

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Audit, Risk and Scrutiny
DATE	29 September 2015
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott
TITLE OF REPORT	Public Performance Reporting Assessment 2013/14
REPORT NUMBER:	CG/15/111
CHECKLIST RECEIVED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the Committee with details of Audit Scotland's assessment of the Council's Public Performance Reporting (PPR) requirement for the 2013/14 reporting year.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

- (a) note that the Head of Communications and Promotion would prepare an action plan and report back to committee within six months; and
- (b) note the content of the report.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific financial implications arising from the report however the council may wish to review its use of the council website and other information delivery vehicles. This may result in the need to develop a business case to address issues outlined in the report.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other implications specifically arising from this report.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

5.1 The report provides the Committee with Audit Scotland's assessment of the Council's public performance arrangements for the 2013/14 reporting year.

5.2 The report indicates that the council needs to improve the quality of the information provided to the public including via the corporate website and social media. The current website has been in use since 2006 and is in need of review to consider the latest developments in best practice. This review will form part of the work programme for the new Communications and Promotion

service and will include a review of content management systems and best practice utilised by other organisations. The review will also examine synergies with the Information Management work stream and with FOISA requests. FOISA requests are sometimes submitted when requestors cannot locate often basic information about services and service performance.

- 5.3 Appendix 1 details the assessment of our Public Performance Reporting for the 2013/14 reporting year. Audit Scotland developed new methodology for this assessment which differs from that used in the 2012/13 assessment. The assessment details performance against:

SPI 1 a range of information “sufficient to demonstrate that the council is securing Best Value in relation to:-

- Responsiveness to communities
- Revenues and service costs
- Employees
- Assets
- Procurement
- Sustainable development
- Equalities and diversity

SPI 2 a range of information sufficient to demonstrate that the Council is securing Best Value in providing the following services:-

- Benefits administration
- Community care
- Criminal justice social work
- Cultural & community services covering at least sport & leisure, museums, the arts and libraries
- Planning (both environmental and development management)
- The education of children
- Child protection and children’s social work
- Housing & homelessness
- Protective services including environmental health and trading standards
- Roads and lighting
- Waste management services

SPI 3 a fixed suite of indicators to support benchmarking through the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) covering:-

- Children’s Services
- Corporate Services
- Social Work Services
- Culture and Leisure Services
- Environmental Services
- Housing Services
- Corporate Asset Management
- Economic Development

6. IMPACT

Corporate – Public Performance Reporting is a statutory requirement for local authorities in Scotland. PPR focuses on, but not exclusively, the Statutory Performance Indicators which are required for publication each financial year and which serve to demonstrate each council's approach to Best Value. Analysis of performance supports service improvement decision-making. SPIs are reported through the Corporate Performance Dashboard to the Corporate Management Team. Services will also report SPIs to committees as part of regular performance reporting regimes and the suite of SPIs are reported to Council each year along with an analysis of overall performance.

Public – Members of the public have a right to receive information on the performance of the Council's services and core functions. Whilst SPIs provide some of this information, of equal if not greater importance, are the case studies or stories about the Council's activities during the year which provide context to the headline data. We should also strive to provide this information in a variety of formats including hard copy and online formats as well as using all available communication channels in order to meet the needs of our diverse communities.

PPR also serves to support the Council's commitment to the delivery of improved outcomes for our communities through the Single Outcome Agreement.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The Council is at risk of failing to meet Audit Scotland requirements in our Public Performance arrangements, which may lead to poor public perceptions of our activities and unfavourable assessment when compared with our peer authorities. To mitigate this risk, we are developing additional performance indicators and encouraging services to continue to develop methods of reporting meaningful information into the public domain, including case studies on areas of particular interest such as public projects, new initiatives and the output of our engagement activity with customers and citizens. We are also canvassing opinion through the 'Aberdeen City Voice' on the nature of our performance reporting and communication.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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