

Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	25 January 2017
Officer	<u>Local Members</u> All Members <u>Lead Director</u> Mike Harries, Director for Environment and the Economy
Subject of Report	Corporate Plan: Outcomes focused monitoring report
Executive Summary	<p>In April 2016 the County Council adopted a Corporate Plan based on an outcomes focused approach. The Plan is comprised of four outcomes, reflecting the County Council’s commitment to helping people in Dorset be Healthy, Safe and Independent, and benefitting from a Prosperous economy.</p> <p>Alongside this, in February 2016 the County Council agreed a new committee structure to monitor and scrutinise progress against the Corporate Plan, with Overview and Scrutiny Committees for Economic Growth, People and Communities and Safeguarding. The Economic Growth Committee has oversight of the “Prosperous” corporate outcome.</p> <p>The Corporate Leadership Team has selected a set of “outcome indicators” that will measure progress towards the four outcomes. This indicator set provides the focal point from which we can understand whether or not we and our partners are making a difference to people’s lives in Dorset. A summary of the current status of the “Prosperous” indicators is provided at Appendix 1 of this report, and a detailed analysis is presented at Appendix 2. Members of this committee are invited to challenge the evidence and commentaries provided, and identify any issues requiring more detailed consideration.</p>
Impact Assessment:	<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 outcomes approach and the Corporate Plan.</p>

	<p>Use of Evidence: The outcome indicator data in this report is drawn from a number of local and national sources, including Business Demography (ONS) and the Employer Skills Survey (UK CES). Corporate oversight and ownership of performance management information and processes is a key component of the terms of reference of the corporate Planning and Learning Group. There is a lead officer for each outcome on this group 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 Councils approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as:</p> <p>Current: Medium Residual: Low</p> <p>Other Implications: None</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Considers the evidence of Dorset’s position with regard to the outcome indicators in Appendix 1 and 2; and: ii) Identifies any issues requiring more detailed consideration.
<p>Reason for Recommendation</p>	<p>The 2016-17 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 to assess progress against the corporate plan.</p>
<p>Appendices</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Population Indicators Summary – Prosperous 2. Population Indicators Full Report – Prosperous
<p>Background Papers</p>	<p>Corporate Plan Refresh 2016-17 (Report to the Cabinet, 13 April 2016)</p>
<p>Officer Contact</p>	<p>Name: John Alexander Tel: (01305) 225096 Email: j.d.alexander@dorsetcc.gov.uk</p>

1. Background

- 1.1 In April 2016 the County Council adopted a Corporate Plan based on an outcomes focused approach. Its core principle was to articulate the conditions of wellbeing that we are seeking to achieve for Dorset alongside our communities and partners – the “ends” – and work backwards, using the best available evidence, to establish the best “means” of achieving them with the resources available to us. The Corporate Plan is comprised of four outcomes, reflecting the County Council’s commitment to helping people in Dorset be **Healthy**, **Safe** and **Independent**, and benefitting from a **Prosperous** economy.
- 1.2 Alongside this, and following a member “Task and Finish” review of the County Council’s overview and scrutiny arrangements, the County Council, in February 2016, agreed that the future committee structure should be based on the new outcome focused Corporate Plan, with Overview and Scrutiny Committees for Economic Growth, People and Communities and Safeguarding, each having responsibility for monitoring progress with specific Corporate Plan outcomes. The Economic Growth Committee has oversight of the **Prosperous** corporate outcome.
- 1.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committees can, if necessary, seek approval via the new Audit and Governance Committee if there are any grounds to invoke formal scrutiny processes (e.g. *Call in*, *Call to Account* or *Councillor Call for Action*). A formal Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, comprising the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairmen and the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee, oversees and coordinates the whole process.

2. Outcome indicators

- 2.1 Following the adoption of the corporate plan, the Corporate Leadership Team, having sought advice from senior managers, selected a set of “outcome indicators” that will measure progress towards the four outcomes. This indicator set provides the focal point from which we can understand whether or not we and our partners are making a difference to people’s lives in Dorset.
- 2.2 As this is the first round of committees to which these outcome indicators are being presented, the detailed analysis of them is presented here in full at Appendix 2 (A summary is at Appendix 1). For this reason, this report is longer than is the intention for future versions. Live, up-to-date information on all of the indicators that support the corporate plan can be accessed on the [Dorset Outcomes Tracker](#) on *Sharepoint*. Councillors and officers can access this at any time, and it can be made available for real-time interrogation at committee meetings.
- 2.3 Members will note that no specific annual targets are attached to these indicators. In the past, target setting processes have been somewhat arbitrary, particularly in view of the fact that no single agency can be held to account for delivering an outcome such as, for example, reducing the number of people who are killed or seriously injured on Dorset’s roads. Rather, for each indicator, a trend line shows the direction of travel, and anticipated future direction if nothing different is done to influence progress.

