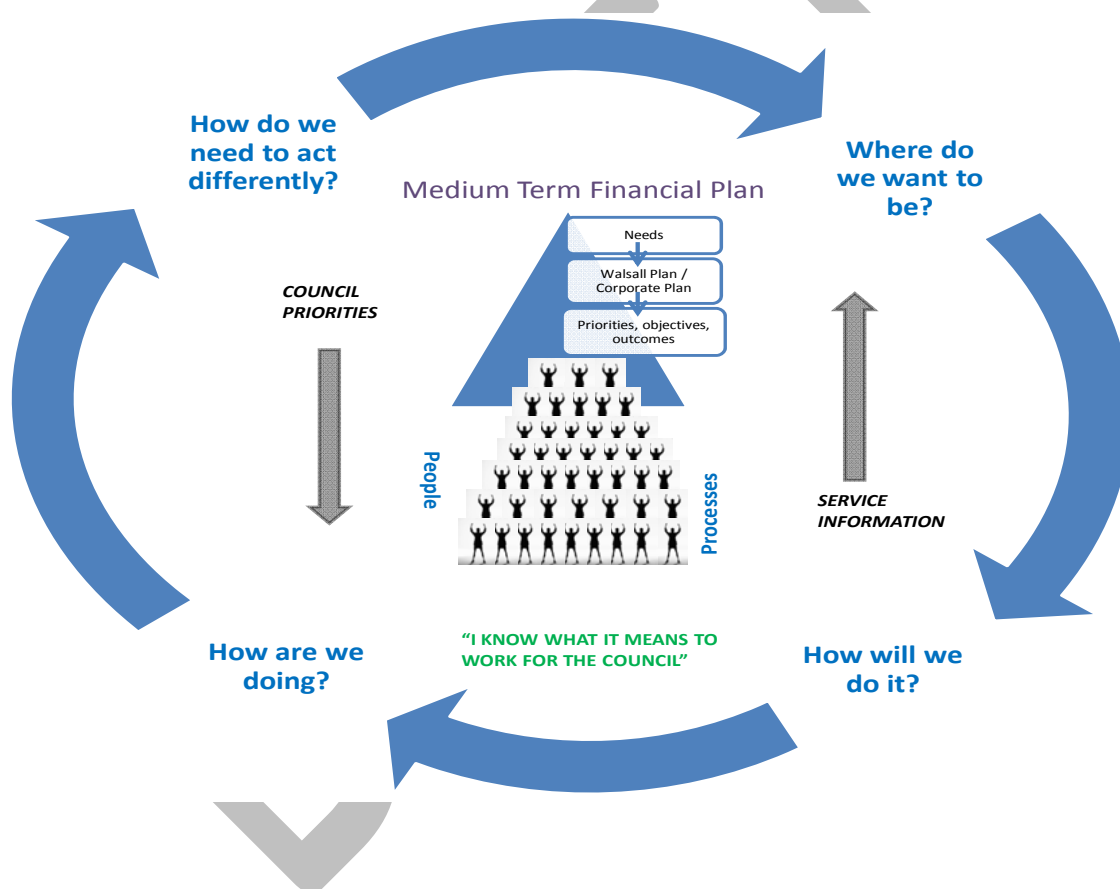
3.4 Data Quality

The quality and accuracy of data and information is of paramount importance as it identifies the needs of customers and so informs the priorities of the council and partners and is also used for measures in tracking the efficiency of services and the delivery of outcomes. Data and information that is of poor quality may lead to the council targeting the wrong priorities, skew the measures and mislead services and the leadership about the success being

achieved in delivering against outcomes. Services must take sufficient action to improve data quality where possible and ensure it is maintained at the highest level possible.

Every employee that has responsibility for recording data in a council system has a responsibility for the quality of that data and there is an additional responsibility placed on those that collate and analyse data to ensure calculations and accurate and that definitions of measures are applied consistently and accurately.

