

Audit and Governance Committee

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	12 March 2018
Officer	<p><u>Local Members</u></p> <p>All Members</p> <p>Lead Directors</p> <p><u>Debbie Ward, Chief Executive</u></p>
Subject of Report	<p>Monitoring Corporate Plan Outcomes: Update on Overview and Scrutiny Committee Activities, March 2018</p>
Executive Summary	<p>In January 2018, the Audit and Governance Committee received the full suite of information that is submitted to the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees at each of their quarterly meetings. While it was recognised that the Audit and Governance Committee may prefer, in future, to receive shorter, more focused reports, the committee was asked to give guidance to officers on the level and nature of the information they would like to see.</p> <p>Although the committee found the information informative, members were clear that the Audit and Governance Committee should not duplicate the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. It was therefore agreed that future corporate plan monitoring reports to the Audit and Governance Committee should not include detailed performance information. Rather, they should provide a summary of the approaches taken by the OSC committees in addressing issues relating to Corporate Plan delivery, so that the Audit and Governance Committee could seek assurance that the OSCs were looking at the right areas and addressing them adequately.</p> <p>Acknowledging that the four outcomes monitoring reports contained much information that was of interest and concern to all members, the committee also asked for copies of the reports to be placed in the Members' Room. This was done, and in future, outcomes monitoring reports will be placed in the members room as soon as they are published if members continue to find this helpful. This report therefore summarises overview and scrutiny activities that have arisen from committee discussions linked to issues raised in the quarterly outcome focused monitoring reports.</p>

Monitoring Corporate Plan Outcomes

	<p>It would, however, be helpful if members of this committee who also attend OSC meetings could draw upon their own reflections from those meetings and ensure they are comfortable that issues highlighted in the outcomes reports are being adequately addressed. For reference, as well as the copies in the members room, the reports can be accessed on Dorset for You via this link: https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/article/422628/Monitor-and-review---how-are-we-doing</p> <p>After the March round of committees, annual reports for the three OSCs will be produced, which will provide a more comprehensive account of the work those committees have done during 2017-18 to address the corporate outcomes within their various remits. These will be presented to the committees in June for discussion, prior to wider publication.</p>
<p>Impact Assessment:</p>	<p>Equalities Impact Assessment: There are no specific equalities implications in this report. However, the prioritisation of resources in order to challenge inequalities in outcomes for Dorset's people is fundamental to the Corporate Plan.</p>
	<p>Use of Evidence: The outcome indicator data submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees is drawn from a number of local and national sources, including: Business Demography (ONS); the Employer Skills Survey (UK CES); the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) and the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF). There is a lead officer for each outcome whose responsibility it is to ensure that data is accurate and timely and supported by relevant commentary.</p>
	<p>Budget: None in the context of this specific report. However the information contained herein is intended to facilitate evidence driven scrutiny of the interventions that have the greatest impact on outcomes for communities, as well as activity that has less impact. This can help with the identification of cost efficiencies that are based on the least impact on the wellbeing of customers and communities.</p>
	<p>Risk: Having considered the risks associated with this report using the County Council's approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as:</p> <p>Current: Medium Residual: Low</p>
	<p>Other Implications: None</p>

Monitoring Corporate Plan Outcomes

Recommendation	<p>That the committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) considers the accounts in this report of the activity of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees in scrutinising progress against the four outcomes in the Corporate Plan 2017-18; and: ii) decides whether it is sufficiently assured that issues of concern are being adequately addressed; iii) If necessary, recommend that one or more of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees focuses attention on an issue or issues requiring more investigation and scrutiny.
Reason for Recommendation	<p>The 2017-18 Corporate Plan provides an overarching strategic framework for monitoring progress towards good outcomes for Dorset. The Overview and Scrutiny committees provide corporate governance and performance monitoring arrangements so that progress against the corporate plan can be monitored effectively, and the Audit and Governance Committee needs to ensure that this process is effective, and issues of concern are adequately addressed.</p>
Appendices	None
Background Papers	<p><i>Dorset County Council Corporate Plan 2017-18</i>, Cabinet, 28 June 2017</p> <p>https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/corporate-plan-outcomes-framework</p>
Officer Contact	<p>Name: John Alexander, Senior Assurance Manager</p> <p>Tel: (01305) 225096</p> <p>Email: j.d.alexander@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>

