Walsall Council

Audit Committee – 25 June 2009

Walsall Performance Framework

Summary of report

The report sets out the latest version of the Walsall Performance Framework (formally the Corporate Integrated Planning and Performance Framework) at **Appendix One.** The Framework details the way in which various performance management processes interlink and demonstrates how services and resources are managed. It places citizen outcomes at the heart of the planning process and so supports the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan.

Recommendations

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

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Rory Borealis
Executive Director (Resources)

15 June 2009

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. Former versions of this framework were brought to Audit Committee in March 2005, March 2007 and again in March 2008. The learning from our experience of operating the framework is reflected in this version.

Resource considerations

Financial: Effective performance management is key to efficient service delivery and effective allocation of resources. The performance framework informs the medium term financial strategy and vice versa. Officers from within finance were engaged in consultation activity on the framework.

Legal: There are no legal or constitutional implications to this report.

Staffing: Workforce Planning, Equalities and Health and Safety are all integrated into this framework and performance management impacts on all staff through the IPM process. Whilst much of performance management activity takes place at a strategic level, real changes will only be made by individuals changing the way they work; this framework integrates all this activity to demonstrate and promote the 'golden thread'.

Performance and risk management issues
Risk: Risk management underpins effective planning and performance management. The management of risk and opportunity is an integral part of every planning process within the framework.

Performance management: The Walsall Performance Framework underlines our approach to performance management in Walsall and provides clarity to our members, staff, partners and regulators. The document itself does not change any of our individual performance related policies but brings them all together in a framework that promotes best practices and aligns approaches across the Council.

Performance Management arrangements are a key component of the Organisational Assessment within CAA, with two key lines of enquiry (KLOE) on managing performance and other criteria running throughout the use of resources KLOEs.

Regular review and development of the framework is good practice. This year's review has taken into account of the introduction of Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) as well as internal work carried out reviewing performance management processes in consultation with managers across the authority and the main changes for this edition are:
- A simpler, more user friendly name; an email poll of participants revealed that the preferred name was the 'Walsall Performance Framework.'
- A new chapter on our stakeholders (Chapter 4)
- Greater integration with the Sustainable Community Strategy (Table 1 and Diagram 2).

Equality implications
The Performance Management Framework helps ensure the delivery of all the Council's core values, including equalities. Free from discrimination and harassment is one of the 7 citizen outcomes identified in the Corporate Plan and the performance framework links this into everything we do; through a thorough understanding of the needs of our diverse communities and robust action planning to close identified gaps we can help delivery of this outcome. Equalities is also a key theme with the new Comprehensive Area Assessment which the performance framework supports.

Consultation
Managers across all services and partners were consulted as part of activity to review performance management processes which has informed the revisions to the Walsall Performance Framework.

Background papers
Report to CMT and previous reports to Audit Committee in relation to performance management arrangements.

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1. Introduction

The Walsall Performance Framework replaces the document previously known as the Corporate Integrated Planning and Performance Framework (CIPPF). The main objectives of the Performance Framework are to set out how the council structures and manages its performance now and for the future and to ensure that this approach facilitates the delivery of the council's vision, aims and objectives, and secures effective outcomes that benefit our customers.

The Walsall Performance Framework and its component parts are integral to the council's business operations and inextricably linked to other strategic and operational activities. Robust and comprehensive performance management is recognised as essential to delivering continuous improvement and operational and corporate excellence. This process helps to raise and maintain, at a high level, the performance levels of individuals, services and the authority as a whole to ensure the delivery of high quality, cost effective services. Performance management continues to make a significant contribution to delivering the council's improvement vision and transformation agenda. Service transformation sits at the heart of our 2009-12 Corporate Plan. Performance management arrangements scored 3 out of 4 as part of the 2008 corporate assessment.

The starting point for delivering good services in Walsall is ensuring a clear understanding of our borough, its communities and the challenges that lie ahead. The Walsall Partnership (WP) continues to use partners as a key source of data for this and other purposes. In addition, the council continues to use a wide variety of similar data in planning and delivering its services. Key aspects are contained in the document "People and Place Perspectives; A Picture of Our Community".

The council's service delivery takes place within the context provided by the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) which sets out the broad objectives and vision for the community to 2021. The SCS reflects the contribution that Walsall Council and its partners expect to make to improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of our area; both immediate and longer-term. The Local Area Agreement (LAA) is the delivery plan for the SCS and is consequently aligned to various other plans: joint partnership plans, council plans and individual partner organisations' plans. The council's contribution and commitment towards the delivery of the SCS, the LAA and the shared vision for the borough is set out in the Corporate Plan and in the priorities and outcomes framework contained within it. Increasingly council services work in partnership with other organisations to deliver quality services. To do this effectively we need to be sensitive to the priorities and objectives of our partners and align these with ours as much as possible. Our Performance

Framework supports this requirement, and the influence, importance and role of partners are all acknowledged within this document.

The council has also established a set of five core values – respect, integrity, equality, listening and excellence - which set out the expected behavioural characteristics for the organisation and which shape our unique culture. These have been developed further by drafting a set of core corporate customer care competencies as part of our project to Improve Customer Experience (ICE). All services are committed within the ICE project to developing and sustaining service standards and ensuring the needs of all our service users are considered and provided for. The council is providing customer care training for all our front line staff, placing the customer at the heart of our approach to service delivery.

Ultimate responsibility and accountability for the performance of the council rests with elected members. Political leadership is key to ensuring effective performance management through clear vision and focus on improvement, with personal and collective accountability. All councillors play a vital role in managing performance and delivering services that meet the needs of our communities - as do all employees.

Managing performance effectively requires a commitment to data quality alongside co-ordinated planning and review systems. The diagrams throughout the document are intended to present key elements of the process clearly and simply. This framework will continue to be refined and developed to reflect the evolving organisation, our partners and the environment within which we operate in the spirit of continuous improvement. The transition to the national indicator set (NIS) and the move from the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) to the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) is having a significant impact currently. Whilst we recognise the need to work effectively with partners to collectively bring improved services to the community that we serve, the CAA brings fresh challenges to all providers of public services. We will continually monitor the impact of the CAA framework and process and review this information so it is reflected in our performance framework, ensuring that it remains fit for purpose and a recognised tool for supporting the delivery of our services.

