

**Rossendale Borough Council
Performance Management and
Data Quality Strategy
and Action Plan**

1. Introduction

Performance Management can be defined as **“Taking action in response to actual performance, to achieve outcomes for users and the public that are better than they would otherwise be.”** Action taken to improve things may be at individual, team, service, corporate or community level.

In order to generate consistently good performance, the following elements have to be in place:

1. A strong vision of what the organisation is trying to achieve effectively communicated within the organisation
2. Robust and effective planning systems which ensure that the allocation of resources follows service demands and delivery is measured and monitored against clear targets
3. Staff who are empowered to act by providing clarity about who is accountable for what within clear managerial frameworks
4. A focus on community priorities based on facts about customer and citizen need

1.1 Performance Information

A effective performance management framework is reliant upon the availability of complete, accurate, reliable and timely performance data, as it by measuring this data that tells us whether we are currently achieving our targets and achieving the desired levels of performance.

Ensuring that the data underpinning all performance measures is of a sufficiently ‘high quality’, enables all users of the information to place confidence in what it is telling them, and thus informs and supports the management decision making process in relation to service provision and improvement.

1.1 Increased use of Performance Information by Regulators

The Government has expressed its intention to make greater use of the information provided by the performance indicators that are used by public bodies to assess the quality of public services and to reduce the use of more formal inspection processes. Accordingly, greater importance is now being given to the quality of data that is used to measure performance, as this determines the confidence the ‘end user’ can place in the information provided by such measures of performance.

1.2 Voluntary Standards for Data Quality

To improve their approach to data quality all public bodies are being asked to adopt the voluntary **‘Standards for Better Quality Data’**, developed by the Audit Commission, to support improvement of data quality in the public sector. These standards define a broad framework of management arrangements that are recommended to embed the principles of good practice and performance in relation to securing high quality data.

2. Purpose of the Strategy

This strategy document explains what we mean by Performance Management, where, when and how it is applied, and what everyone has to do to make it work effectively and to continually improve the Council's approach to performance management.

The overall purpose of this strategy is to set out how Rossendale Borough Council goes about managing its performance, by clearly setting out its performance management framework; and, by clearly identifying the role of Members, managers and staff in managing the Council's performance, both in the context of individuals and services and how they contribute to the Council's goals.

All stakeholders must be made aware of these roles and given appropriate support and training in order to fulfil them.

As the Council recognises that effective performance management is based upon high quality data, the strategy also sets out the Council's corporate commitment to data quality; its standards for Data Quality; and, the strategic objectives of the Council in relation to securing high quality data.

The Strategy is supported by a strategic action plan that clearly show what actions the Council intends to undertake to improve its approach to performance management and data quality and the on-going development of a 'Rossendale Briefing Sheets' for the Council's Covalent Performance Information system. It is intended that this should be an ongoing project involving both corporate and service specific applications, and, extend to the use of performance management with partner organisations.

It has been developed in partnership with Members and staff and is informed by an assessment of our progress in managing performance, building on what we believe to be our key strengths.

The Audit Commission will assess the effectiveness of Rossendale Council's approach to performance management through the annual progress assessment of the Council, with a separate review of data quality that will feed into the Council's 'Value for Money Assessment' and will also be used to inform a 'risk based' approach to the physical audit of the data quality which underpins performance information

3. Rossendale Council's Performance Management Framework

The Council is committed towards embedding a performance management framework that is robust, transparent and accountable and that shows how the Council and its partners intends to balance achieving national, regional and local priorities in a way that best meets the needs of the local community.