3.5 Improvement and learning cycle

The Council's approach to improvement is based on a continual improvement and learning loop.   This is a perpetual cycle as delivery of services is based on:

- **Where do we want to be?** An understanding of the Vision and strategic plans of the organisation (these detail the priorities) – These plans are based on a detailed understanding of the local and national context and how this impacts on the council, partners and our customers.
    - Our Vision describes where we want Walsall to be, our aspiration for Walsall.
    - Our Values describe how we will operate to both as a council and a partnership to deliver the Vision and priorities
    - Our Priorities are areas identified, based on analysis of available data and intelligence, which need to be improved if we are to achieve our Vision. These are further broken down into more specific ambitions.

- **How will we do it?** The design and delivery of services to address the priorities (addressing the issues that most impact on customers);

    Strategic and delivery plans articulate the actions and activity that need to be delivered to address the priority areas and ambitions. The outcome sought, i.e. the identified change / improvement required shapes both the actions identified and the measures that will be used to track levels of performance.

    These and all level of planning must take into account the resources required to deliver the activity and actions identified from both a monetary and employee perspective.   They must consider the purpose of activity from a customer perspective, understand and reflect the flow of work and recognise the workforce that is needed to deliver the service. In recognising the workforce needed strategic leaders need to ensure there are the right conditions to support staff to achieve better outcomes for customers.
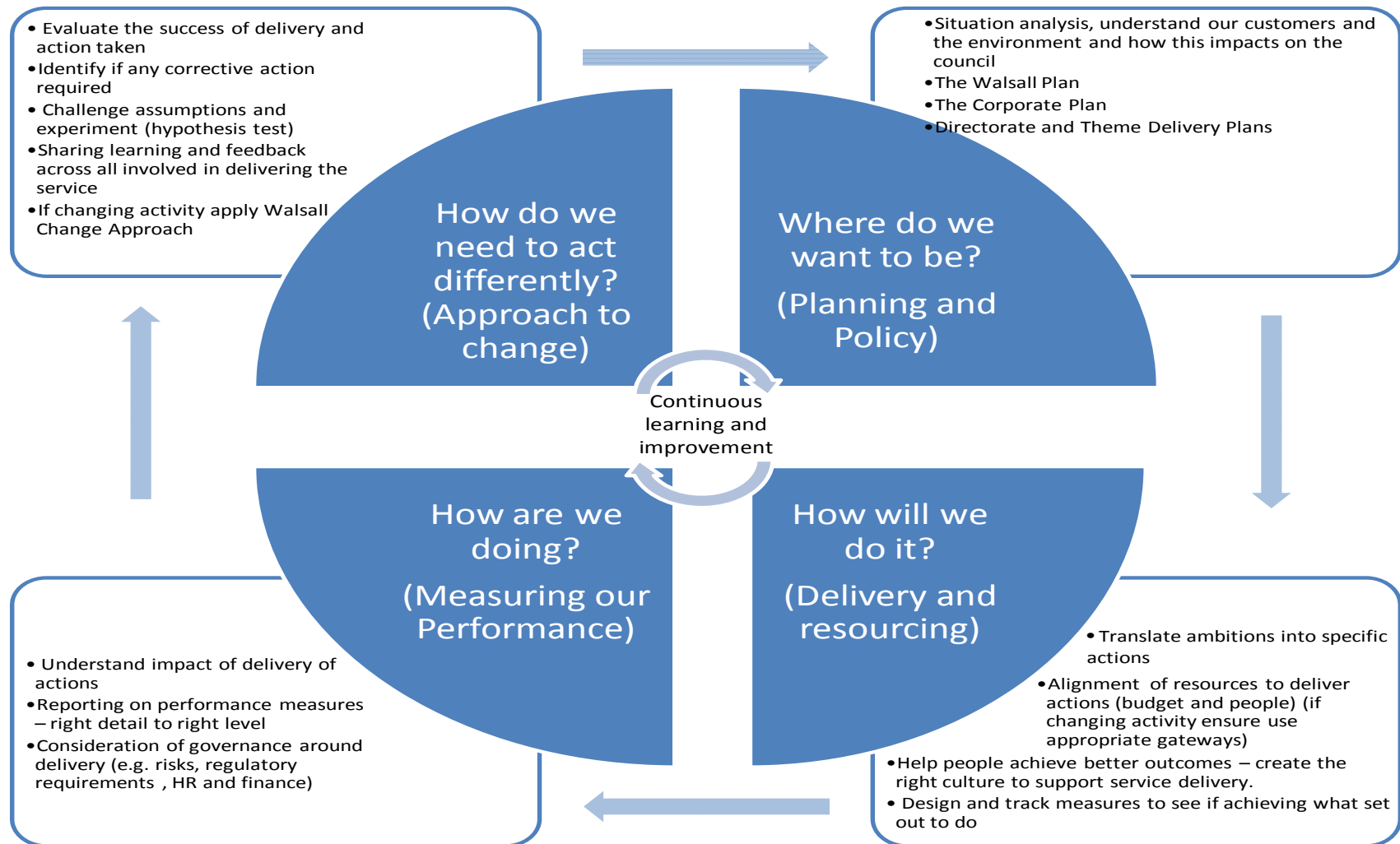
- **How are we doing?** Measuring and assessing the impact of the service delivery both in terms of providing customers with what they need (addressing organisation priorities) and ensuring services are efficient and effective (delivering the organisations objectives); and

