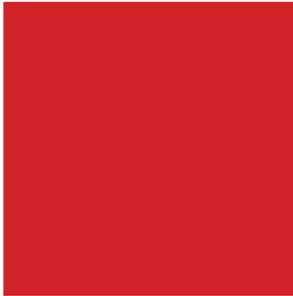
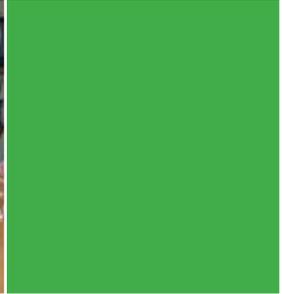




PERTH &
KINROSS
COUNCIL

How Good is Our Council?

A guide to evaluating Council Services
using quality indicators



Securing the future... | *Improving services*

| *Enhancing quality of life* | *Making the best use of public resources*

Foreword

Perth & Kinross Council is committed to being an excellent Council, ensuring delivery of high performing, quality services that meet the needs of users and communities. Our agenda is about achieving excellence through people, modernising our organisations and working in partnership with other bodies.

The Council is committed to improving services, enhancing the quality of life and making the best use of public resources. As a result, we are driven by an agenda of continuous improvement - seeking to modernise the way we work by, for example, removing duplication and inefficiencies while focussing on the quality of everything we do. Self-evaluation is a key to this overall approach.

This guide is designed to support self-evaluation across all the services within Perth & Kinross Council. At the heart of this is a set of quality indicators that can be drawn on for both self-evaluation and in preparation for inspection/external scrutiny. The indicators are designed to help the Council to identify strengths in service provision and to identify where further development or improvement is required. The indicators do not focus solely on performance in relation to quantitative or statistical measures but are designed to help make judgements on the quality of what we do.

Bernadette Malone
Chief Executive

The guide is not intended to replace existing approaches to evaluation in use across the Council but to support them and give a greater coherence to the efforts which we are already making in terms of improving services. It does however emphasise the importance of having a clear focus on impact and outcomes while evaluating services. Self-evaluation should lead to the maintenance of high standards, to targeted action on areas needing to be improved, to continuous improvement in pursuit of excellence and to celebrate our successes. Rigorous examination of impact and outcomes for the users of our services and the people of Perth and Kinross is essential to achieve improvements in all aspects of our work.

The organisational vision states that the only way to achieve our priorities for the communities of Perth and Kinross is through a dynamic, innovative local Council focused on delivering and facilitating excellent services. The diagram overleaf outlines the link between the Council's objectives within the Corporate Plan and how the self-evaluation framework supports the delivery and improvement in these outcomes.

The opportunities for the Council have never been greater. This approach to quality assurance will support us in meeting these new challenges successfully.



Themes	Key Questions	Core Quality Indicators	Business Management & Improvement Plan	Corporate Plan Objectives
Impact	What key outcomes have we achieved?	Improvements in performance	Priorities for improvement identified through the process of effective service self-evaluation	A safe, secure and welcoming environment
	How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders? (Key Areas 1-4)	Adherence to statutory principles and fulfilment of statutory duties Impact on service users Impact on staff Impact on the local community Impact on the wider community		
Processes	How good is our delivery of key processes?	Delivering services Developing, managing and improving partnerships/relationships Inclusion, equality and fairness Improving the quality of services to stakeholders	Priorities for improvement identified through the process of effective service self-evaluation	Healthy, caring communities
	How good is our management? (Key Areas 5-8)	Policy review and development Participation of service users and other stakeholders Planning Sufficiency, recruitment and retention Deployment and teamwork Development and training Partnership working Financial management Resource management Information systems		
Leadership	How good is our leadership? (Key Area 9)	Vision, values and aims Leadership and direction Leading people and developing partnerships Leadership of innovation, change and improvement		Educated, responsible and informed citizens Confident, active and inclusive communities

What is our new capacity to improve?
(Key Area 10)

Guide 1

General introduction and a simple approach to using quality indicators to support self-evaluation



How Good is Our Council?

A guide to evaluating Council Services using quality indicators

‘How Good is Our Council?’ is intended to be used across Perth & Kinross Council to assist services and the Council as a whole to evaluate how well it is doing in a rigorous, robust, systematic and consistent way.

It is meant to be used as a ‘toolkit’ to support the overall self-evaluation process. It is *not* intended to be read from cover to cover, but simply as guidance when undertaking any self-evaluation exercise - whether at individual Team, Division, Service or Council level. To assist with this, it has been divided into three parts:

Guide 1
General introduction and a simple approach to using quality indicators to support self-evaluation

- Part 1** *The role of generic quality indicators*
- Part 2** *The structure of the generic quality indicators*
- Part 3** *Using the guidance to complete a self-evaluation exercise*

Guide 2
Indicators, themes and illustrations

- Part 1** *Applying the generic quality indicators*
- Part 2** *The six-point scale and illustrations*

Guide 3
Asking questions and providing evidence to support the self-evaluation process

- Part 1** *Self-evaluation and sources of evidence*
- Part 2** *Self-evaluation questions*

The section above highlighted in bold indicates which particular guide you are reading.

