

# COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

## COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT 2007 (RECATAGORISATION ) 13<sup>TH</sup> September 2007

### Report of Head of Corporate Strategy

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise the Committee of the timetable for the forthcoming Comprehensive Performance Assessment and to invite comment upon the Self Assessment document.

**This report is public**

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Committee note the timetable for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) re-categorisation inspection
- (2) That the Committee provide officers with comments on the CPA Self Assessment document
- (3) That the Chief Executive be authorised to submit the CPA self assessment to the Audit Commission by the due date following comments from members of the committee and other comments received from consultees.

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) is the process by which the overall performance of every council in the country is judged by the Audit Commission. In 2003/04 Lancaster City Council was judged to be a FAIR authority<sup>1</sup>. Upper tier and unitary councils are re-assessed on an annual basis but for district councils a re-inspection only takes place where *'there is a realistic prospect of a change in category'*.
- 1.2 CPA in November 2003 judged Lancaster City Council to be an authority at the beginning of an wide ranging improvement programme. It acknowledged that major positive changes had just been put in place but concluded that it was difficult at that time to assess the potential impact they would have. Since then the council has a continuing strong track record of improvement, evidenced by good performance against targets and consistently positive 'Direction of Travel' and 'Use of Resources' assessments.

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<sup>1</sup> Scoring scale - 'poor', 'weak', 'fair', 'good' or 'excellent'

- 1.3 The council's application for re-categorisation was accepted by the Audit Commission in Autumn 2006, placing this authority amongst a very small group of rapidly improving councils nationally who made successful submissions. Our inspection has now been scheduled over a two week period commencing 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2007.

The timetable for the CPA process has been confirmed as follows:

Submit completed self assessment	21 <sup>st</sup> September 2007
Pre field work feedback meeting	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2007
On site	W/C 22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2007
End of on site feedback meeting	30 <sup>th</sup> October 2007
Draft report received for comment	7 <sup>th</sup> December 2007
Prepublication report	18 <sup>th</sup> January 2008
Report and CPA category publication	12 <sup>th</sup> February 2008

## 2.0 Proposal Details

- 2.1 The timetable above shows that the first step of the process is for the council to submit its own corporate Self Assessment document to the Audit Commission. This 20 page document makes the case to support our application for re-categorisation and details the key improvements the council has made since November 2003.
- 2.2 During the on-site week, the inspection team will 'test' the claims we make in our Self Assessment through interviews with staff, members and our partners. It will also provide the inspectors with a blue-print for their inspection activity and set the tone for the inspection. It is in effect the key document guiding the inspection process.
- 2.3 The latest version of the self assessment is attached and members are asked to offer any comments they would wish to make upon the assessment document prior to its submission to the Audit Commission. This same version has also been sent to Service Heads and the council's external auditors, KPMG, for them to offer their comments before finalising the document. Any comments received by the date of the meeting will be presented to the Committee however members are asked to delegate the signing off of the final version to the Chief Executive prior to despatch to the Audit Commission by 21<sup>st</sup> September.

A draft copy of the self assessment has also been sent to the printers to allow early preparatory work to be completed ahead of the committee's considerations.

## 3.0 Details of Consultation

- 3.1 All council services have been involved in the preparation of the Self Assessment document. All our key partners will have been consulted by the audit commission direct prior to the on site inspection in October.

### **CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

There are no implications directly arising from this report

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications other than the resources allocated to prepare the self assessment and co-ordinate on site activity.

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Section 151 officer has been consulted and has no comment to add

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are not legal implications directly arising from this report

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has nothing further to add

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Audit Commission – District Council CPA guidance

**Contact Officer:** Richard Tulej –Head of Corporate Strategy

**Telephone:** 01524 582079

**E-mail:** rtulej@lancaster.gov.uk

**Ref:**