Key Improvement Areas – 2013/14

The table below describes identified areas for improvements included within the 2012/13 approved AGS, with a corresponding mid-year update.

Key Improvement Areas – Principle A	Lead Officer	Deadline
Complaint Handling The County Council has an effective complaints policy and procedures which inform positive service improvements. As part of this, a number of action plans are formulated showing how lessons learned feed into wider departmental plans. The 'lessons learned' process can be enhanced by translating more complaints into action plans. **Update October 2013** Changes have been made to the way LCC analyses complaints. The onus is now not on the Team Manager but on the Customer Relations Team to undertake post evaluation of the root cause and any corrective action (more than simply resolving the problem). The advantage of this is that every case has been reviewed to see what opportunities exist for systemic service improvement.	Customer Relations Manager	March 2014
Value for Money (VfM) The Council's Value for Money Strategy is detailed within the MTFS. Delivery of this strategy can be enhanced by Departmental Management Teams' agreeing an approach on how to measure / benchmark VfM within their directorates and reflecting results in the department's performance plans. **Update October 2013** LCC partakes in benchmarking activity to help ascertain VfM data on services provided. There is an annual process to benchmark performance on key indicators using CIPFA and service benchmark data which are included in the Annual Report to Council. At departmental level, a number of services participate in regional and national benchmarking with some completing self assessments, as well conducting a peer review. Data from a variety of appropriate sources including CIPFA VFM measures will continue to be used as an understanding of outputs will provide better information for future decision	Assistant Director: Strategic Finance	March 2014

making. Some departments have commenced a forensic review of service costs and values.		

Key Improvement Areas – Principle B	Lead Officer	Deadline
Performance Monitoring All DMT's receive regular reports on the status of key performance indicators and other relevant performance measures and have a process to address poor performance. Performance Monitoring can be improved by: Refining quarterly reporting; defining expectations and implementing KPI's; including wider client base; embedding performance management in revised Scrutiny function and; Communication of refreshed Council priorities after election. **Update October 2013** The Leader of the Council established a quarterly corporate performance dashboard and requested that cabinet portfolio holders establish a similar approach at departmental level. DMT's receive quarterly performance reports on both the 'health-check' indicators for the department and performance against the key priorities identified in service plans. Performance issues which arise are discussed and appropriate course of action is agreed by DMT.	Department al Managemen t Teams'	March 2014
Partnership Working The Council has monitoring processes in place to review and manage the performance of key partnerships / joint working arrangements. Given that Partnership working and the investment of County Council funding is becoming potentially more complex, partnership protocols and governance arrangements need to be reviewed. **Update October 2013** Guidance on partnership risk management has been rolled out to departments via risk representatives. A 'Partnership Healthcheck' has been created, to be completed by all partnerships in the Leicestershire Together structure. The results will be used as an input into the Peer Review of Leicestershire Together structures and governance later this year. They will also be used to ensure that involvement in specific partnerships does not expose the County Council to unacceptable levels of risk	Assistant Director: Strategic Finance	December 2013

Key Improvement Areas – Principle C	Lead Officer	Deadline
Anti Fraud & Corruption The County Council assesses itself against the Audit Commission's 'Protecting the Public Purse' (PPP) and the	Assistant Director: Strategic	December 2013