- **How do we need to act differently?** based on the assessment of service performance in the previous step a thorough evaluation of how well services are performing, the identification of any required corrective action and the testing of any changes to improve delivery prior to full implementation.

Using performance information and a holistic understanding of the service being delivered it is important that there is an evaluation of the success and impact that has been made as this helps identify any glitches or waste in the system so that changes to delivery can be tested before being fully implemented. If changes are to be made the Walsall Change Approach must be followed. The Walsall Change Approach is the collection of tools and techniques that can be used when implementing a change – this ensures the appropriate technique is applied regarding the level and complexity of the change required.

Identified changes to delivery need to be consider in the context of the organisations strategic plans (do they meet the priorities of the organisation) and of the environment (political, economic, social etc.) the council is operating in. The impact of delivery may have changed the priorities and focus of the council and changes in the environment may also affect the way in which we operate (e.g. reducing budgets). This then informs the planning of service delivery and the cycle continues. Figure 4 illustrates this process

Appendix 1

Figure 4 – Learning and Improvement Cycle

- Evaluate the success of delivery and action taken
- Identify if any corrective action required
- Challenge assumptions and experiment (hypothesis test)
- Sharing learning and feedback across all involved in delivering the service
- If changing activity apply Walsall Change Approach

- Situation analysis, understand our customers and the environment and how this impacts on the council
- The Walsall Plan
- The Corporate Plan
- Directorate and Theme Delivery Plans

How do we need to act differently? (Approach to change)

Where do we want to be? (Planning and Policy)

Continuous learning and improvement

How are we doing? (Measuring our Performance)

How will we do it? (Delivery and resourcing)

- Understand impact of delivery of actions
- Reporting on performance measures – right detail to right level
- Consideration of governance around delivery (e.g. risks, regulatory requirements , HR and finance)

- Translate ambitions into specific actions
- Alignment of resources to deliver actions (budget and people) (if changing activity ensure use appropriate gateways)
- Help people achieve better outcomes – create the right culture to support service delivery.
- Design and track measures to see if achieving what set out to do

4. Roles and responsibilities

All employees are responsible for how they operate and perform. They are jointly responsible for the delivery of services, the delivery of outcomes and how well services perform it terms of meeting the needs of our customers and the delivery of our priorities. Executive Directors are responsible for ensuring there are performance management arrangements in place that provide them with assurance about the way services are performing. Recognising the individuality of service areas and themes there is no prescriptive way to do this but Executive Directors must fulfil this responsibility to the satisfaction of the Chief Executive, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Councillors.