All staff should have an understanding of how the Performance Framework works and how their individual efforts contribute to the planning, implementing and monitoring of service delivery. Service planning, a key aspect of this framework represents the way in which the overall strategy, objectives and resources are allocated and translated into detailed targets and actions. This then informs the individual performance management (IPM) meetings held with all staff. Managers and elected members need an understanding of the Performance Framework to enable them to exercise their leadership role in relation to all its aspects and are

supported in doing this by the performance management training modules that have been developed.

Ensuring the framework continues to live and breathe is vital to its success so we welcome feedback and practical ideas. **If you would like to share your views please contact Helen Dudson on 01922 653524.**
Paul Sheehan Chief Executive

2. Vision

Vision:

The council is fully committed to the vision of the borough developed jointly with our partners through the Walsall Partnership, and published in the **Sustainable Community Strategy** (SCS) based on the shared knowledge of all local partners of the borough, its localities, and of its people, and on the views of our communities expressed through consultation.

Our vision is that Walsall will be a great place to live, work and invest, where

- people get on well with each other
- growing up is as good as it can be and young people fulfil their potential
- people are our strength and have the skills and attitude required by employers
- people consider the impact of what we do now on future generations
- people feel proud to live, having high quality distinctive design of buildings and spaces
- there is a wide range of facilities for people to use and enjoy
- everyone has the chance to live in a home fit for their purpose and for the future
- people can get around easily and safely
- there are more and better jobs for local people
- people support and look after each other
- people can live an independent and healthy life.

We are a key player in the Walsall Partnership, and central to the achievement of our shared vision, to 2021, and of the priority actions set out within the SCS and the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

Delivering our commitment to the shared vision – the Walsall Outcomes Framework

To ensure that our own five directorates, and the services, teams, and individual members of staff working within them, all focus their resources, their energy and their attention in this direction – on the things that matter most to

local people, the things that will take forward our common agenda to achieve our shared vision, the council has adopted a ten-strand outcomes framework which forms a key part of our **Corporate Plan**.

This framework is reflective of the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters agenda – being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic well-being, and the seven outcomes developed by the Commission for Social Care Inspection for the assessment of adult social care: improved health, improved quality of life, making a positive contribution, economic well-being, freedom from discrimination or harassment, personal dignity and respect, and the exercise of choice and control. However, the council sees our Walsall Outcomes Framework as one which reflects the whole spectrum of our activity, and all our services and functions.

This framework is built around **seven citizen outcomes**, each focussed on action to ensure that citizens are:

- Healthy
- Safe and secure
- Aspiring and achieving
- Enjoying a high quality of life – clean, green, and mobile
- Active - contributing to their communities
- Financially and materially secure - achieving economic well-being
- Free from discrimination or harassment

These citizen outcomes are customer facing, and are be backed up by **three internal drivers** to provide the momentum to deliver the council's commitment to the SCS, the shared vision, and our citizen outcomes. These are:

- Effective use of resources
- Delivering quality services and meeting customer expectations
- Taking forward the transformation agenda

These provide a clear focus on the key issues, priorities and outcomes for the people of our borough, and also ensure that there is a focus on our own internal systems and processes.

Together with the shared vision, this ten part outcomes framework provides clarity of purpose to our directorates, services, teams and to individuals working for the council, whether in front-line services or back office functions. Building on practice in previous years, our citizen outcomes and internal drivers are 'made real' by a set of **pledges**, key actions which the council promises to deliver during the year ahead, to provide clear evidence of our commitment. These pledges are delivered via directorate plans and service action plans and are monitored by Cabinet throughout the year.

The table below shows how our Council Outcomes align to the partnership vision.

Table 1: Alignment of Outcomes

SCS vision *Walsall will be a great place to live, work and invest where ….*	The Council's citizen outcomes	SCS Outcomes	SCS Perspectives – People, Places, Prosperity
People get on well with each other	Citizens are free from discrimination or harassment Citizens are active - contributing to their communities*	Developing strong and dynamic communities Feeling safe and being healthy	People People
Growing up is as good as it can be and young people fulfil their potential	Citizens are aspiring and achieving	Creating opportunity and potential Education, knowledge and skills Working with employers to create jobs and opportunities	People Prosperity Prosperity
People are our strength and have the skills and attitude required by employers	Citizens are financially and materially secure - achieving economic well-being	Working with employers to create jobs and opportunities Research and development Education, knowledge and skills	Places Prosperity Prosperity
People consider the impact of what we do now on future generations	Citizens are enjoying a high quality of life – clean, green and mobile	Accessible and sustainable places for business	Prosperity
People feel proud to live, having high quality distinctive design of buildings and spaces	Citizens are enjoying a high quality of life – clean, green and mobile	Vibrant town and neighbourhood centres	Prosperity
There is a wide range of facilities for people to use and enjoy	Citizens are enjoying a high quality of life – clean, green and mobile	Improving the quality of our environment	Places

		Improving access to employment, services and facilities	Places
		Vibrant town and neighbourhood centres and neighbourhoods	Prosperity
Everyone has the chance to live in a home fit for their purpose and for the future	Citizens are enjoying a high quality of life – clean, green and mobile	Improving housing choice	Places
People can get around easily and safely	Citizens are safe and secure	Feeling safe and being healthy	People
	Citizens are enjoying a high quality of life – clean, green and mobile	Improving access to employment, services and facilities	Places
		Accessible and sustainable places for business	Prosperity
There are more and better jobs for local people	Citizens are financially and materially secure - achieving economic well-being	Research and development	Prosperity
		Vibrant town and neighbourhood centres	Prosperity
		Working with employers to create jobs and opportunities	Prosperity
People support and look after each other	Citizens are healthy	Developing strong and dynamic communities	People
		Feeling safe and being healthy	People
People can live an independent and healthy life	Citizens are healthy	Feeling safe and being healthy	People
		Improving housing choice	Places

3. What is Performance Management?

Effective performance management ensures delivery of the organisation's aims and objectives, and drives forward service improvements. Performance management provides the framework that turns our ambitions into delivery; it is about:

- Understanding the impact and outcomes of our activities
- Accurately collecting, recording, analysing and reporting measures which deliver those outcomes, ensuring information is reliable, consistent and comparable
- Understanding what needs to be done to improve these outcomes
- Taking the necessary actions
- Checking and measuring that the actions lead to improvement
- Learning from what has or has not gone well and making changes where necessary

Or in its simplest form, Performance Management is about identifying and taking action to make things better than they would otherwise be.