1. Background

- 1.1 The corporate plan is based on the four **outcomes** that we seek to achieve for Dorset, alongside our partners and communities – that people are safe, healthy and independent, with a prosperous economy. For each outcome there is a small set of “**population indicators**”, selected to measure progress towards the four outcomes. No single agency is accountable for these indicators - accountability is shared between partner organisations and communities themselves. These include, for example: levels of crime in Dorset (Safe); rates of early death from cardiovascular disease (Healthy); Delayed Transfers of Care (Independent); and the productivity of Dorset’s businesses (Prosperous).

Monitoring Corporate Plan Outcomes

- 1.2 The outcome reports that are presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees consist of single page summaries for each of these population indicators. Each page shows the latest data, trend, and commentary for the indicator, **benchmarking** information, and the status of any associated corporate **risks**.
- 1.3 Importantly, each page also includes service performance measures, which measure the County Council's own specific contribution to, and impact upon, corporate outcomes. For example, one of the outcome indicators for the "Prosperous" outcome is "The productivity of Dorset's businesses". A performance measure for the County Council on this is "Growing Places Fund invested in active interventions", since the Growing Places Fund is one of the ways in which we strive to help support businesses and improve productivity. Unlike with the population indicators, the County Council is directly accountable for the progress (or otherwise) of performance measures, since they reflect the degree to which we are making the best use of our resources to make a positive difference to the lives of our own customers and service users.
- 1.4 Efforts continue at Corporate Leadership Team to present a cross-directorate, outcomes focused analysis of the **value for money** of County Council services to sit alongside the performance information in these reports. In the interim, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees have been receiving some directorate-based value for money information.
- 1.5 Officers suggest possible areas of performance upon which the committees might choose to focus, but members are encouraged to consider all of the indicators and associated information that fall within their committee's remit, scrutinise the evidence and commentaries provided, and decide if they are comfortable with the direction of travel. If appropriate, members can request a more in-depth review of specific areas. Key areas of focus at recent meetings, and committee activity that has been, or is being, instigated as a result of scrutinising the outcomes reports, are summarised below.

2.0 Safeguarding Committee (Outcome: "Safe")

2.1 Crime

The outcome reports have drawn the committee's attention to upward trends in total crime, anti-social behaviour, and domestic abuse crime.

2.1.1 *Domestic abuse*

The significant increase in domestic abuse crime over the last three years has received considerable scrutiny, and the committee elected to hold an inquiry day on the issue on 17 October 2017 involving the Police, CCG, victim representatives, volunteer agencies, Public Health, the Community Safety Partnership, and front-line staff, and members themselves. The purpose of the day was to identify and explore key lines of enquiry. The day was considered successful in terms of raising awareness of the key issues, and the committee asked the Cabinet to support further targeted activity in furtherance of enhanced whole family approaches and improved mapping of service pathways. An update on progress will be considered by the committee at its July meeting.

2.1.2 *Other crime*

The committee has also discussed and endorsed the Community Safety Partnership's new protocol and guidance on modern slavery. Beyond that, the committee has had no specific focus on rising crime and antisocial behaviour rates. However, the People and Communities Overview Committee has given careful consideration to further investigating levels of race and hate crime, following a spike in reported incidents after

Monitoring Corporate Plan Outcomes

the Brexit referendum. However, subsequent monitoring showed that this spike was short term and figures returned to their previous relatively low level.

2.2 Children in Care/ children subject to a Child Protection Plan

2.2.1 Outcomes reports have focused on the above twice during the course of the year so far. The rate of children subject to a Child Protection Plan in Dorset increased between 2013 and 2017 and was higher than the national figure, but this has now begun to reduce. Plans are most commonly put in to place due to abuse or neglect. If the plan to reduce the risk of harm does not work then the child may become 'looked after' by the local authority.