4.1 Role of Managerial Leadership

Managers at all levels of the organisation have a vital role to play in the way the organisation learns, develops and improves in order to deliver services to residents and businesses. Managers are expected to:

- **Lead by example**
  - Work in a collaborative and productive way, exhibiting the behaviours expected of all employees.

- **Understand the system**
  - This requires profound knowledge you don't get this from just performance reports, inspection and audit carried out for someone on your behalf and reported to a board meeting but from actively observing and participating in the work. In particular you need to understand variation and the nature of this variation. This doesn't just apply to the area you are specifically responsible for but the wider operations that, taken together, create the system that achieves the customer's purpose.

- **Act on the system and continuously review it**
  - Workers control the work and it is the role of the manager to support them by controlling the way the work works. This includes taking responsibility for all the things outside the control of workers that have a bearing on how the system works and ensuring the system is flexible enough to cope with predictable variation.

- **Remove blockages and barriers**
  - Use the knowledge of how the work works and listen to staff to act on the things that are stopping them from achieving the customer's purpose and creating waste.

- **Champion the council's values**

-   Lead by example and show these values are part of how you work, not something that you pay lip service to. Challenge yourself and others where you fall short of meeting these values.

-   **Encourage the sharing of learning**
    -   Talk openly about your experiences - good and bad - so that others may learn from them. Use the profound knowledge you have developed of the system in which you work to share ideas for wider improvements outside your direct control.

-   **Challenge peers**
    -   Constructively challenge practice amongst your peers to ensure they are working in a way consistent with the organisation's objectives, priorities and values.

-   **Encourage a culture of continuous improvement**
    -   Don't treat this is a one off exercise to identify a set of improvements and efficiencies that can be quickly 'cashed-in' before reverting back to old management styles. This is a new culture, a way of working that demands, and allows for, constant and remarkable improvements.

-   **Promote understanding of the organisation's objectives amongst the workforce**
    -   Create clarity and constancy of purpose by actively promoting the council's objectives, priorities and values and helping staff to see how their role aligns to those.
    -   Provide staff with feedback, though formal appraisals and other mechanisms on how they are performing and check they are aware of how they contribute to the purpose, priorities and objectives of both the services they provide and the organisation as a whole.

4.2 Role of Employees

Every employee in the Council will be expected to:

-   Deliver quality services, working closely with the customer to ensure their needs are met.

-   Take ownership of customers' problems and the resolution of problems.

-   Identify and remove 'waste' (steps in our processes which add no value to the work) from the system which are unnecessary and do not help the customers.

-   Understands how delivery aligns to the organisations objectives.

-   Work collaboratively and flexibly.

- Recognise and understand how they contribute to the purpose, priorities and objectives of both the services they provide and the organisation as a whole.

- Actively participate in performance appraisals with line manager to assess individual contribution to all of the above

- To abide by the Staff Code of Conduct at all times.

4.3 Role of Services and Themes

There is no prescriptive framework dictated by the 'centre' for Services and Themes to follow. Where employees and leaders understand the work and the purpose they are working towards, the measures they need to understand to help them manage the work, will develop. There is an expectation that a Theme or Service performance framework will encompass the following:

- Support delivery of any national frameworks applicable to that area.

- Provide intelligence to support informed decision making and business improvement within that area. Qualitative measures as well as quantitative measures.

- Use intelligence to challenge and improve performance.

- Engage with the Business and Partnership Intelligence Team to create an effective network of analytical skills, information sharing to ensure intelligence is joined up and learning is shared.

- Use intelligence to identify and effectively manage and mitigate risks

- Work with the Policy and Assurance Team to seek support and constructive challenge on meeting the above responsibilities.

4.4 Role of the Policy and Assurance Team (previously Corporate Performance Management)

- **Maintains links** to the Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Plan for strategic alignment and report on delivery

- Organisational **oversight** and **independent assurance** for Members, Cabinet, Chief Executive and CMT regarding how well the council is meeting purpose and potential risks associated with external regulation and inspection regimes.