The foundations of the Council's Performance Management Framework is built upon achieving our ambitions for the Borough, which were determined through consultation with local people, and represent the things that they told us were important to them, as expressed through:

WHAT WE ARE HERE FOR – THE VISION AND MISSION

Rossendale Alive – The Partnership Vision

The vision for the Borough, as a whole is Rossendale Alive. This is set out in the Local Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy which sets out a strategy to improve the quality of life in Rossendale over the longer term (2020) and is split across 8 Strategic Objectives -

Community Safety – a place where people do not live in fear of crime;

Health – a place where vulnerable people are looked after and all residents can look forward to a long healthy life;

Education – a place where people of all ages will be well educated and capable of providing business with the human resource to compete in highly competitive global markets;

Environment – a place which has attractive rural settings, a fantastic street scene and is easily accessible for all;

Housing – a place where people have a choice of high quality housing which is affordable for all;

Economy – a place where job prospects and wages are high and the cost of living is low;

Community Network – a place where all opinions count and people respect and celebrate difference in gender; sexuality; race; culture and religion;

Culture – a place which is a cracking place to live for people of all ages and is widely accepted as a major place to visit.

8 x 8 by 2008 – The Council Mission

The Council's contribution to the vision is defined by its overarching mission of "8 x 8 by 2008". This means that by 2008 the Council is determined to have 8 out of 10 customers satisfied with its services. A basket of key success indicators was first established in April 2005 and reviewed in 2006 -7. showing corporate priority areas, that the Council is targeting for 'above average' performance by 2008/9 in relation to Best Value indicators, and locally determined 'achievement' for key actions in priority areas.

Rossendale Borough Council - Corporate Objectives

In a similar way to the Community Strategy, the Council has 8 Corporate Objectives of which five are shared with the Local Strategic Partnership (i.e., Environment; Housing; Culture; Economy; Community Involvement). In addition to the shared objectives, the Council has three internal objectives which are:-

Customers – being responsive and proactive to meet the needs of all our customers (i.e. "Putting Customers First")

Improvement – the continuous provision of high quality public services built upon the foundations of Finance, Risk, Performance, Procurement and Human Resources Management

Partnerships – increasing our capacity to deliver through effective partnerships

The Council's approach to delivering its objectives is through what we describe as the "Capacity Building Model of Local Government". This means that we will rigorously challenge how we do things to ensure that we have secured the best means of delivering the quality of service that local people want. We have set out what this model means in a policy statement which is available at www.rossendale.gov.uk/capacitybuilding

Rossendale Borough Council – Corporate Priorities

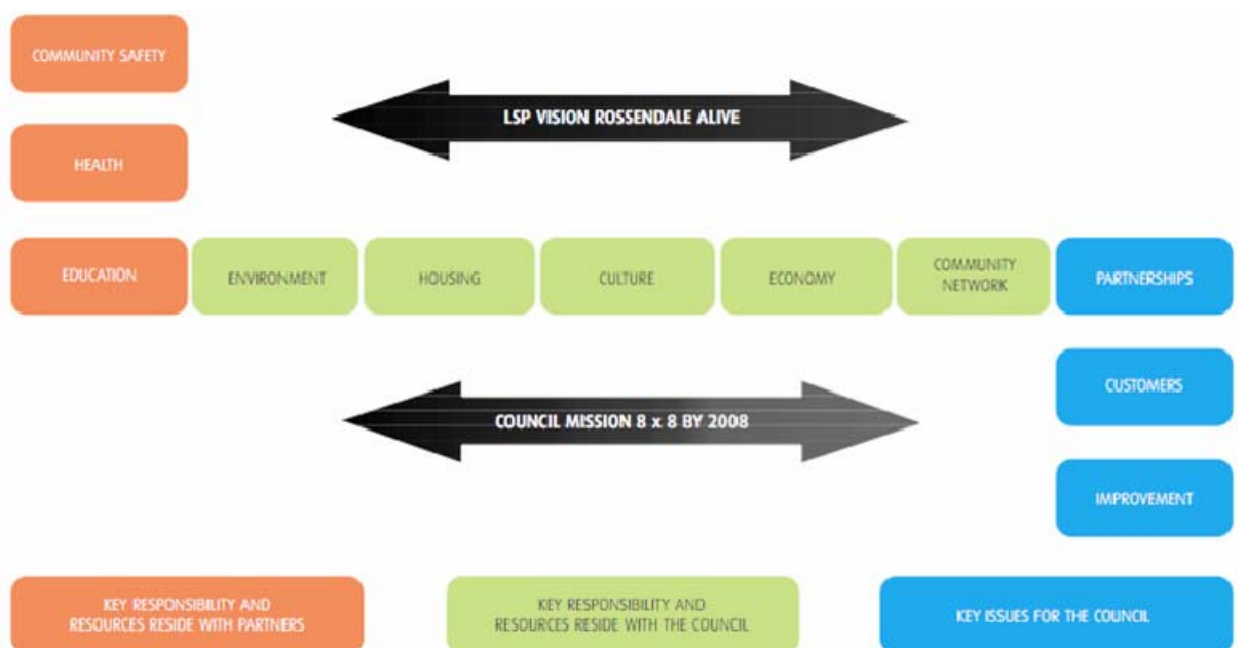
Across the 8 Corporate Objectives, local people and elected members have identified priorities for improvement. The aim of the prioritisation process is to ensure that the Council's resources and business plans are focused on delivering on the things that really matter to the well being of Rossendale residents and will contribute most to achieving the overall corporate objectives. The following list represents a list of Corporate priorities together with their associated Corporate Objective:-

