



Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee

Briefing Paper

Report of: Peter Jones - Head of Chief Executive's Office

Date: Thursday, 5th March 2009

Open

Comprehensive Area Assessment

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to bring Members' attention to the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) framework published by the Audit Commission in February 2009. It will come into effect on 1st April 2009.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Audit Commission introduced Comprehensive Performance Assessments (CPAs) in 2002 to replace Best Value. This Council received its corporate assessment in 2004 and was rated as 'Fair'.
- 2.2 The Commission now wishes to broaden its assessment of public services by moving from CPA, which focussed on individual organisations, to area-based assessments involving partnerships across all sectors and their success or otherwise in achieving positive outcomes for local people.
- 2.3 The new CAA framework has been developed over the past year or so and has just been published. The first reports will be published in November 2009.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 Details of the CAA framework are provided in Appendix 1 to this paper. An overview of the model is set out in Appendix 2.
- 3.2 An action plan is being drawn up by CMT to prepare for audit and inspection work which will be carried out from this spring. The action plan will be reported to this Committee in due course and will reflect duties and responsibilities under the new Directorates.

- 3.3 Discussions are also being held with partners to agree a co-ordinated approach to responding to the Key Lines of Enquiry for the area assessment (as distinct from the organisational assessment part of the framework) and to align performance monitoring reports across the various organisations.
- 3.4 Progress reports will be provided at further meetings of this Committee throughout the year (2009/10).

4. Options

- 4.1 Members are requested to consider the contents of the CAA framework and are recommended to include regular progress reports in the work programme for 2009/10. This may include inviting partners to attend a future meeting to provide a broader perspective on performance issues.

5. Implications

- 5.1 There are certain key themes which run through the CAA framework and which Members may wish to focus on. These include:
- Sustainability
 - Tackling inequality
 - Supporting vulnerable people
 - Value for money
 - Continued focus on local (shared) priorities, and
 - The importance of community outcomes (rather than processes) in evaluating delivery of services.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1: CAA Framework (Audit Commission)
- 6.2 Appendix 2: Summary model

Officer Contact Details:

Walter Delin
Chief Executive
01562 732700