Performance management is a key component of delivering the council's vision, priorities, pledges and the new outcomes framework. The Performance Framework provides a robust process to monitor, review and take appropriate corrective action that will constantly drive performance forward. It is about achieving the objectives and vision of the council and the communities it serves, whilst incorporating national performance management systems introduced by government (e.g. CAA) and being responsive to changes in these systems.

Co-ordinated planning and review systems are key to managing performance effectively and the Performance Framework sets out how our various planning processes interlink and demonstrates how services and resources are managed. It sets out the minimum "must do" within which the council will operate and is underpinned by functional frameworks and processes that provide further guidance and protocols. A variety of tools are available to all services to support their achievement of continuous improvement in service delivery so that ultimately the council achieves optimum customer satisfaction.

Understanding customer feedback in all forms is key to ensuring services provide customers with the highest standards and performance management plays a fundamental role in this. In addition to taking steps to engage hard to reach groups (e.g. vulnerable groups, BME communities), analysing the future needs of customers will also ensure the council is responsive to and able to meet changes in demands for council services and that it adapts accordingly. We work closely with

partners to analyse information, run regular citizen panel consultations and engage various stakeholder groups when developing policies. For example, our green spaces strategy and the development of the annual budget setting process involved discussions with representative groups such as business sector representatives, the disability forum, friends of parks groups and members of Local Neighbourhood Partnerships (LNPs).

The Performance Framework outlines the council-wide mandatory processes that are in place to drive forward continuous improvement. These may be built on by individual directorates to address specific issues. The performance boards at directorate and strategic level ensure that the minimum requirements are delivered and that any additional processes will support and compliment this corporate approach to performance management.

The project office sits within the transformation and performance management service as effective programme and project management is key to the delivery of transformation and service improvements. We have developed a corporate approach to programme and project management that is based on best practice and has been adapted to meet the needs of the organisation. Projects are monitored via performance boards, with strategic projects being reported to cabinet on a quarterly basis.

4. Our Stakeholders

A stakeholder is anyone who can affect, or can be affected by an organisation's actions. A thorough understanding of who our stakeholders are, what they need and what they can contribute is therefore essential.

Diagram 1 below explains how Walsall Council puts stakeholder satisfaction at the heart of its operations; as the starting point for understanding what we need to deliver and as the end point for measuring the success of that delivery.

Diagram 1
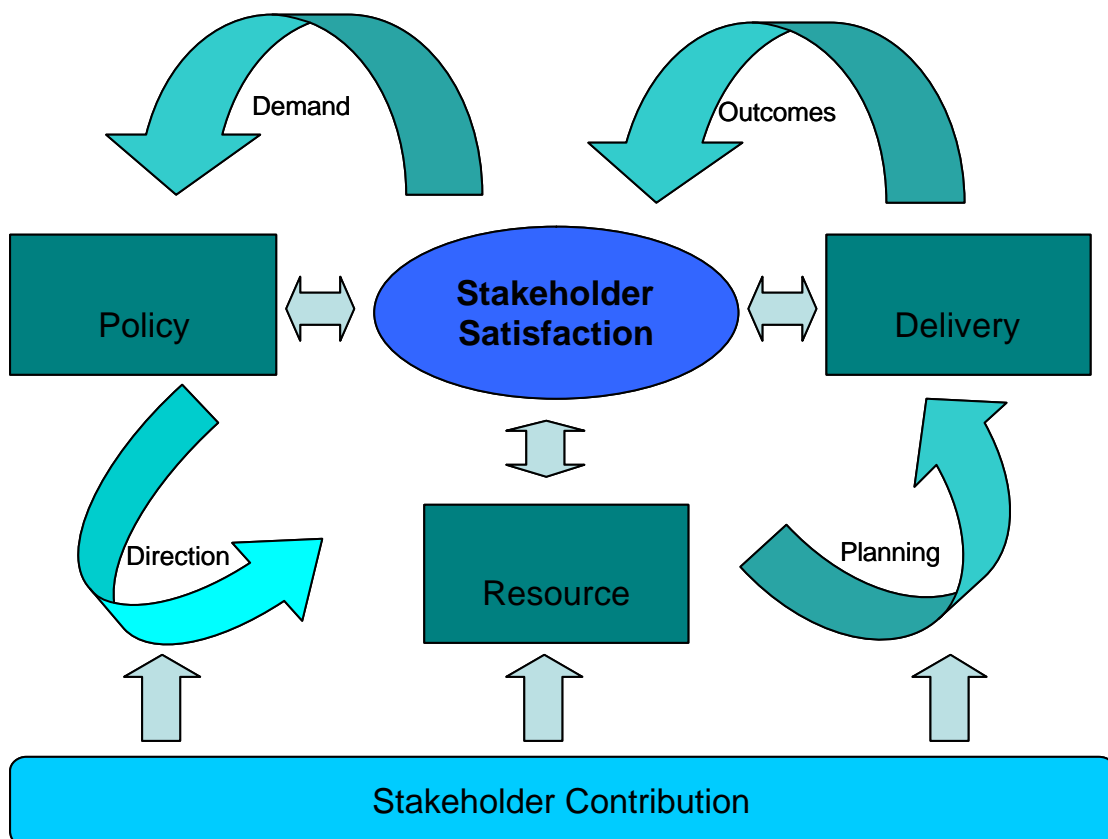
Listening to what people want, analysing their needs and plotting trends for future requirements (e.g. population changes) helps the council, through its elected members, set the policy framework within which we operate.

This in turn informs our resourcing requirements (e.g. money, staff, skills, technology, buildings etc.) which set the boundaries for activity planning by services.