- Delivering quality services to customers (Customers, Improvement)
- Delivering regeneration across the Borough (Economy, Housing)
- Keeping our Borough clean and green (Environment)
- Promoting Rossendale as a cracking place to live and visit (Economy)
- Improving health and well being across the Borough (Health, Housing)

Enabled by:

Strong financial management and the delivery of value for money services (Improvement)
 Equipping members to fulfil their role as leaders in the community (Community Network)
 Maintaining a workforce with the competencies to deliver the priorities for the Borough (Improvement). All these various strands tie together as shown below:

THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK



Rossendale Council's Golden Thread

That Rossendale Council's priorities are firmly based on the aspirations of local communities is central to our performance management framework. These priorities are an important strand that represent the core of the **Golden Thread** – which means the common themes that link:

- Rossendale's Community Strategy to the Council's Corporate Improvement Plan
- The Council's Corporate Improvement Plan to the Council's Business Plans
- The Council's Business Plans to the Council's Team Plans
- The Council's Team Plans to each Employees' Personal Development Plans.

Ultimately, maintaining the Golden Thread means that everything that Rossendale Council does can be related to the community's priorities and that each employee can see how their job contributes towards these.

National and Regional Priorities

Sitting on top of the community priorities, the government have set a number of national priorities, based around themes that local communities are most concerned about, and that they wish all public services to work in partnership to achieve.

- Raising standards across our schools
- Improving the quality of life of older people and of children, young people and families at risk
- Promoting healthier communities and narrowing health inequalities
- Creating safer and stronger communities
- Transforming our local environment
- meeting local transport needs more effectively
- Promoting the economic vitality of localities

In Rossendale, we are striving to achieve these priorities in a way which best suits the needs of local people, by exercising our 'Community Leadership' role, and working with partners such as Lancashire County Council, the Police, the Health Authority and the North West Development Agency.

In particular, the Council's participation in the Local Area Agreement for Lancashire is a way in which we can come together with our Lancashire partners, to jointly work together to achieve these priorities.

The chart on the following page maps out how each element feeds into the **Council's Golden Thread**.

National Drivers

How RBC works towards the delivery of the national "Shared Priorities" for Local Government, in a way that best meets local needs

Regional Drivers

How Rossendale Council works with regional partners and contributes to the 'Transformational Pennine Lancashire Agenda'

Lancashire Drivers

The Lancashire Partnership's Local Area Agreement – How do Rossendale Council work with Lancashire Partners to contribute to outcomes and targets in the Local Area Agreement?