3. The role of overview and scrutiny

- 3.1 It is for members (and managers) to challenge the evidence and commentaries provided, and decide if they are comfortable that the forecasts are acceptable. If not, it is the job of members, officers, partners and communities to work together to try to find ways to make improvements (or “turn the curve”) in a more acceptable direction. In effect, the target is to outperform an unacceptable forecast.
- 3.2 In June 2016, a [Planning and Scoping document](#) was presented to, and discussed by, all of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees as a suggested means for identifying issues requiring more detailed consideration by members and for initiating review

processes. This takes members through a process of specifying the purpose of any review, indicators of success and a defined methodology, and other considerations such as resource requirements, risks and timescales. Through such a process it will be possible for members to scrutinise not just progress towards outcomes, but the performance of County Council services in making positive contributions to those outcomes.

4. What are the big issues?

4.1 Members are strongly encouraged to consider all of the indicators within the remit of this committee, and form their own view about whether more should be done to improve particular outcomes. However, each outcome is sponsored by a Director and supported by a senior lead officer, and they will suggest particular areas of concern and future focus.

4.2 The sponsor for the “**People in Dorset Benefit from a Prosperous Economy**” outcome is Mike Harries, the Director for Environment and the Economy. The lead officer for the outcome is Maxine Bodell, Economy, Planning and Transport Service Manager. The current position with all of the “Prosperous” indicators is summarised in Appendix 1 and analysed in detail in Appendix 2.

4.3 Lead officers have suggested that the “Prosperous” indicators which require the most focus and attention are as follows:

- **Ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile incomes**

At a ratio of nearly 11:1 this is significantly higher than the national average and presents a barrier to prosperity (labour force mobility; key workers; ability for younger people and graduates to live and work in the area; homelessness; etc.). This has implications for other prosperity indicators such as productivity and fuel poverty.

- **Productivity rate (GVA)**

Whilst this has remained relatively static in recent years it remains significantly below the national average. Higher productivity is associated with higher skilled jobs and incomes so can help to boost recruitment, business start-ups and reduce the ratio of house prices to incomes. Note that this indicator may be reflected ‘by proxy’ in the separate indicator for births of new enterprises per 10,000 population, which shows a worsening situation and growing gap when compared with the national average. This could have a disproportionate impact upon Dorset’s more remote rural communities so the positive and improving situation with superfast broadband (a notable positive for Dorset) could assist in reversing this trend. However, last year’s business research for Dorset indicates a lack of business awareness, and therefore take up, of superfast, as well as a lack of business understanding that training their staff to use superfast effectively could bring business benefits and raise productivity. More work needs to be done to address this.

- **Percentage of employers that have skill shortage vacancies**

This affects the productivity of businesses and difficulties in recruitment can impact upon inward investment decisions as well as business start-ups. This indicator links with productivity and housing affordability issues.

4.4 Any criteria could be used for suggesting an indicator is worthy of special attention, but likely reasons include: the situation is getting worse in Dorset; Dorset is worse than other comparable areas; or the situation with the indicator is putting unsustainable pressure on service budgets, to the detriment of our ability to maintain good performance in other areas.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Dorset's relentless focus on outcomes, and on seeking to address how to make a real difference to people's lives in Dorset whilst living within our means, demonstrates a significant departure from our previous, more process-driven approaches to performance management. Our outcomes focused overview and scrutiny functions are also new, and genuinely innovative. Making it all work to its full potential will take time, effort, and a degree of cultural change. It is important that members note, and understand, that the processes for scrutiny and overview described in this report are very much not "set in stone". Officers are very committed to making this new and different approach demonstrably effective, and the feedback, insight and suggestions for improvements of members is fundamental to making that happen.
- 5.2 To support members as we develop and refine our outcomes approach, we have organised two half day training opportunities on 8 and 9 February. The seminars are specifically designed to provide members with an increased understanding of outcomes based activity and the tools to effectively scrutinise and challenge this. The courses will be facilitated by David Burnby, an internationally recognised expert in outcomes management. He has a wealth of experience and personally supported the recent development and agreement of a new 'Outcomes Framework' for the Northern Ireland Assembly - entitled 'Programme for Government' - a good example of how outcomes can be used to help different views to unite around a common purpose. We very much hope that you will be able to join us for one of these sessions. If you have not already signed up for one of them, you can do so by contacting the Learning and Organisational Development Manager, Helen Sotheran, h.l.sotheran@dorsetcc.gov.uk, 01305 224088.