The delivery of services shaped by stakeholder input should result in increased stakeholder satisfaction which will then affect future demand and so on.

It is also important to note that stakeholders, as well as driving our activity are also contributors to the success of that delivery with roles and responsibilities within it.

Stakeholders have varied and often conflicting needs and wishes, and also contribute and engage in different ways. In addition, an individual could fit into a number of different stakeholder categories that have a degree of overlap between them. The council is required to balance the expectations of different interests in the most appropriate way but in order to do this we first need to understand what those expectations are.

Listed below are different categories of stakeholder, along with a brief summary of their impact.

Resident- Anyone living within the boundaries of Walsall is a resident of Walsall Council and relies on the council for things such as street cleaning, road maintenance, public lighting etc. These are things that impact on everybody in the borough but which people expect to be done rather than ask to be done at a specific point.

Citizen- Whilst formed of the same group as residents (anyone living within the Walsall boundary), it is useful to separate out citizens from residents due to the role they play when acting as citizens, with specific civic responsibilities. These responsibilities are around democratic engagement and compliance with laws and bye-laws.

Customer- A customer may be both a resident and a citizen but in this role they are actively seeking out a council service they wish to use. Customers could be seeking advice from the First Stop Shop or using a leisure centre or library. The important difference from someone acting as just a resident is that they choose to use this service and the standard of that service will impact on whether they continue to use it or seek other means and on their overall satisfaction with the council.

Service-User- A service-user, like a customer, seeks a council service but the distinction here is circumstances mean they are reliant on that service and the council has a statutory obligation to provide it. Vulnerable Adults needing support from social care or children in need are the clearest examples. The move towards a more 'personalised' social care system, given individuals

greater choice in how to receive their care is making service-users into a role more like a customer.

Community groups- These are groups who represent a particular community with the borough, either based on locality or on common factors such as ethnicity, religion, age or disability. As representative groups they exert influence over council policy on behalf of their members and have a duty to proactively engage in support of their interests.

Lobby Groups- Similar to community groups but these groups represent a particular issue rather than a group of people and may operate at a local, regional or national level.

Partner agencies- Organisations such as the Police or the NHS are part of part of Walsall's Local Strategic Partnership and have jointly agreed with the council to work together towards a shared vision, as set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy and delivered through the Local Area Agreement.

Contracted agencies- These organisations deliver services on the council's behalf through a contract awarded via a competitive procurement process. They have contractual obligations to fulfil and are answerable to the council for those but they also exert their own influence over service direction and expect the council to honour its side of the contract. The largest example of this currently operating is the Education Contract with Serco to run the schools in the borough.

Workforce- Employees are the council's most valuable resource and recruiting and retaining the right people with the right skills and keeping them motivated and working together towards the same vision is essential to the delivery of that vision.

Unions- As representatives of the workforce, the council works closely with Unions on staffing issues

European and central government- The council operates within the legislative framework laid out by European and central government who via enactments can dictate what we must do, and what we can do and cannot do.

Regulatory bodies- Inspection bodies such as the Audit Commission or the Care Quality Commission will assess the council's performance and make recommendations for improvement. Feedback from these bodies forms an important part of our future planning as we seek continuous improvement and better outcomes.

Voluntary sector- A number of charities operate within the area and their work overlaps with the services provided by the council.

Local business- As employees of our residents, payers of non-domestic rates and providers of services and manufacturers of goods, local businesses

are essential to the economic welfare of our residents and the regeneration of the borough.

Neighbouring authorities- Issues do not always conform to the artificial boundaries of local government authorities, nor can we operate in isolation from our neighbours; their actions impact on us and our actions impact on them so we need to be aware of what each other is doing.

Utility companies- These organisations provide essential services to our residents. Cooperation is needed with things like road resurfacing or regeneration projects as well as close working over issues such as climate change or fuel poverty.

Political parties- Most of our elected members are part of a national political party and are accountable to that party and its core values. National policy developments from these parties therefore impacts on policy at a local level as well.

5. The Performance Framework

Working with all elements in the Performance Framework ensures performance management and continuous improvement are embedded into the Walsall Council culture. This framework sets out the links between all activities as illustrated in Diagram 2 below.

This illustrates the relationship between the various elements which, when jointly managed, ensure continuous improvement and effective service delivery. Behind these key components lies a variety of data sources that services access to ensure service outcomes and improvement are achieved.

The information used to effectively manage performance needs to be reliable, consistent and comparable, both over time and between different authorities. In order to secure robust data quality we have developed a corporate quality assurance policy which outlines our approach to data quality and provides support to services to ensure their data collection processes are fit for purpose. Our approach to quality assurance was developed through our work with the Audit Commission and is now recognised as good practice.

The management of risk at all levels within the organisation is an integral part of seizing opportunities, delivering excellent services and achieving continuous improvement. It is recognised that strategic risk management, as a corporate self diagnostic tool, provides demonstrable evidence of the organisation's capacity to improve and enables us to seize and maximise our opportunities. Hence risk and opportunity management is an integral part of every planning process within this framework.