Drivers from Rossendale's Local Community

Achieving the Vision "Rossendale Alive" –
Rossendale Councils Contribution to the Community Strategy - 3 Year Delivery Plan
How Rossendale Council works with local Partners to contribute to vision

**The Council's Corporate Drivers -
What does the Council intend to do achieve, national, regional and community priorities?**

**Organisational
Development Strategy**
– shows how it will
manage its staff will
contribute

Corporate Improvement Plan

**What does the Council plan to
achieve?
8 x 8 by 2008
Actions
Key Success Indicators
Risks**

**Medium Term Financial
Strategy – shows how
it will manage its
finances to contribute**

Service Level Contributions to Corporate Priorities

**The Councils 9 Service Plans with: Contributory Actions
Local and Best Value Indicator Targets Risks**

Service Team Level Contributions

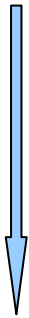
**Service team Plans
BVPI Improvement Plans**

Individual Employee Level

**Annual PD Process
One to One Supervision meetings**

**The Council's
Planning and
Budget Cycle**

JUNE

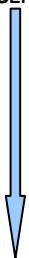


AUGUST

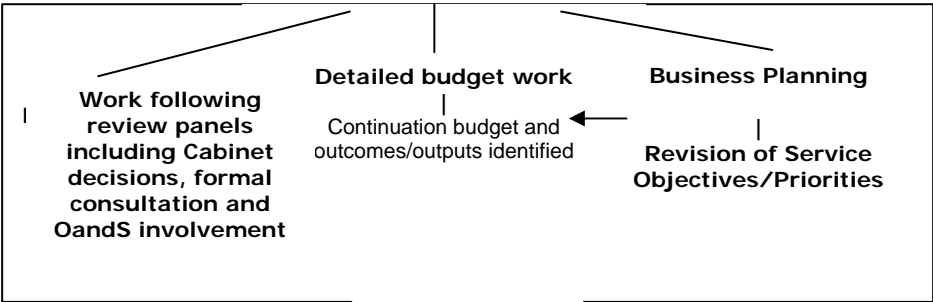
Corporate Improvement Plan
to reflect Community Strategy
key outcomes and outputs
identified

Policy and Budget Review Panels
Identify areas where changes in the way in
which services are delivered could create
headroom within the identified financial
scenario over the coming three years

SEPT



NOV



DEC



JAN

Draft Policy Budget and Headline Unit Tasks
Produced
Initial Consideration by Cabinet

Receipt of Settlement Figures
Revise draft Policy Budget and Business

Executive Launches Proposed Budget for Consultation

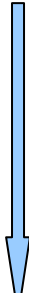
Revise Detail of Unit
Business Plan

Consultation

Final Unit Business Plans
approved by 31.3, reflecting
budget decisions

Budget set at February Council

FEB



Implementation

Rossendale Council's Commitment to Performance Management

Performance Management is a high priority in Rossendale and the Council is committed towards continuing to embed a performance management culture – where everybody is determined to get things right and there is a real desire to improve things for local people.

As a result the Council is committed to using performance information to help Members and managers decide how to make things better by using this information as an important management tool that provides a sound basis to:

- Help Members and managers identify, plan and prioritise how the Council can best contribute towards the achievement of national, regional and local priorities
- Guide the allocation of resources towards the achievement of priorities.
- Support and inform the Corporate, Business, Team and Individual Planning Processes.
- To set goals and targets within the Council's plans that are realistic and challenging, and to monitor and report upon their achievement.
- To demonstrate in a timely manner, the current levels of performance being achieved against the goals and targets within the Council's plans to all the Council's stakeholders.
- Enable management and staff to take timely, corrective action in areas of under-performance.
- Recognise, reward and share learning from areas of high performance.

The Council recognises that if the performance data supporting these decisions cannot be relied upon by the Council, for example if the achievement of service performance targets is under or over stated - this may lead to poorer decision within the Council that fails to deliver the anticipated value for money or to recognise and reward good performance.

To achieve high standards of data quality the Council intends to consistently apply the following standards across the authority.

5. The Council's Standards for High Quality Data

The council is committed to securing high quality data that meets both national and locally defined requirements. In this context, data quality can be defined as "***fitness for purpose***", and in relation to performance information, data quality means that the accuracy, validity, reliability, timeliness, relevance and completeness of data is fit for its intended end use.