Part 1

The role of generic quality indicators

A coherent and sustained approach to improving quality **1.1**

This framework consists of six essential elements which should characterise both the quality improvement systems of the Council, individual services and the processes which we use when working together to raise the quality of the services we provide.

The six elements seek to ensure that, whatever approach to quality improvement the Council uses, that approach will:

- *articulate clearly the desired outcomes for people who use our services;*
- *set challenging targets and improvement objectives for achieving successful outcomes for everyone who uses our services;*
- *have, within and across services, effective arrangements for evaluating systematically and rigorously whether successful outcomes are being achieved;*
- *ask demanding questions about the performance of Services and the Council itself;*
- *use the information from evaluation to make continuous and sustained improvements to achieve successful outcomes; and*
- *clarify leadership and accountability roles for achieving improved outcomes.*

This guidance is not intended to replace specific approaches to self-evaluation and quality improvement. Rather, it is intended to help systematise and give greater coherence to the efforts which Services are already making to improve quality within the context of provision of services for users.

Evaluation questions **1.2**

The revised Corporate Improvement Framework is now based around six key, high level questions:

- 1 *What key outcomes have we achieved?*
- 2 *How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?*
- 3 *How good is our delivery of key processes?*
- 4 *How good is our management?*
- 5 *How good is our leadership?*
- 6 *What is our capacity for improvement?*

These six high-level questions are consistent with other well-established quality improvement models currently in use in the public, private and voluntary sectors including: Charter Mark, Investors in People, the Excellence Model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) and aspects of ISO9000. The approach is also consistent with the principles of Best Value, the statutory framework which is provided in the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. They also reflect the models of evaluation used within a number of external scrutiny regimes such as HMI, SWIA and any of the inspectorates concerned with the inspection of services to children and young people. It builds on the self-evaluation work already begun within Perth & Kinross Council which led to the adoption of the Organisational Change Improvement Plan.

Indicators

1.3

There are three types of indicator or standard which will be used as part of the self-evaluation process within the Council. These three categories are:

- *generic quality indicators*
- *specific indicators and standards; and*
- *national targets and key performance improvement indicators.*

In carrying out evaluations of services, evaluators will refer to the national targets and key performance indicators when examining quantitative data on the performance of services. Where no relevant national measures exist, consideration should be given to using or developing local ones to measure performance against. These indicators are particularly relevant when addressing the first two of the six high-level questions - those concerned with outcomes and impact, respectively (Questions 1 and 2).

1.3.1 Generic quality indicators

Generic quality indicators give focus to the collection and evaluation of evidence required to answer each of the six high-level questions. As Figure 1 on page 11 shows, the indicators are linked to key areas and the six high-level questions. The structure and design of the indicators are explained in more detail in Part 2 of this guide.

The high-level questions and indicators are consistent with other widely used quality improvement models. Like the six high-level questions, the generic quality indicators are strategic in character.

They are designed to help both internal and external evaluators inter-relate fundamental aspects of provision of:

- *the outcomes from, and impact of, services;*

- *the processes used in delivering services; and*
- *the leadership and direction shown in providing continually improving services.*

By examining the links between these fundamental aspects, evaluators can create a holistic picture of the quality of service delivery and can assess the capacity of the Council to improve the quality of services.

Used systematically across the Council, the generic indicators will contribute to the development of a common language and shared understanding of quality issues across services, and will give greater coherence to both self-evaluation and external audit/inspection. Guides 2 and 3 explain how the generic quality indicators can be used to assess the quality of the work being undertaken across the Council.

1.3.2 Specific indicators and standards

While the generic quality indicators should be applied in answering the six high-level questions, there will be situations in which evaluations will have to be informed by use of specific indicators, standards or other protocols. These include indicators which are used in a specific sector such as education or housing, or which have been developed to allow a particular focus, such as child protection. Use of specific indicators is most likely when answering the high-level question “How good is our delivery of key processes?”

Where indicators or standards do not exist, other forms of guidance can indicate the direction in which services can be improved, for example: EFQM, Charter Mark, ISO9000, Investors in People.

1.3.3 National targets and key performance improvement indicators

It is essential that in the self-evaluation of services, the quality of outcomes and the impact of services are rigorously evaluated. This is recognised in the generic quality indicators, where indicators related to high-level questions 1 and 2 are concerned with outcomes and impact respectively.

While the use of local targets should play an important part in such evaluations, the use of national indicators in answering these questions will support a fair, objective and consistent approach to the evaluation of the impact of services across the Council.

Part 2

The structure of the generic quality indicators

Structure and design of generic quality indicators

2.1

The structure of the generic quality indicators has been developed in accordance with the principles of the Excellence Model of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) and can be used in conjunction with other quality models, for example, Investors in People, Charter Mark and ISO 9000. Evidence produced through the use of these or other evaluation models, and through the use of specific indicators, can be used in evaluations based on the generic quality indicators.

The structure of the indicators is based on the six high-level questions listed in Part 1. Associated with the six questions are ten key areas, one or more of these being linked to each question. One or more quality indicators further map out each key area. Answers to the questions are found through examination of each key area using the indicators to ensure that the evaluation is both rigorous and comprehensive.