Diagram 1- The Walsall Performance Framework

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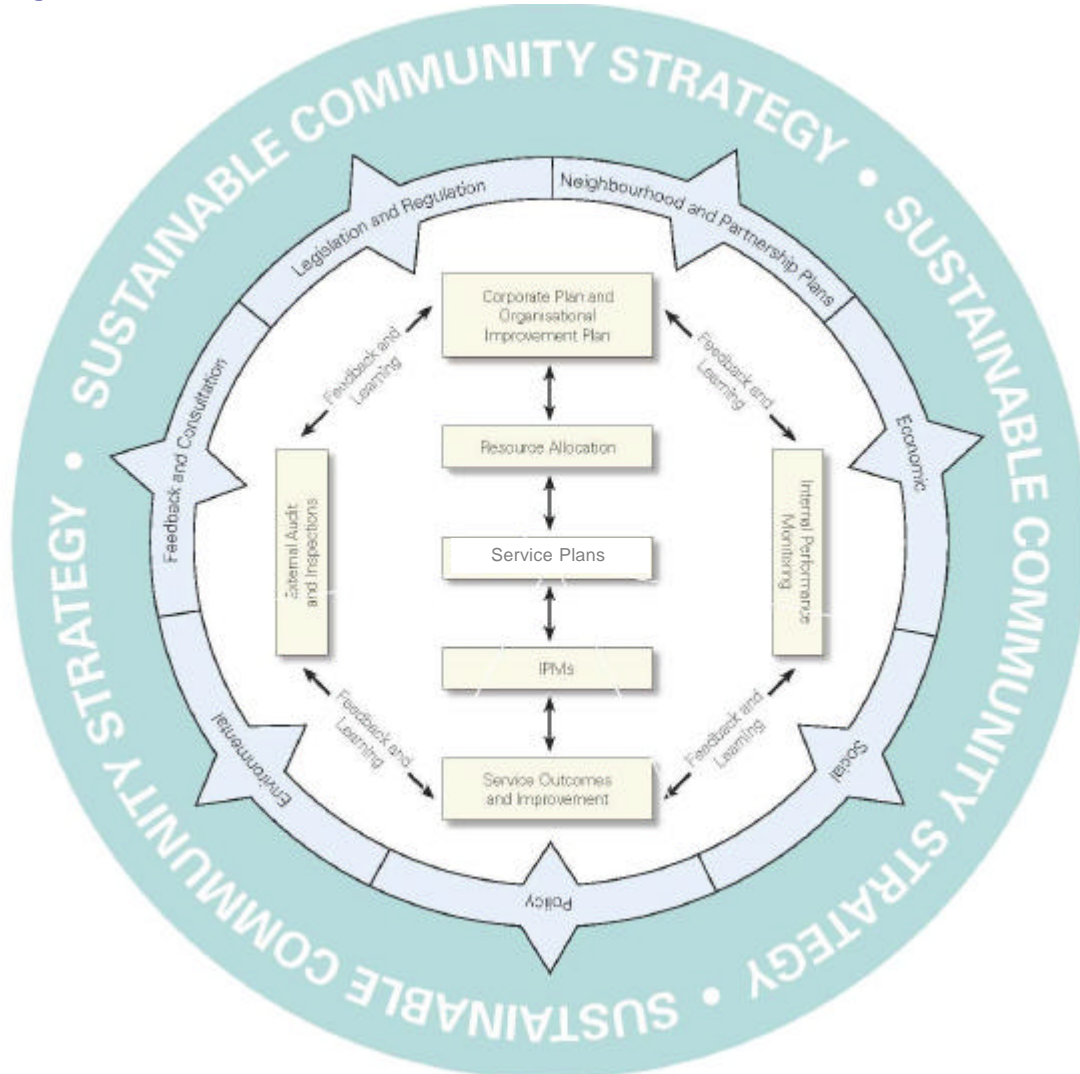
Surrounding our framework, and providing the overarching strategic direction, is the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). Developed in partnership, the SCS sets out a shared vision of the borough that by 2021 Walsall is a great place to live, work and invest.

Informing the SCS are a number of drivers that in turn also directly affect our internal council planning processes.

Legislation and Regulation There are a number of legislative and regulatory requirements that inform the way we have to work as a council. Much of what we must do and what we cannot do is set in statute whilst government and government bodies have regulatory powers to either

determine or influence the level of service provided or the way in which it is delivered.

Neighbourhood and Partnership Plans Partnership working has significantly increased in recent years and will have to become even stronger in the new era of CAA. The priorities and plans of our partners inform and are informed by the SCS and they also impact on our own plans. At a local neighbourhood level, each of the 9 LNPs develop plans to address local issues and needs. These are intrinsically linked to the SCS and the council's plans as they represent the aspirations and priorities of local areas

Economic conditions have a large bearing on the services the council needs and is able to deliver. It affects the levels of regeneration and investment coming into the borough and the financial well-being of residents and as such the levels of support they require from the council.

Social and demographic factors, linked to economic factors, influence the type and level of support the council needs to supply to its residents. These factors can also impact on community cohesion and health inequalities.

Environmental factors impact on what the council and its partners do now and how it plans for the future. The cleanliness of the borough is important to its residents and the international challenge of climate change and reduction of carbon emissions in particular requires local as well as global responses. Considering the impact of what we do now on future generations therefore has an important part to play in our planning processes.

Feedback and consultation The SCS was informed by the wishes, needs and aspirations of the people of Walsall and, as a listening organisation, the council too relies on what people tell us to inform what we do. Proactive consultation on priorities as well as formal and informal feedback through comments, compliments and complaints help us to prioritise our work as well as monitor and, where necessary, change what we do.

Policy As a democratically and accountable body, the council has a role in acting as a place-shaper for the borough. Whilst this role is heavily informed by the other factors described above it is also necessarily informed by the political beliefs of the elected members through the mandate given to them by the election process. Similarly the politics of national and European government influences how and what we do as an organisation.

The Council's Performance Management Processes

Within the centre of the circle in the above diagram are the council's own internal processes which are informed by the all things on the outside of the circle.

1. Corporate Plan and Organisational Improvement Plan

The council's own Corporate Plan, which is published each year, sets out, at a strategic level, the council's commitment to deliver its own contribution to the work of the wider partnership to take forward and implement the SCS, and achieve our shared vision for the borough of Walsall. Details of this can be found in section 2 above. The delivery arm of our Corporate Plan is the Organisational Improvement Plan which sets out what we plan to do to continue to move forward as an organisation.

2. Resource Allocation

This encompasses all financial decision making processes from the medium term financial strategy, decision conferences, and strategic choices exercises through to the formal annual budget setting process and the individual management of budgets at service level. The various elements that jointly inform and deliver our financial planning and management are illustrated below in Table 2.