National Fraud Authority's (NFA) Counter Fraud checklist to increase understanding of fraud exposure. Internal Audit has reviewed the Authority's response to this and a list of target areas for potential improvement has been identified. Refreshing and aligning the Council's existing policy, strategy and procedures to guidance within the NFA Fighting Fraud Locally, Local Government Fraud Strategy, will enhance arrangements to create fraud awareness and further emphasise the Council's zero tolerance towards fraud. **Update October 2013** As presented within the Risk Management Update report, the following progress has been made: • A thorough fraud risk assessment taking into account risk areas highlighted by the Audit Commission and the NFA as well as local/historical issues. The assessment identifies areas where focus should be directed within the revision of the strategy and policy. • The NFA have developed a 'fraud awareness campaign pack' for communication across all authorities. The benefits of running a 'fraud awareness week' are being considered. • The County Solicitor has commissioned a team (comprising of Legal Services, Internal Audit, Risk Management and Strategic HR) to review the Council's existing Whistleblowing Policy to ensure that it conforms to the British Standard (PAS1998) Whistleblowing arrangements Code of Practice. A refresh of this policy will feed into the revision of the Anti Fraud & Corruption policy and strategy, as well the review into the employee code of conduct.	Finance	
Review of Officer Code of Conduct The County Council has adopted an Employee Code of Conduct which is supported by regular items on the Council's intranet. A review of this Code will be undertaken. **Update October 2013** The County Solicitor has commissioned a project team (comprising of Legal, Committee Services, Risk Management and Strategic HR Services staff) to review the Code of Conduct to ensure that it is up to date and legally compliant and aligns to LCC policies and processes, whilst ensuring that it is easily understood by managers and employees alike. A report has been presented to the People	County Solicitor	April 2014

Strategy Board with a view to implementing a revised / new 'Code of Conduct' in April 2014.		

Key Improvement Areas – Principle D	Lead Officer	Deadline
Business Intelligence The corporate Research and Information function is co-located with the Performance function enabling provision of quality information drawing on census, research and variety of other sources, including operational systems. Business Intelligence is one of the seven themes in the Information and Technology Strategy and actions to improve will enhance the effectiveness of decision making at both departmental and corporate level. **Update October 2013** Action to improve business information on customers and costs of services is on track with the establishment and scoping of cross-organisation virtual team to focus on Business Intelligence (BI). This includes an initial assessment of the areas that affect our current BI capability, and very initial discussions with the affected stakeholders to create some impetus around the action plan, consider structural options for the teams involved and identify priority actions to address the current barriers	Performance and Business Intelligence Function	March 2014

Key Improvement Areas – Principle E	Lead Officer	Deadline
Succession Planning The County Council recognises that there is a need to focus on improving succession planning. To this the People Strategy Board has agreed a pilot approach to Talent Management and Succession Planning which is due to commence during 2013. **Update October 2013** A pilot scheme is currently being developed to be implemented by March 2014. This scheme will feed into the work to improve the overall approach to managing performance within the Council.	Learning & Development Manager	March 2014
Review of Mandatory Training Learning and Development (L&D) Plan's are approved by Departmental Management Teams / Workforce Groups and are reviewed and updated on a periodic basis. Relevant L&D activities are communicated through intranet, email updates, newsletters, briefings and staff workers groups. A review of	Learning & Development Manager	March 2014

| Mandatory E-Learning programmes and training will be undertaken with departments to support staff in having the appropriate skills for their role.

Update October 2013
A review of mandatory E Learning modules was completed, presented and approved by the People Strategy Board in July. Quarterly reporting on performance (uptake) is in place and improvement plans are being developed as a result. | | |

Key Improvement Areas – Principle F	Lead Officer	Deadline
<u>Engaging with Officers and Public</u> The County Council recognises that engagement with officers and the public is vital to achieving objectives. To this effect, the Council is committed to publishing as much information and data as it can both for internal and external customers. Provision of information via the Intranet and County Council Website can be improved by routine checks and updates at both departmental and corporate level. **Update October 2013** The corporate communications' team actively and routinely engage with both staff and public. This is done through internal campaigns as well as information via press releases and the Council's website. Good examples of this are illustrated through the savings consultation and targeted consultation for specific themes. Service areas within departments are aware of whom their stakeholders are and the responsibility to engage with them, especially on matters that could affect their work/operations. Departments have established communications within their own areas via newsletter/ team briefs etc, as well as representatives attending groups that cover cross organisational issues, ensuring internal stakeholders are communicated to and allowed to feedback. Departments will also regularly consult and engage with external stakeholders, either directly or through an external agency.	Departmental Management Teams'	March 2014

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