- Provides support to service in preparing for external regulation, peer review and inspections, both in supporting logistics and providing assurance regarding expected outcome.

- Provides independent **critical friend challenge** to services and CMT to help develop the right measures to ensure they align to purpose and are easily and efficiently captured and reported to inform decision making.

- **Supports** services, service clusters and directorates in the development of their individual framework and approaches, assessing effectiveness and through the collation and effective interpretation of combined data and intelligence to provide strategic view of how the organisation is performing against both customer demand and external requirements.

- **Signposting** services to existing datasets and interpretation of information and intelligence.

- Provides co-ordinated **horizon-scanning** for the organisation, considering the potential impact of proposed changes to environment on our customers and services.

- **Coordinates** an effective network of analytical skills to help ensure intelligence, including horizon scanning is joined up and fully utilised without any duplication.

- **Advises on the balance** of existing regulatory and national frameworks with those that support delivery of local priorities through new ways of working.

- **Inform** identification and management of corporate risks.

- Facilitates the sharing of **corporate learning.**

- Facilitate the engagement of partners across **Walsall Partnership** to ensure the safe and effective sharing of intelligence to produce a fuller understanding of the needs of people in Walsall to inform decision making.

4.5 Role of Elected Members

Full Council is ultimately responsible for the performance of the council and is responsible for setting policy and the budget envelope for the delivery of priorities as agreed by the Council's and expressed in the Corporate Plan.

Cabinet members are accountable for the performance of services within their portfolios, they work closely with executive directors to monitor the performance of services within their individual portfolios and then jointly as Cabinet to receive intelligence that informs their decision making. They know, and are responsible for, what services are doing in order to maximise, improve or turn around poor performance.

Audit Committee, through its delegated powers, contributes to the council's governance by ensuring an effective internal control environment is maintained. In addition it reviews mechanisms for the assessment and management of risk and considers arrangements for and the merits of operating quality assurance and performance management processes. It has delegated power to consider the arrangements for performance management processes.
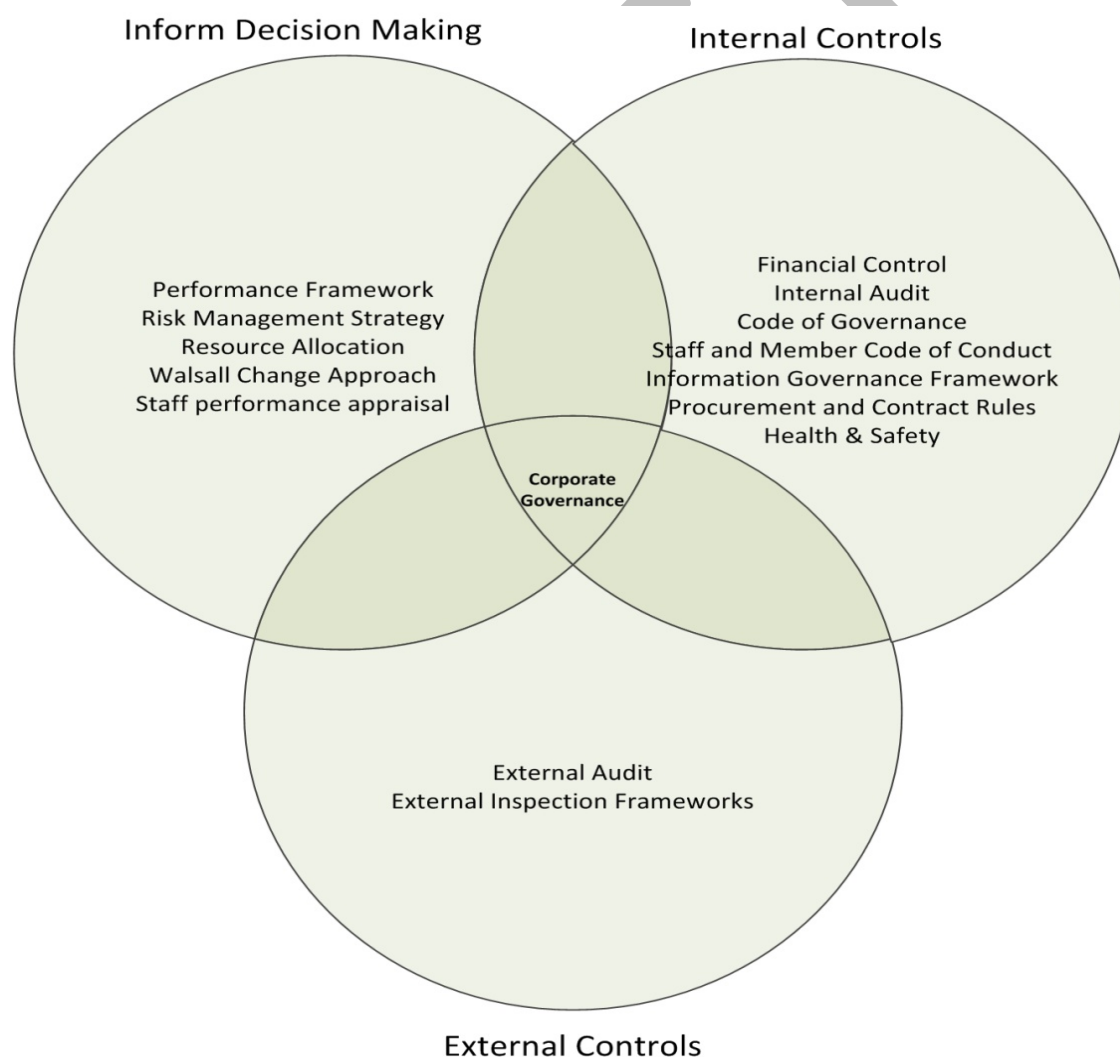
Scrutiny Panels are involved in performance management in a variety of ways. This includes involvement in the development, monitoring and review of policies. Scrutiny panels are responsible for holding Cabinet to account for the delivery of the council's strategic priorities as expressed in the Corporate Plan.