2.2.2 The rate of children in care increased steadily until 2016 but is now reducing and was 57.6 per 10,000 at the end of Q3 17-18, which is lower than the national rate. The decision about whether a child should enter care is an important one as outcomes for children in care can be poorer than those of their peers and the cost of providing care is increasing.

2.2.3 The interim Director for Children's Services is the lead officer for the Safeguarding Committee and has therefore engaged fully in discussions around these issues, explaining the County Council's strategies to decrease the average caseload of social workers, improve our approach to fostering, adoption and special guardianship, and promote early intervention through Family Partnership Zones and other activities. Members have therefore been assured that sufficient measures are in place to continue the improving trends in numbers. In addition, the March committee will be receiving an outcomes report on early intervention and prevention.

2.3 People killed or seriously injured on Dorset's roads

2.3.1 There has been a consistent focus on road traffic accidents throughout the year by the committee. The number of people killed or seriously injured during the 12 months to September 2017 was 224 - a 16% reduction compared to the same period in 2016. Despite the reducing trend, the figure remains higher than in previous years, in line with regional and national trends.

2.3.2 The committee set up a Task and Finish Group working with with the Collision Reduction and Traffic Engineering Team. The group agreed to review and update the existing Road Casualty Reduction Plan, with the aim of identifying opportunities for new interventions while remaining realistic about what would make a difference in terms of casualties and people killed. The focus has been on reviewing rural routes and targeting the worst affected areas with local interventions such as establishing hard standing spots to enable mobile speed cameras to be positioned. There will be a further collisions report presented to the committee in March.

3.0 **People and Communities Committee** (Outcomes: "Healthy"; "Independent")

3.1 Inequality in life expectancy between population groups

3.1.1 This indicator is consistently identified as a "cause for concern" in outcomes reports. Dorset, like the rest of the country, has seen significant improvements in death rates from preventable illnesses over the last century, but this does not reflect the experience of all people in Dorset and there remain significant differences in health outcomes across and within our communities. Life expectancy data only changes gradually - the issue is to understand and prioritise the work we and our partners do to reduce inequality in health outcomes. The Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) for Dorset has identified a Prevention at Scale work plan to focus at a system level on improving inequalities and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees are careful not to duplicate oversight of this work elsewhere. Nevertheless, the People and

Monitoring Corporate Plan Outcomes

Communities Committee has chosen to focus activity on some areas known to contribute to inequality in life expectancy, as follows:

3.1.2 *Social Isolation*

Social isolation is a significant issue in Dorset, and is also known to have a negative impact on life expectancy. The committee set up a review group which suggested focusing first on Beaminster and Blandford to try to understand the issues, and then using the lessons learned to consider in order a more generalised approach. Links between social isolation, deprivation, loneliness and community transport were highlighted. It was intended the review would consider social inclusion among all age groups, with the Young Researchers helping to collect and understand the views and experiences of young people. Progress has been slow so far, but a schedule of meetings has now been arranged to progress the review and a progress report will be submitted to the committee in June 2018.

3.1.2 *Mental Health*

Data in the “Healthy” outcomes report suggests that mental health conditions have become increasingly prevalent in Dorset over the past few years – poor mental health is known to be another factor that reduces life expectancy as well as being one of the two main causes of sickness absence in the working aged population. The committee held a workshop on 13 December 2017 involving the CCG, key professional staff and service users. This took into account the review of Children and Adults Mental Health Services by the Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee and members' views about children's mental health. A number of issues arose, including access to services, housing and benefits, commissioning and the need for safe places. A full report will be presented to the March 2018 meeting.

3.1.3 *Alcohol related harm*

Another of the population indicators in the “Healthy” outcome is “the rate of hospital admissions for alcohol related conditions”, which are rising in Dorset for men and women, and which may be seen as a proxy for alcohol related harm more generally. Again, alcohol misuse affects life expectancy, and as such affects socially disadvantaged groups more acutely, since ill effects are exacerbated by factors from which poorer people are more likely to suffer (mental ill health, inadequate housing, poor diet, other substance misuse, etc.) The committee asked for a longer briefing paper on the issue, which they considered in January. While it was recognised that this was already a focus of concern for the STP, and therefore the Health and Wellbeing Board, the decision was taken to include some consideration of alcohol related harm in a review of homelessness in Dorset which the committee had previously initiated.