The following standards define the general standards for data quality within the Council:

5.2 Accuracy - Data should be sufficiently detailed and within a reasonable margin of error that presents a fair picture of performance and to support informed decision-making at the most appropriate level. The costs and effort of collection must be balanced against its intended application.

5.3 Consistent Application of Definitions - The definitions for all performance indicators should be clear, un-ambiguous and carefully and consistently applied, with all relevant documentation being retained to provide an audit trail that demonstrates this.

5.4 Validity - All data should be statistically valid enough to provide a satisfactory representation of what it is intended to measure, thus enabling all users of the data to have confidence that it fairly and adequately reflects its intended purpose.

5.5 Reliability - All data, must reliably demonstrate the actual performance achieved, regardless of how, where and when it is collected by the Council. The data must be reliable enough to confidently reflect real changes over time, not just changes in the way the data has been collected.

5.6 Relevance - All the data collected, analysed and reported by the Council must be relevant to what the Council and its partners are striving to achieve by focusing on the achievement of their priorities. Too much data can distract from this focus and overwhelm users of data who need it to guide their decisions.

5.7 Timeliness - Data needs to be collected, analysed and reported frequently enough to monitor performance and enable the users of data to make management decisions in relation to current performance.

5.8 Completeness - All relevant data items attached to a performance indicator should be a fully recorded and complete.

5.9 Implementing the Standards in Rossendale

It is important to recognise that the degree, to which the data quality standards should be applied, can and should vary, according to the end purpose of the data. For example, with certain data, it may be acceptable to accept a small margin of error, to enable data to be produced quickly enough for it to be of use.

6. Rossendale Council's Strategic Objectives for Data Quality

The Council has set the following objectives to secure high quality data throughout the Council:

- Data quality is taken seriously within the Council and meets both national and local standards.
- Everybody within the Council takes ownership of their role and responsibility in relation to data quality and acts upon this.

- Everybody with a role in data quality is given appropriate training and guidance to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge in relation to data quality.
- The risks associated with data quality will be effectively managed by the Council and subject to regular formal reviews and quality checks.
- The systems and processes used by the Council produce high quality data that is fit for its intended purpose.
- Performance information is actively used by the Council to prioritise, plan and monitor the continual improvement of its services.
- The Council's systems for performance information systems are secure and allow the organisation to function under adverse circumstances.

6.1 Role and Responsibilities in Data Quality

The Council recognises that effective Performance Management and Measurement is underpinned by the use of high quality data and has agreed the following roles and responsibilities in relation to this.

6.2 The Portfolio Holder for Performance Management

The Portfolio Holder 'Champions' the use of effective performance management and measurement throughout the Council and both advocates and calls to account the role of Members, managers and staff in carrying out their responsibilities, so as to embed a 'Performance Management Culture', throughout the Council.

6.3 The Council's Portfolio Holders

Portfolio Holders hold regular meetings with the relevant Head of Service for their portfolio in order to review and challenge the progress of the implementation of the Service's Business Plan. This includes:

- The effective completion of the actions within Business Plans
- The achievement of stated targets for **both local and national indicators**
- Ongoing review of operational risks
- The compliance with the stated objectives for 'Data Quality'

Portfolio Holders will also engage with the relevant Head of Service in the development of priorities, actions and targets as the annual business plan is being reviewed and refreshed.

6.4 The Cabinet

Members of this committee regularly scrutinise, challenge and where necessary 'call in' more detailed reports of the Council's progress against:

- **Corporate Plan** – scrutinising the Corporate Improvement Plan ‘RAG’ (red, amber, green) on a quarterly basis strategic actions as shown in the Council’s and a six monthly report against the Council’s Key Success Indicators

(Cycle of Partner performance Reporting to be agreed)

- **LSP 3 Year Delivery Plan**
- **Green Vale Homes**
- **Rossendale Leisure Trust**
- **Capita Revenue and Benefits Contract**
- **Local Area Agreement**
- **Corporate Risk Register - Reviewing the Council’s Corporate Risk Register every 6 months**
- **BVPI’s - receiving the Council’s quarterly BVPI performance reports as an information item**

