

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy and Resources
DATE	6 May 2014
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott
TITLE OF REPORT	Corporate Governance Performance Reporting
REPORT NUMBER:	CG/14/053
CHECKLIST RECEIVED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report details the revised process for on-going reporting of performance information, drawn from across the Corporate Governance Directorate.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Committee are asked to:

- (i) Note the content of the report and the format for future performance reporting to the Committee;
- (ii) Direct any further action as appropriate.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report. However, the performance of the Corporate Governance Directorate includes reference to the service's financial management arrangements and therefore aims to provide assurance on our stewardship.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other implications specifically arising from this report.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Performance reporting is aligned to the Corporate Governance Service Plan. The Plan is currently undergoing review to reflect revisions to our priorities, outcomes and the Corporate Governance Improvement Plan actions. Future performance reports will provide the Committee with

details of those improvement actions and the measures in place to evidence progress.

Performance reports will reflect the dynamic nature of performance management across Corporate Governance. Where possible, information is updated on a monthly basis and therefore presents a snapshot of overall performance at a given point in time, as well as a trend analysis over a preceding period. The drivers are performance, improvement and risk, providing members of the Committee with a complete picture of the standard of performance activity across the range of functions and services administered by the directorate, the management of risks impacting effective delivery and the improvement actions by which future performance standards will be enhanced.

6. IMPACT

Corporate – Reporting to the Committee is an essential governance requirement of the Service’s performance management arrangements, by which members may seek assurance that performance improvement activity is evidenced and robust. In addition, future reporting will be directed at staff and other stakeholders, as well as the Committee.

Public – The report is designed for information purposes and no Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been prepared.

Services are required to carry out regular reporting of performance to committees. Corporate Governance undertakes to report our own performance to the Committee and thereby into the public domain. Transparency in our performance reporting is a key component of our public performance reporting requirement, which is subject to annual audit by Audit Scotland.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The nature of this report is not such that a risk assessment of options is required for consideration by the Committee. However, the regular reporting of performance is itself mitigation of the risk that the Council’s public performance reporting arrangements do not meet with external scrutiny requirements.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Neil Buck
Performance and Risk Manager
nebuck@aberdeencity.gov.uk
01224 522408

10. REPORT

10.1 Previous reports before the Committee have detailed a range of performance information in relation to Corporate Governance functions and services which tended to focus on Statutory Performance Indicators. Whilst this format assisted the Council to meet its statutory public performance reporting requirements, the information before members often reflected performance against a range of indicators at the close of the previous financial year. Only in a limited number of instances, was information reported on a monthly or quarterly basis and reflective of a current picture of performance.

10.2 Timely, accurate performance data supports informed decision-taking, focuses resources on areas for improvement and using trend analysis, highlights movement in performance over periods of up to three years in some instances. The former reporting format was not reflective of the full range of functions and services carried out by Corporate Governance. As a result, a revised format has been developed which is intended to provide as comprehensive a picture of performance as possible.

10.3 The new reporting format is dynamic, current and is targeted at multiple audiences:

- Senior managers within the Corporate Governance Directorate, where direct responsibility for performance management and improvement is vested.
- Members of the Committee, where assurance on the effectiveness of performance management is required.
- Employees, the stakeholders who work in our services and administer the functions where improvements in performance will be delivered.

10.4 Rather than a traditional paper format, the new approach uses an electronic 'dashboard' to display the information using a variety of formats; notably charts, graphs and supporting data tables where appropriate. The format allows the data to be refreshed on a frequent basis so that the viewer is provided with the most up to date picture available, at point of access.

10.4 Reporting will now focus on key areas reflective of Corporate Governance performance: our people, our finances and our customers. A fourth area of focus concerns performance specific to the five service areas of the directorate:

- Customer Service and Performance
- Finance
- Human Resources and Organisational Development
- Legal and Democratic Services
- Procurement

10.5 At each meeting cycle of the Committee, it is proposed to provide members with an overview demonstration of key performance areas from across the directorate and a more detailed analysis of performance specific to one of the five service areas. However, members will be provided with a link to the electronic dashboard which can be saved to desktops, permitting access to current performance information whenever required. In advance of each Committee meeting, the link will be issued to members in preparation for their attendance.

10.6 Risk

Work continues to develop and improve the Councils system of risk management. The Corporate Governance Service Risk Register is undergoing review and future updates will be incorporated into the dashboard. Meanwhile, risks have been aligned with the three key performance areas in the dashboard. Additionally, for each service area, there will be a team-level operational risk register which will be accessible within the 'Service Performance' area of the dashboard. The risk information will detail the level of risk and the controls and mitigation in place to manage it, providing members with the opportunity to challenge evidence supporting the effectiveness of risk management approaches across Corporate Governance.