3.2 Education performance

3.2.1 Within the corporate plan, education performance at Key Stage 2 appears within the “Independent” outcome, whereas Key Stage 4 and above are part of the “Prosperous” outcome. While there are logical reasons for this, it does create the possibility for duplication between the People and Communities Committee and the Economic Growth Committee (or alternatively, of education performance “falling down the crack” between the two).

3.2.2 A report on education performance at Key Stage 4 was actually presented to the People and Communities Committee, where the links between poor attainment and social disadvantage were discussed. The committee in June 2017 decided to have an inquiry day on the issue, but although this has been acknowledged as a priority area for review this has not yet happened. Key stage 4 performance has also been

Monitoring Corporate Plan Outcomes

discussed at the Economic Growth Committee (see below). The Audit and Governance Committee may wish to form a view on whether there should be an increased focus on attainment and its links to social independence, mobility, and economic growth – there is some cause for concern about educational performance at all levels in Dorset. Members may also wish to consider which Overview and Scrutiny Committee should lead on this issue, or indeed, if it should be a joint area of focus for two (or more) committees.

3.3 Delayed Transfers of Care

- 3.3.1 Delayed Transfers of Care have been highlighted in outcomes reports as a cause for concern, since the total number of delayed transfers in Dorset has increased. However the proportion that are “DCC accountable” has improved through targeted work to reduce the number of delayed days in Community Hospitals. During the winter of 2017-18, Significant pressures were experienced in local acute and community hospitals - although the social care continued to perform well. A full report will be provided to the March 2018 meeting.

4.0 **Economic Growth Committee (Outcome: “Prosperous”)**

- 4.1 The Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee has had one fewer meetings than the other two committees during 2017-18. There was an early focus on broadband and mobile telephone connectivity – an indicator in the Prosperous outcome – and members remain satisfied with the direction of travel in these areas. The following discussions arose from outcomes monitoring reports:

4.2 Road Conditions

There has been a recent slight decline in road conditions on both principal and non-principal roads. Although this followed an extended period where road conditions had been consistently significantly better than in previous years, the Assistant Director for Highways acknowledged to the committee that this was an issue requiring further investigation. Worsening performance for road conditions is linked to reduced resources available for road maintenance. There was also a busier start to the winter period compared to recent years, requiring a high number of salting actions, which can impact on performance elsewhere in the service, with staff resource redirected to winter gritting. The committee welcomed an update on the Working Together Highways Initiative, through which the County Council seeks to support and maximise the contributions that the voluntary and community sector and Parish and Town Councils can make to enhance road maintenance in the county.

4.3 Educational attainment

- 4.3.1 As mentioned above, the committee discussed Key Stage 4 attainment levels and the inequalities that exist across Dorset. The committee asked to receive regular updates on this issue. 2016-17 data will be presented to the committee in March.
- 4.3.2 The discussion broadened to the issue of social mobility more generally, and the recently reported statistic that Weymouth and Portland has among the lowest rates of social mobility nationally. It was noted that the government had made “Opportunity Area” funding available for a number of areas of the country experiencing low levels of mobility, all of which had higher levels of social mobility than Weymouth and Portland. The committee asked for further investigation as to why Dorset had been unable to secure this funding. More generally, the committee had an appetite to look further into the issue of social mobility and its impact on economic growth.

5.0 Conclusion

5.1 Three areas have been identified in this report that the Audit and Governance Committee may consider need further investigation:

- Total crime/ Anti-social behaviour
- Educational attainment in Dorset schools
- Inequality in social mobility

5.2 Officers will be attending the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 25 April to discuss proposals for further work on social mobility. The Audit and Governance Committee could perhaps consider using this meeting to look at any other areas where further work may be required, either as identified in this report, or based on their own recollections of recent Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings, or any matters that may arise from the March 2018 round of meetings. Chairs and vice chairs can then be assured that the committees are focusing on the right areas in a sufficiently structured way that avoids duplication of activity.