
CORPORATE PLAN 2008/09 – 2011/12: PERFORMANCE TARGETS

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor John Williams, Leader
Responsible Director – Lorraine O’Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. For Members to receive and consider performance targets for the period 2008/09 to 2011/12, and performance out-turns for 2007/08.

Summary

2. The Corporate Plan for 2008–2012 was approved in April 2008 subject to a further report being presented setting out performance targets for inclusion in the plan, together with out-turn performance data for 2007/08 (minute C212(2)/Apr/08 refers).
3. The reasons for the changes this year to established corporate planning practice, resulting in staggered delivery of corporate plan proposals, performance out-turns and performance targets, are set out in the main report.
4. Government introduced a new national indicator set of performance measures from April 2008. It has not been possible to set targets against all national and local performance indicators at this stage. The reasons for this are outlined in the main report. **Appendix 1** contains targets for:
 - (a) all national indicators (NIs) for which targets can be set currently, including those that have been selected to measure progress on improvement priorities in the corporate plan, and for other NIs not included in the Corporate Plan;
 - (b) those local performance indicators (LIs) that have been selected for inclusion in the Corporate Plan and for which targets can be set at this stage, but not for any non-corporate plan LIs;
 - (c) indicators within this range (all NIs and corporate plan LIs) for which targets cannot be set at present, are indicated by ‘New’ in the target rows.
5. **Appendix 2** contains performance out-turns for 2007/08, as sent to all Councillors on 30th June 2006 to meet the new statutory requirements detailed in the main report. Subject to approval of the targets in **Appendix 1**, the two appendices will be incorporated in the Corporate Plan approved in April. A version of the complete plan, with these appendices added, has been installed on the Intranet for Members’ information.

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that :-

- (a) the targets set out in **Appendix 1** be approved for monitoring and reporting during the remainder of 2008/09 and subsequent years;
- (b) the performance out-turns set out in **Appendix 2** be noted.

Reasons

7. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:-

- (a) to complete the preparation and adoption of the Corporate Plan for 2008-12;
- (b) to enable the performance of Council services and improvement delivery plans to be monitored, and the statutory duty to report Darlington's performance against national indicators to be carried out.

Lorraine O'Donnell
Assistant Chief Executive

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report

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| S17 Crime and Disorder | The outcomes of this report will have a general impact on Crime and Disorder. |
| Health and Well Being | The outcomes of this report will have a general impact on Health and Wellbeing. |
| Sustainability | The outcomes of this report will have a general impact on the Sustainability agenda. |
| Diversity | The outcomes of this report will have a general impact on the Diversity agenda. |
| Wards Affected | This report affects all wards equally (although some of the performance indicators and targets in Appendix 1 will impact specifically on some wards). |
| Groups Affected | This report affects all people (although some of the performance indicators and targets in Appendix 1 relate to specific groups of people). |
| Budget and Policy Framework | This report will not affect the Budget and Policy Framework. |
| Key Decision | This is not a key decision. |
| Urgent Decision | This is not an urgent decision. |
| One Darlington: Perfectly Placed | The targets set out in Appendix 1 will contribute directly to implementation of the Sustainable Community Strategy. |

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

Background

8. This report follows on from the approval of the Corporate Plan for 2008/09-2011/12 at minute C212(2)/Apr/08, and the publication of performance out-turns for 2007/08 in June 2008. It presents for approval performance targets set against a wide range of performance indicators. Appendix 1 contains all of the new national indicators (NIs) as well as those local indicators (LIs) selected for inclusion in the Corporate Plan. However, paragraph 15 (below) explains that it is not possible at this stage to set targets against all these indicators.
9. In previous years performance targets have been presented for Members' consideration within the combined Corporate and Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP). The Council had a duty to publish the BVPP by the end of June each year.
10. This year, corporate priorities, performance out-turns for 2007/08 and performance targets for the four year period starting in 2008/09 have had to be presented for Member consideration on a phased basis, due to a series of statutory and other changes.