Ward Councillors, as community leaders and representatives of specific geographical areas, play a key role in consulting the community they serve and in championing the concerns and priorities of residents. This in turn influences and informs corporate priorities.

5. Links to wide corporate governance

Governance supports the council in delivering outcomes by ensuring there are high standards of conduct and leadership that ensures the council does the right things, in the right way, for the right people in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

The Corporate Governance Framework informs and controls how decisions are made and implemented and the Corporate Governance Group is responsible for the strategic review of governance and the identification and delivery of activity to ensure the risk of governance failure is minimised. There are three key components of good governance as depicted in the diagram below.

Inform Decision Making

Internal Controls

Performance Framework
Risk Management Strategy
Resource Allocation
Walsall Change Approach
Staff performance appraisal

Financial Control
Internal Audit
Code of Governance
Staff and Member Code of Conduct
Information Governance Framework
Procurement and Contract Rules
Health & Safety

Corporate
Governance

External Audit
External Inspection Frameworks

External Controls

Walsall's local code of governance has 6 key fundamental principles which underpin corporate governance. These are:

1. Focusing on the purpose of Walsall Council and on outcomes for the community, and creating and implementing a vision for the local area.

2. Elected Members and Officers working together to achieve a common purpose with clearly defined functions and roles.

3. Promoting Values for Walsall Council and demonstrating the values of good governance through upholding high standards of conduct and behaviour.

4. Taking informed and transparent decisions which are subject to effective scrutiny and managing risk.

5. Developing the capacity and capability of Elected Members and Officers to be effective

6. Engaging with local people and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.

The Performance Framework is an important part of the wider corporate governance framework which comprises the systems and processes, culture and values, by which the authority is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community.