Table 2: Key aspects of financial management

The Financial Framework Within The CIPPF				
Category	**Overall**	**Revenue**	**Capital**	**Treasury Management**	**Risk Management**
Strategies	MTFS				
			Capital Strategy	Treasury Management Strategy	Risk Management Strategy
Guidance	CIPFA and technical guidance	Budget Guidelines	Capital Guidelines	CIPFA Code of Practice for TM	Risk Management Toolkit
Plans	MTFP	Annual Budget	Capital Programme and AMP	Treasury Policy Statement	Risk Management Action Plans
Governance	Constitution	Budget Management and Control Manual and Annual Governance Statement		Prudential Indicators and Annual Report	Risk Register reporting and regular review
	Contract and Finance Procedure Rules				Audit Cttee Reports and annual report
	Internal and External Audit Plans and our response to inspection and audit				

3. Service Plans

These detail the actions being taken by services to deliver the council's priorities. They are detailed plans for individual council services and teams, setting out specific targets and improvements to be achieved over a three year period but focusing on the current year. They also incorporate other planning requirements, such as workforce planning, equalities, health and safety and risk management, which are a common thread throughout all levels of planning but have a particular focus at this stage as specific actions are detailed.

Workforce Planning

Major improvements in performance come when the right people with the right knowledge, skills and behaviours are deployed appropriately. Workforce planning is the process of analysing the future skills and competencies that are needed to deliver new and improved services, and assessing the strengths and development needs of our current workforce against these requirements. This element is informed by the IPM process and includes both corporate and directorate workforce development plans and training programmes. It is closely linked to the council's

organisational development and human resources strategies and is influenced by external and internal factors in the same way as the rest of the planning process.

Equalities

Equality is one of the council's core values and a desire to ensure equity in service delivery and in the workplace is embedded into every stage of our performance processes, including those with partners. Equality Impact Assessments help identify any areas of inequality in our policies or service delivery and put in place steps to rectify these. Corporate and Directorate Equalities Boards help monitor and champion equalities issues within service areas. There is a recognition that equality does not mean 'the same for everyone' but is about respecting differences and ensuring no-one is unfairly discriminated against based on their age, gender, race, religion, sexuality or disability.

Health and Safety

The council has a duty to ensure adequate systems are in place to keep people safe and to comply with legislative requirements. Each service should have a health and safety action plan in place and any implications for health and safety coming out of other priorities (e.g. office moves) should be flagged up through this process.

4. Individual Performance Management (IPM)

The IPM process provides a framework for managers and staff to meet and discuss work performance for the previous year, and agree targets and personal development needs for the coming year. It allows managers to give constructive feedback on employee performance and is the forum through which priorities are translated from service and team plans into individual actions. IPM is an integral element of the Performance Framework and applies to all employees. More information can be found on the intranet under service information.

5. External audit and inspection

Audit and inspections are key processes for assessing the performance of a service or function and for identifying ways improvements can be made. External inspections (e.g. CAA and service based inspections) also provide an opportunity to benchmark the performance of the council and its functions against other authorities in order to share best practice and learn from good examples.

6. Internal monitoring, review and corrective action

The continual monitoring, review and implementation of required corrective action is vital to ensure continuous improvement and is undertaken at every level of the financial, service and individual planning processes. In addition, this ensures that we take action in response to actual performance to make outcomes better than they would have otherwise been. It is recognised that both officers and elected members play key roles in the delivery of effective performance management to deliver continuous improvement. Key to this is the way services react and learn from the monitoring they undertake whether it is in the form of customer feedback or as part of a performance action plan. Internal monitoring is conducted by monitoring performance against targets, and as such, effective target setting and the use of benchmarking data is of fundamental importance.

7. Feedback and learning

In order to continually build on the progress we are making, we constantly strive to capture the feedback from users and other stakeholders to enable us to learn from the outputs that we deliver. Improving outcomes for our residents matters most, and their feedback through formal consultation, inspection, periodic surveys or simple ad hoc remarks help us improve our way of working and ultimately deliver improved services. This information is constantly being sought and fed back into the organisation in order to help us prioritise our resources around the needs of our users. Walsall Viewfinder simplifies this process by providing an electronic, web-based system for recording, monitoring and storing consultation activity across the partnership.
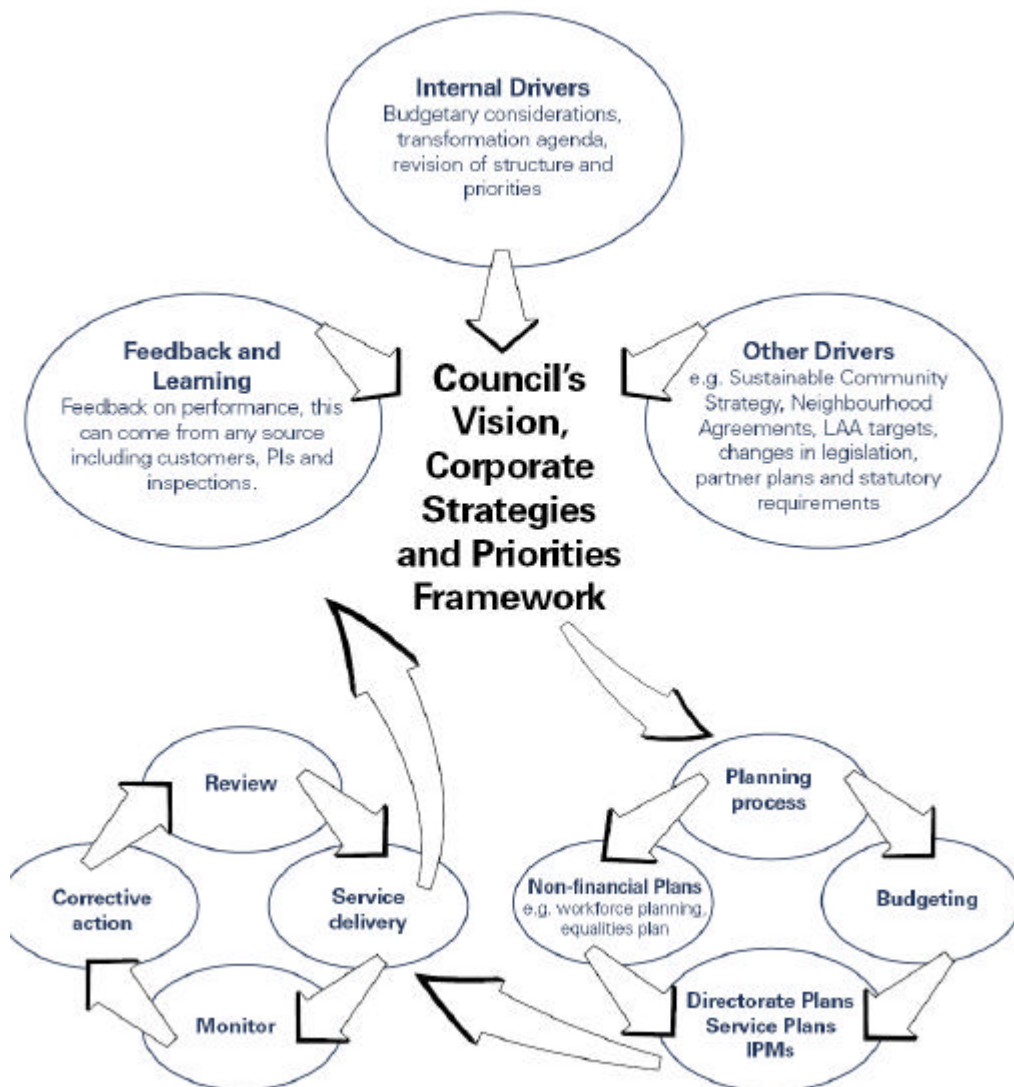
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Performance Framework Process