Changes in the Statutory Framework

11. The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 abolished the requirement to publish a BVPP. This freed-up the production of the Corporate Plan from any statutory timescale, enabling the 2008/09-2011/12 plan, setting out the Council's current priorities for delivering the One Darlington : Perfectly Placed vision, to be published early in the business year.
12. The abolition of the BVPP duty was partially counterbalanced earlier this year when the Department for Communities and Local Government informed local authorities that they must nevertheless publish performance out-turns against Best Value Performance Indicators for 2007/08 by the end of June, together with a contracts compliance statement. The schedule of out-turns included with this report as **Appendix 2** was therefore published to discharge this requirement. Publication included emailing the schedule to all Council Members on 30th June 2008.
13. The most significant change to performance management arrangements for 2008/09 has been the replacement of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs – again abolished by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007) with a completely new set of 198 national indicators (NIs) (now 196 indicators following deletions notified by government).

Updating the Performance Management Framework

14. It was not feasible to achieve the major task of incorporating the NI set into the Council's Performance Management Framework (PMF) in time to enable targets to be set and included in the Corporate Plan approved in April 2008. Work is continuing on establishing the NIs within the Performance Plus IT system, to enable them to be monitored and progress on delivering corporate priorities to be calculated and reported. In addition, the

introduction of the new national indicator set provided the opportunity to carry out a complete review of our local performance indicators, and this has further extended the scope and scale of the revisions to the PMF.

15. Survey and data collection is required during 2008/09 to establish baselines for many of the totally new NIs before targets can be set against them. Many require agreements and protocols with partner agencies that will be responsible for collecting data. The tables in **Appendix 1** include all targets that can be set from currently available baseline data, but totally new NIs for which targets cannot be set because no baseline data is available, or for other reasons, are identified by 'New' in place of targets in the tables.

Reviewing Our Approach to Target Setting

16. The abolition of BVPIs and BVPPs, combined with the renewed focus on Darlington priorities driven by the SCS and the LAA, point towards a shift in the approach to target setting. Whereas previously all PIs were treated as equally important, with target setting focused on a five year cycle of improvement to top quartile level, the new regime opens up the potential for focusing effort and resources on enhancing performance relating to our local ambitions and priorities.
17. For those performance indicators that are not strongly related to local priorities, and are at high or acceptable levels in comparison with other local authorities, targets could be set to maintain rather than improve that level of performance. Target setting would always seek to improve average or poor performance, and monitoring of 'maintenance targets' would be necessary to ensure that we maintained an acceptable position relative to others.
18. As well as focusing on the areas of performance and delivery that matter most to Darlington, a renewed approach to target setting is also being developed around the One Darlington priority of 'narrowing the gap', focused on driving improvement for everyone irrespective of where they live in the borough, rather than simply improving the borough-wide average performance.
19. This approach requires further examination, and will be the subject of future reporting to Members. Some of the Community Safety targets, however, reflect the approach outlined above, with ambitious targets in the LAA to tackle agreed local priorities, whilst issues that are not a priority locally (e.g. gun crime) are not targeted for improvement.

The Proposed Targets

20. The targets in **Appendix 1** generally reflect the established approach of continuing improvement across all performance indicators. Targets have been set taking account of previous performance (where available) and other baseline data; and national quartile data for 2006/07 published by the Audit Commission, and for 2007/08 provided by TQFirst (not yet published by the Audit Commission). As always the general principle has been to set targets that are both realistic and challenging, and national indicator targets have been subject to a process of internal challenge at Corporate Management Team level. The standard definitions for national indicators, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in March 2008, have been instrumental in the setting of NI targets.

21. For some PIs it will be difficult to ascertain what the targets mean from the definition and targets alone shown in **Appendix 1**. The column headed 'Type/Better' provides some limited guidance. 'Type' indicates the unit of measure – number, percentage, currency, etc – whilst 'Better' indicates whether higher or lower performance is better. Officers can provide further clarification on individual performance indicators and the targets set against them, and detailed guidance on the purpose, definition, collection and calculation of individual indicators can be accessed at:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/nationalindicatorsupdate>

Conclusion

22. Approval of the targets set out in **Appendix 1** will allow effective monitoring of service performance, and measuring of progress in delivering our contribution to One Darlington : Perfectly Placed, and support continuing work on the revision of the PMF.

Outcome of Consultation

23. LSP partners and Council service teams have contributed to setting targets. The outcomes of consultation are reflected in targets in Appendix 1; in particular, the LAA targets (identified in the tables in **Appendix 1**) have been subject to extensive discussion and negotiation.