5.1 External Controls

The Council as a public sector organisation is also governed by a wider legislative and statutory framework and a considerable part of how this is governed is via external inspections. These provide a valuable function in holding up a mirror to the organisation so it can see how it is performing in relation to this principle. Good inspection reports provide assurance that the council is functioning well, poor inspection reports should be seen as a catalyst for change.

Although the inspection regime has reduced significantly over the last 3 years many aspects still continue in other forms, for example the appraisal of how the council manages its resources and achieves value for money is accommodated within the External Auditors (Grant Thornton) assessment under their ISA 260 report and their report on financial resilience.

Other Inspections and external regulation continue across different areas, for example:

- Under the new Children's Services inspections framework (November 2013), Ofsted inspects :
  - Services for children in need of help and protection

- Services for children looked after
- Services for care leavers
- Services provided by local authority adoption and fostering agencies
- The effectiveness of the Local Children Safeguarding Board (LSCB)

Ofsted also inspects:
- School Improvement functions and arrangements
- Individual schools
- Individual Child minders and childcare providers
- Individual children's centres
- Individual residential homes

- HM Inspectorate of Probation inspects youth offending work carried out by our Youth Justice Service

- In Adult's Social Care, inspection is carried out by the Care Quality Commission and it focuses on care settings – treatment care and support services for adults in care homes and in people's own homes (both personal and nursing care); whilst the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) collects data returns from local authorities.

- The Care Quality Commissions also regulates services provided by the NHS , including treatment, care and support provided by hospitals, GPs, dentists, ambulances and mental health services; and services for people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.

- The Food Standards Agency carries out inspections of our enforcement services.

- The Surveillance Commissioner inspects the council's use of RIPA powers.

- The Information Commissioner has the power to carry out compulsory inspections on information governance compliance where concerns are raised either due to the volume of complaints or a result of a serious incident.

6. The Walsall Change Approach

The Walsall Change Approach provides a set of tools, resources and techniques for services to apply to help to improve the likelihood of successful delivery and alignment to the vision and priorities.

6.1 Principles

To support successful business change, activity will:
- Be aligned to the Council's vision, priorities and objectives and be based on the purpose (from a customer perspective) of the service being changed
- Be based on clear and robust intelligence
- Identify and manage the risks associated with change
- Allocate appropriate resources including skills and expertise
- Identify interdependencies with other activity to avoid silo working
- Create ownership by communicating, involving and enabling staff, as early and openly and as fully as is possible to ensure they feel they can influence and shape the change and feel empowered throughout the process.

All business change initiatives, aligned to the priority Themes contained in the Corporate Plan come under the umbrella of the Council' Working Smarter Programme.

The Working Smarter Programme Board provides governance and direction of the Programme. The Board comprises of the Chief Executive, Executive Directors along with assurance from the Heads of Finance and Programme Delivery and Governance. Executive Directors lead on the achievement of outcomes for each Theme and officers will be invited to the Board as and when required.

Consideration of significant change initiatives and their approval to proceed rests with the respective Theme Lead in the first instance, where the Theme Lead will gain assurance of the purpose, measures and methods being proposed and will report to the Board details of the proposals and how it will support the agreed priorities and outcomes.

The decision to proceed will rest with the Working Smarter Programme Board based on overall priorities and resources and in conjunction with advice and guidance from the Executive Director responsible for Working Smarter and the Business Change team.

6.2 Gateway for Change Approval

Step 1 – **Change identified** – a need for change.

Step 2 – **Purpose** - Activity Leader identified and defines the purpose of the work. They gather information and knowledge about the change supported by Business Change colleagues where needed.

Step 3 – **Consideration to Proceed** - Feedback and consideration by the Theme Lead and discussed with the Working Smarter Lead Executive.

Step 4 – **Decision to Proceed** - Theme Lead to present the proposed change to the Board. Decision to proceed will result in incorporating the activity into the Working Smarter Programme having considered risks, interdependencies, priorities and outcomes.

Step 5 – **Governance Process** – progress against outcomes and measures will be reviewed at the Working Smarter Programme Board and communicated to all interested parties.