The framework is intended to enable the council to balance the different needs of the people it serves against available resources and to manage change in a coherent way. It supports our medium term, policy-led approach to resource management.

The Performance Framework Process (Diagram 3) illustrates the relationship between a variety of influences. The relationships illustrated

by this diagram should not be viewed in isolation. For example, some influences such as partner plans or LAA targets may directly influence the planning process at either directorate or service level. It is important that due recognition is given to the influence of external factors such as partner plans or statutory returns e.g. library standard, Self Assessment for Adults Social Care, Annual Performance Assessment (APA) and statutory annual monitoring report strategic planning policy. Within this, reflection upon, and changes in the community we serve are taken into account, and appropriate action is taken to respond positively to ensure services maintain their customer focus and continue to meet the needs of the community.

Diagram 3

Timetable (example activity)				
	Quarter One (April-June)	**Quarter Two (July-Sept)**	**Quarter Three (Oct-Dec)**	**Quarter Four (Jan- Mar)**
SCS, LAA and other partnership plans	Monitoring of LAA targets through scrutiny and LSP Monitoring of LNP neighbourhood agreements	Monitoring of LAA targets through scrutiny and LSP Monitoring of LNP neighbourhood agreements	Monitoring of LAA targets through scrutiny and LSP Monitoring of LNP neighbourhood agreements	Monitoring of LAA targets through scrutiny and LSP Monitoring of LNP neighbourhood agreements
Corporate Plan, Priorities and Pledges	Previous years pledges reviewed New pledges go live as corporate plan is published. Outturn data for previous year is approved and published.	Next years pledges and corporate plan start to be developed Pledges monitored by CMT and Cabinet	Pledges monitored by Cabinet and CMT. Consultation on next years pledges	Pledges monitored by Cabinet and CMT. Draft Corporate Plan and new pledges to Cabinet and Council for approval
Financial Planning	Refreshed financial plans go live. Estimated outturn to CMT and Cabinet. Monthly current year budget monitoring. Draft statement of accounts produced.	Monthly current year budget monitoring Comprehensive Spending Review evaluated and budget guidelines published Medium Term Financial Plan reviewed and reported to CMT Budget consultation with residents for following year	Monthly current year budget monitoring. Annual financial settlement reviewed. Draft budget to Scrutiny\CMT and Cabinet	Monthly current year budget monitoring. Final budget report to CMT\Cabinet 5 year MTFP to CMT\Cabinet Budget set by Council
Working Planning and Training	Workforce and training plans revised to reflect updated service plans and feedback. Current year training programme commence.	Issues input into workforce review. Training attendance and feedback monitored.	Mid year review of workforce plans Training attendance and feedback monitored.	Launch and publication of corporate and service specific training programmes
Service Planning. Other Plans and IPMs	All plans become 'live' Service team targets agreed and cascaded to teams and individuals IPMs completed for all staff	Quarter 1 review of service plans. Commence development and consultation of priorities for following year	Quarter 2 review of service plans. Continue development and consultation of priorities for following year IPM 6 month reviews carried out for all staff	Draft service plans for following year finalised following consultation and sign off.

7. Delivering performance management

High quality council services rely on strong corporate governance from their political and administrative leaders and it is the responsibility of these leaders to ensure there is an emphasis on providing quality services and meeting community needs. Judging the effectiveness of the council is a process of measuring performance and assessing it against desired outcomes and for this reason managing performance is part of everyone's day-job. The key role of the leaders of the council regarding performance management is detailed below.

Role of councillors

Full Council is ultimately responsible for the performance of the council and is the only body that can deal with strategic framework policy issues.

Cabinet members are accountable for the performance of services within their portfolios by setting targets and ensuring that targets are met. They work closely with executive directors to monitor the performance of services within their individual portfolios and then jointly as Cabinet to receive quarterly monitoring reports e.g. the Beacon Index. They know, and are responsible for, what services are doing in order to maximise, improve or turn around poor performance. The performance of the council as a whole is monitored by the specific cabinet member responsible for performance management.

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 and Performance Panels are involved in performance management in a variety of ways. This includes involvement in the development, monitoring and review of policies, a role in the completion of performance reviews and monitoring the implementation of improvements identified. Scrutiny panels are responsible for holding Cabinet to account for the delivery of the council's strategic goals and individual portfolio targets. Each panel develops its own approach to performance management and there is an opportunity each year for panels to share their experience and reflect on the approach used. Scrutiny panels also carry out Value for Money service reviews which benchmark services against economy, efficiency and effectiveness indicators and help develop recommendations for improvement. They also have a role in considering the performance of partnership organisations,

chiefly through the LAA targets.

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. The role of the ward councillor has been strengthened with the implementation of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 which places a statutory duty on partners who now have a "duty to co-operate" and gives councillors greater powers through Councillor Call for Action.

Officers work to support councillors in fulfilling their various roles and this is largely achieved via the appropriate performance board.

