

## **COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT – UPDATE**

### **1 Purpose**

To report the results of the “refreshed” Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) for 2003 and recent proposals by the Audit Commission for the next round of compulsory corporate assessments.

### **2 The Panel is recommended to:**

- (a) note the marked improvement in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment of our services**
- (b) seek performance improvements to consolidate our position on service scores and improve them where possible and to develop our corporate processes, so as to increase the chances of improving our CPA rating in 2005.**

### **3 Background**

3.1 The Panel will recall that the CPA has two main components:

- A **service score**, based on selected performance indicators, best value and other inspections and assessments of plans and financial processes
- A **council ability score** based on a corporate assessment inspection.

3.2 The CPA is being refreshed with a limited amount of data in 2003 and 2004. To attain an excellent rating from this we would either have to:

- Make a modest improvement in our weighted service score from the 39 we got in 2002 to 42 in 2003, and then volunteer for a full re-run of the corporate assessment. We would have to make this request by 31 January 2004. Then, to reach excellent on this, we would have to lift our score on council ability (i.e. through the corporate assessment inspection) from the 34 achieved in 2002 to 40 in 2003

Or

- We would have to attain a weighted service score of 46 or more and then undergo a light touch corporate assessment to check we were still good at corporate working.

3.3 The results of the refreshed CPA service scores were published on 18 December.

3.4 Section 7 of this report comments on preliminary proposals by the Audit Commission for a full revision of the basis of the CPA for upper tier councils, which is due from 2005.

### **4 Refreshed CPA service scores in 2003**

4.1 The Audit Commission’s report card on the council for 2003 is over the page.

4.2 Our total weighted service score for the CPA in 2003 given in Appendix 1 has risen from 39 to 44, only two points short of the score needed to be graded as an excellent authority.

4.3. The main improvements in our scores were in:

- Our performance on the indicators and inspections relating to benefits, social services to adults, road safety and housing management
- The quality of the data we have submitted, which meant that 'qualifications' have been lifted on some of our data that had previously led to our performance being given the lowest score.

We also benefited from some changes in the definitions of certain indicators.

4.4 It is encouraging that we have not slipped back on the assessment of any services. However, our position appears to be near the lower limit for scores on the following, where we should make every effort to improve further on the performance indicators for the current year:

- collection rates for the Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates
- paying invoices within 30 days or within the terms agreed for contracts
- Human resources indicators, particularly on the diversity of our workforce
- Planning application processing times
- Recycling: our performance on this would benefit significantly from introducing improved recycling containers, as sought in a bid to DEFRA, but which would need additional revenue support from the council in 2005/6.

4.5 There is also a risk that in future years it may be difficult to maintain the current performance due to financial constraints. This could particularly affect Social Services. Other key factors will be:

- our performance in the Ofsted inspection of the Local Education Authority next summer
- the results of a survey of residents' satisfaction with a wide range of services that is currently being done (and which is carried out every three years) that will provide many of the figures used in the next refreshing of the CPA assessment in 2004.

## **5 Should a re-run of the corporate assessment be sought?**

5.1 The jump in our CPA service scores means that we are eligible to apply for a full corporate assessment inspection in 2004. However, even with the improvements that we have made e.g. in performance management, we may not yet be able to demonstrate that we have delivered a step change in corporate working in terms of the factors assessed in the CPA corporate assessment such as focus, capacity, investment and future plans. The extent to which we can demonstrate that the budget and the medium term resource strategy are clearly focused on our priorities could be a key test. It has therefore been agreed that we should not volunteer for a new corporate assessment yet, but give ourselves a further year to improve our services and corporate processes.

## 6 The pattern of changes nationally

6.1 The updating of the CPA service scores for the 150 single tier authorities and county councils in 2003 has led to 26 authorities moving up at least one category in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and 9 have gone down a category. Improvement in the scores tended to be greater for the authorities in the lowest two of the five ratings.

## 7 Major changes to the CPA from 2005

The Audit Commission is consulting on the next full revision of the CPA from 2005. The following changes seem likely:

### 7.1 Corporate assessments

For the next round of compulsory corporate assessments, the Audit Commission will only use well-qualified, trained and accredited inspection teams. This means that the Audit Commission is unlikely to be able to do the assessments in every upper tier authority in 2005. They are likely to start with the worst first. Therefore, as an authority rated 'good', our next compulsory corporate assessment may not be done until 2006 or 2007.

### 7.2 Cross cutting priorities

There will be a new focus on how councils are implementing the shared priorities agreed between the national government and local government (through the LGA). These are:

- **children and young people** - attainment, attendance and pre-school provision, better quality services and promoting the welfare and development of children
- **sustainable communities**, including regulating and enabling economic vitality, supporting people in(to) work, better housing, cleansing, managing the physical environment and environmental sustainability
- **safer and stronger communities**, including reducing crime, anti social behaviour, drug and substance misuse; promoting citizenship, community cohesion and addressing disadvantage; reducing accidents and more effective civil protection
- **healthier communities** – an active life, independence and better quality services for older people and reducing inequalities for families
- **older people**
- **transport** – accessibility and its impact on economic development and the environment.

These priorities mirror those in our draft community strategy quite well. We are likely to be asked which of these are a priority here and would then be assessed on those that are relevant to us. The assessment of these shared priorities would look at how well we:

- contribute to the Local Strategic Partnership and other partnerships
- achieve our local targets, but there might be some national guidelines on relevant measures of success as well.

Scoring of basic service delivery and the use of resources would probably continue to be features of the CPA .

### 7.3 Other possible changes

The revised approach to CPA from 2005 may also pay more attention to:

- The self assessment done by the authority
- Users' and citizens' views of services
- The links made with the next generation of Local Public Service Agreements, for which there is likely to be more local discretion, and with achieving neighbourhood renewal floor targets
- Measures of cost effectiveness.

The Audit Commission will also look again at dividing up the overall CPA judgement into a score for current level of service and one for prospects for improvement. They may also give authorities more say in arriving at the overall rating.

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Head of Strategy

### **Consultation**

The Executive agreed an earlier version of this report on 18 December 2003. The Corporate Management Team discussed the material in this report on 26 November 2003.

### **Background papers**

CPA 2003 scorecard , How Portsmouth City Council is performing  
Comprehensive performance assessment – scores & analysis of performance for single tier and county councils in England 2003

Information used for this report is held in a file in the Strategy Unit.

me/bv/cpa perfp jan 03

**APPENDIX 1: PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL SCORES ON SERVICE PERFORMANCE FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT IN 2002 & 2003**

Service	Unweighted scores (out of 4)		Weighting	Weighted scores	
	2002	2003		2002	2003
Education	3	3	X4	12	12
Social Services - children	3	3	X2	6	6
Social Services - adults	2	3	X2	4	<b>6</b>
Environment	2	3	X2	4	<b>6</b>
Housing	3	3	X2	6	6
Libraries & leisure	3	3	X1	3	3
Benefits	1	2	X1	1	<b>2</b>
Use of resources	3	3	X1	3	3
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>39</b>	<b>44</b>
Minimum score needed to be a 'good' authority				38	
Minimum score needed to be a 'excellent' authority				46	