6.5 Audit and Performance Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Members of this committee regularly scrutinise, challenge and where necessary ‘call in’ more detailed reports of the Council’s progress against:

- **Best Value Performance Indicators and Key Success Indicators** – scrutinising quarterly performance against BVPI’s that are reported monthly and bi-annual report against BVPI’s reported annually
- **Challenge** - providing a ‘challenge’ role against indicators that are not achieving their targets
- **Critical friends** - Act as ‘critical friends’ in constructively reviewing current working practices in order to improve performance
- **Challenge** – the role of the Cabinet in scrutinising and challenging the performance of the Council and its partners (additional role suggested by OandS following consultation on the above

6.6 The Councils Programme Management Board

Roles be included at a later date with the development of the strategy

6.7 Policy and Change Management Service

In relation to the performance management of the Council this service is responsible for:

- The overall strategic development and application of the Council’s Performance Management Framework in line with current best practice
- Advising and supporting the Council Members, Managers, Staff and Partners in complying with the Council’s policies in relation to performance management and data quality
- Producing monthly and quarterly reports that demonstrate the Council’s performance against BVPI’s, KSI’s and actions in the Corporate Improvement Plan
- Providing a lead role in developing the Council’s Corporate Improvement Plan and ensuring that the Council meets its statutory requirements in relation to the production of the Council’s Best Value Performance Plan

- Providing a lead role in preparing for and servicing the Audit Commission's requirements for inspection activities relating to performance management and data quality
- Providing on-going support and guidance for users in relation to the on-going use and development of the 'Covalent' performance system.

6.8 Heads of Service

Each Head of Service is responsible within their service area for:

- Producing their annual Business Plan in accordance with the corporate time table and guidance
- Using performance information to help prioritise and manage service improvement by setting performance targets for the next three years
- Reviewing the development of team action plans and that support targets contained in their Business Plan and reviewing progress against these
- Ensuring that performance up-dates are provided against Business Plan actions and monthly KSI's on the 10th of each month following corporate guidance
- Delegating responsibility for BVPI's and local indicators to a named officer and reviewing their performance in complying with the Council's policies and standards as part of the annual PDP process
- Ensuring that the data that supports stated performance against best value and local indicators, indicator that lie within their service area, is reliable, accurate and timely and conforms to Audit Commission definitions, and retaining evidence trails that proves this
- Conducting an annual review of data quality and the supporting audit trails that demonstrate this following corporate guidance and retaining evidence of this process

6.9 BVPI Responsible Officers

These Officers are designated responsibility by their Head of Service for specific performance indicators, this responsibility includes:

- Placing the outturn of performance against PI's that are reported monthly on Covalent by the 10th of the following month together with monthly, quarterly and annual supporting notes that describe current performance , following corporate guidance
- Producing an annual 'Team Action Plan' that shows how the target against an indicator or group of indicators will be achieved
- Producing a BVPI action plan that shows what actions will be taken for an indicator that is shown as 'red' against its monthly target
- Ensuring that the data that supports the indicator is valid, accurate and reliable
- For indicators that are reported annually, providing a six monthly estimate against the achievement of the target, together with supporting notes
- Where the indicator is designated as not achieving target (5% below target or locally defined amount) producing a BVPI Action Plan that shows the action to be taken to improve by the 10th of the month or at month six, for annual indicators.
- Informing your HoS/Line Manager of any problems in collecting the indicator as they arise

- Participating in an annual review with your HoS/Line Manager of the quality of data and supporting audit trails prior to reporting the end of year outturn
- Maintaining an audit trail on Covalent that demonstrates the accuracy, validity and reliability of the data and that shows how and and is capable of reproducing the outturn reported at the end of the year

Implementation of the Data Quality Policy

The Strategic Action Plan for Data Quality (see appendix 1) together with the development of 'A User Guide and Protocol for Covalent', which is the Council's performance system, demonstrates how the Council intends to achieve its strategic objectives for securing high quality standards of data.

(Appendix) – Action Plan

(Appendix) – Time – Table of Performance Reporting