Performance Boards at Walsall

Performance boards are the agreed way in which Corporate Management Team (CMT) and directorates exercise their leadership role in respect of performance management and improvement. The overall role of the performance boards is to provide leadership of performance management activity in the particular directorate and to co-ordinate this within the corporate performance planning and reporting cycle. The format and content of performance boards is continually reviewed so they continue to meet the organisations needs and support continuous improvement and share learning. The information below provides a broad outline of the performance board process.

Aims Activities at performance board should be outcome focused, drive performance improvement and identify and implement remedial corrective action as soon as required. They should make a difference to performance.

Frequency This in part depends on the organisational level but the most successful performance boards meet monthly, either separately to other management meetings or as specific dedicated time to enable absolute focus on service improvement and delivery.

Delegates In terms of Directorate Level Performance Boards, Executive directors and their line reports should be in attendance. They should be supported by the nominated performance management professional for that directorate. Heads of Finance and HRD should also attend to provide advice and support on financial management and workforce related items. Directorates are free to invite others either routinely or as and when required.

Core agenda Each performance board should have a yearly work programme, identifying what needs to be done, and ensuring 100%

coverage over an annual cycle. The focus is on analysing data and taking action. Accountability, both individual and collective, is at the heart of successful performance management and an effective and successful performance board.

As an integral element of an effective performance management approach, performance boards should provide an opportunity for targets to be reviewed and challenged, ensuring they are stretching yet realistic. Effective benchmarking against comparator groups and national performance data should be undertaken to assist in this process.

Performance boards should, as a minimum, cover the following over the year, each item does not need to be looked at every month, and examples of frequency are indicated in brackets.

Customer Satisfaction – planning for and undertaking surveys using the corporate Service Measurement Tool (SMT) approach; evaluating and understanding the results of surveys and using that to shape services and respond accordingly. Ensuring that comments, complaints and compliments are collected, summarised, understood, used and responded to promptly and appropriately (at least bi-annually at performance boards). Provides an opportunity for services to share learning and informs the service planning process.

In addition, the development of Walsall's Viewfinder helps services and directorates to make better use of customer information to improve service delivery.

Service Planning – finalisation of plans and monitoring progress against them (quarterly.) It is important that service plans are widely consulted upon and well communicated, particularly with support services so they can adequately resource the support required. Performance boards provide the perfect opportunity for this to happen and for the plan to be approved.

Performance Information – Current, trend and predicted performance on Performance Indicators (PI) and other performance data including Statutory PIs, delivery of pledges, inspection improvement plan actions, etc. (Varied) This should include verification of the accuracy and robustness of data and that processes are aligned to the corporate quality assurance policy.

Programme and Project Management – the latest project register is reviewed to ensure that all projects are accurately reported and progressing according to plan. This allows overall management for all projects and ensures project management arrangements are in place and identifies further actions to address red/amber projects, and when new

projects need to be established to help deliver priorities (monthly).

Financial Management – finalising the directorate's budget setting, regular monitoring against budget and evaluating forecasts, tracking implementation of savings and investment, tracking performance against Gershon targets, maximising income. Ensuring the directorate delivers its targets within budget (monthly financial monitoring, quarterly Gershon tracking).

Workforce Planning – finalisation of workforce plans and on-going monitoring of progress (quarterly). Corrective action allows issues to be addressed and managed.

Risk Management – reviewing the risk register, updating it, ensuring new risk assessments are done for emerging risks, ensuring risk management action plans are in place and being implemented. Ensuring partnership risks are identified and managed/controlled and that the partnership is delivering the agreed outcomes. Consideration of how the sustainability agenda is being developed within the directorate and that the Climate Change Strategy is considered with the priority risks identified. Opportunity management is considered and key opportunities are seized enabling benefits to be exploited to the advantage of the organisation (quarterly).

Value for Money – identifying benchmarking activity and reviewing the results to inform service activity and considering the findings of Scrutiny VFM assessments (as required).

Inspection – overview preparation for upcoming inspections, finalisation of action plans and ensuring implementation thereof (as required).

Service showcase – focus on a particular service, perhaps because performance is disappointing (i.e. to understand and take remedial action) or has improved (i.e. to celebrate and share the learning) (as required or on a cyclical basis).

Directorate specific – performance management issues including 'Hot Issues' (as required).

Equalities and Health and Safety These issues will be primarily considered through the Directorate Equalities and Health and Safety Boards but performance boards may need to consider outcomes from these meetings that impact on performance or conversely refer issues to them where performance information highlights a concern.

8. Looking Forward

One of the purposes of regulation and inspection is to act as a catalyst for improvement. The Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) that came into effect on 1 April 2009 is designed to examine how effectively local public services are performing and how well they are working together, to meet the needs of the people they serve.

The first CAA reports are published in November 2009 and may identify areas where the council and its' partners have to do something different or additional to help improve outcomes for local people. The first year builds a baseline against which future progress can be tracked. Of course, inspectorates are not starting from scratch and existing assessments will be an important source of information. For practical reasons, not everything needed to support CAA will be in place for the first year, so some aspects of the assessment will build up over time.

The joint inspectorate bodies involved with the CAA plan to commence a review of the initial process at the start of 2010. This will ensure that the ongoing process of CAA effectively enables regular discussions with inspectorates throughout the year, so that any problems can be tackled immediately.

Additionally, the priorities identified through resident consultation in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) are unlikely to remain constant over time. There are many factors that can influence local priorities and these will need to be reviewed regularly to make sure they remain reflective of local needs.

The Walsall Performance Framework is designed to adapt to all these potentially changing requirements. This flexibility allows our performance management processes to continually evolve and incorporate the changes in national performance frameworks and those of our partners. We will continue to enhance our partnership relationships in order to deliver better services to the people of Walsall. Performance against the National Indicator Set (NIS) will continue be monitored and managed through our existing performance boards within the council and in conjunction with the Walsall Partnership for partner based measures.

The corporate quality assurance policy, which outlines our approach to data quality, is in the process of being reviewed. This is to ensure that it remains fit for purpose not just for the council, but also that it aligns to wider activity around data sharing between partner organisations.