

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Review into the Council's Performance Management framework</b>
<b>Report to be considered by:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	3 August 2010

**Purpose of Report:** To outline the proposed Terms of Reference and scope for a review into the Council's Performance Management framework.

**Recommended Action:** To agree the proposed Terms of Reference.

<b>Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission Chairman</b>	
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# Executive Report

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 There have been a number of recent discussions at the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission over the timing of receipt of performance monitoring reports. When taken in conjunction with the wider changes to the public sector performance reporting regime, an opportunity to position the authority's arrangements for the future is presented.
- 1.2 This report outlines a rationale for a review into performance management, sets out a proposal for the Terms of Reference and presents a suggested methodology.

## 2. Rationale for the review

- 2.1 The speed and scale with which the new coalition government is reshaping the delivery of local public services – and the systems which support them – is unprecedented.
- 2.2 One example of this is the national performance framework which is being fundamentally remoulded. The overarching external assessment of public sector working generally in an area, along with specific assessments of individual organisations (CAA), has been abolished, and a number of further national indicators have been deleted, or their collation postponed.
- 2.3 No firm guidance / indication has been provided as yet as to whether / how comparable independent assessments of councils' / public agencies' performance will be made.
- 2.4 However, the tone of ministers' discourse at present points to a clear expectation that – in support of the government's localism and transparency agendas – councils need to be actively considering more firmly how they report on how well they are doing to the local communities.
- 2.5 This is happening at a time when West Berkshire Council's 4 year corporate strategy is coming to an end. As such, the council is now starting on the process of thinking about how to define its role in this landscape of austerity and how it will deliver its responsibilities and achieve its ambitions over the coming 4 years.
- 2.6 The OSMC has previously expressed concern as to the length of executive cycle and the consequent timeliness with which they are able to review quarterly performance update reports. With it not being possible to bring forward the release of the quarterly performance reports to allow members to scrutinise individual areas of performance, this may be an opportunity - as discussed previously – to consider the value in OSMC looking more comprehensively at the council's progress in achieving its aims and objectives overall.

## 3. Proposed Terms of Reference

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission conducts a review into how the Council defines, manages and monitors strategic performance in a time of austerity, specifically:

- (1) to review processes for developing measures and activities to support and deliver the council's overarching aims / objectives, securing ownership across the organisation and linking these more firmly within more operational service planning;
- (2) to consider the OSMC's role in monitoring progress in relation to specific activities or measures or more wholly with respect to the council's overarching aims / objectives;
- (3) to provide recommendations to the Executive on how the localism / transparency agenda should be interpreted in West Berkshire with respect to reporting on performance and greater accountability in the public domain.

#### **4. Methodology**

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Commission establishes a time-limited task group to conduct the review, comprising 2 x Conservative councillors and 1 x Liberal Democrat. The task group should report back on its work to the 2 November 2010 OSMC meeting.

#### **5. Recommendation**

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Commission agrees the Terms of Reference for the review.

#### **Appendices**

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There are no Appendices to this report.