This is an analytical process designed to identify strengths and weakness in service provision. It should not, however, get in the way of building up an overall picture of how Services work to meet the needs of stakeholders. Key areas are inter-related. The quality of delivery of services clearly influences their impact and, in turn, the quality of outcomes achieved for service users. To complete the quality assurance circle, effective leaders need to monitor outcomes continuously in order to identify aspects of service provision that need to be improved.

High-level questions and key areas

2.2

The relationship between high-level questions and key areas can be seen by considering each high-level question in turn:

What key outcomes have we achieved?

The associated key area is:

Key Area 1

Key performance outcomes

This Key Area focuses on the overall performance of the Council in relation to its aims and objectives, and the extent to which it achieves continuous improvements in performance. The Key Area helps the Council to evaluate its success in delivering measurable outcomes as specified in legislation and programmes for development. National quantitative measures - such as Statutory Performance Indicators - can be used, along with local measures, to assess the achievement of outcomes and the extent to which improvements in outcomes have been achieved. Key Area 1 also focuses on the extent to which the Council fulfils its statutory duties. Evidence includes trends over time and other aggregated data which provide indications of successes in improving the quality of services, both overall and in comparison with other service providers.

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

The associated key areas are:

Key Area 2
Impact on users of services

Key Area 3
Impact on staff

Key Area 4
Impact on the community

Key Areas 2, 3 and 4 focus on the impact on important groups of stakeholders of the services provided by the Council. They consider the benefits that stakeholders derive from the services provided. Evaluation in these key areas takes into account direct observation and quantitative data, together with evidence of stakeholders' views, to arrive at overall judgements of impact of the services on stakeholders.

Where evidence from these sources conflicts or indicates significant weaknesses, organisations should follow audit trails to identify and address the possible causes, using indicators from other key areas or relevant specific indicators. This investigation and analysis could, for example, focus on a number of issues, such as the quality of services provided, processes for communicating with, and involving stakeholders, and/or the management of information.

How good is our delivery of key processes?

The associated key area is:

Key Area 5
Delivery of services

Key Area 5 focuses on the delivery of services by individual Services and/or the Council. It provides indicators to evaluate the quality of processes for delivering services. These include the processes for developing, managing and improving partnerships with service users and other stakeholders. It also covers inclusion, equality and fairness. Key Area 5 also considers the effectiveness of processes for improving the quality of services provided.

How good is our management?

The associated key areas are:

Key Area 6
Policy development and planning

Key Area 7
Management and support of staff

Key Area 8
Partnerships and resources

Key Areas 6, 7 and 8 focus on the management activities necessary to ensure effective service delivery and deliver best value. These activities include processes for developing and updating policies, for involving stakeholders, for operational planning, for managing staff, finance and resources and for developing productive partnerships.

Strengths and weaknesses in these areas will affect the quality of services delivered (Key Area 5), their impact on stakeholders (Key Areas 2, 3 and 4) and the performance of an organisation or partnership in achieving key outcomes (Key Area 1).

How good is our leadership?

The associated key area is:

Key Area 9
Leadership and direction

Key Area 9 focuses on the strategic leadership and direction of individual Services and/or the Council in delivering services. It considers their corporate purpose and the expression and delivery of their aim through strategic planning with partner agencies and the community. It considers the quality of leadership at the strategic level, as well as within teams and Services. Key Area 9 also examines the involvement of elected members in leading the Council.

What is our capacity for improvement?

The associated key area is:

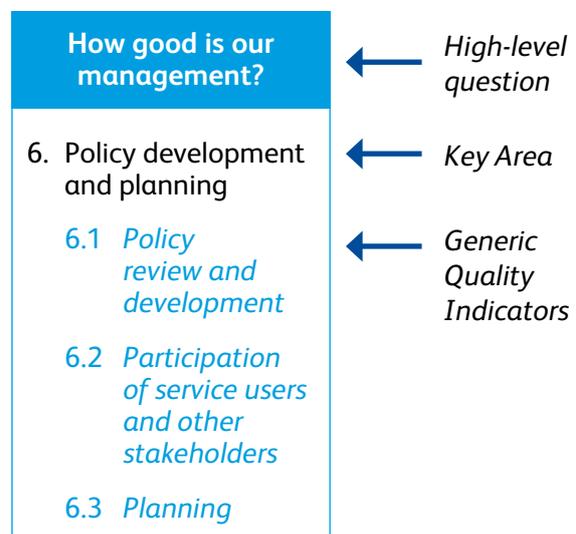
Key Area 10 Capacity for improvement

The final high-level question requires a global judgement to be made, based on evidence and evaluations from all other key areas. This judgement is a forward-looking assessment, based on a review of past practice in leadership, planning and improvement, but also taking account of contextual factors which might influence the capacity of services and/or the Council to improve the quality of services in the future. Such factors might include changes of senior staff, plans to restructure, or significant changes in funding.

Key areas and generic quality indicators

2.3

Each key area is further elaborated into a number of generic quality indicators. These help evaluators take a comprehensive and rigorous look at that key area. This is illustrated schematically below. One of the three key areas linked to the high-level question “How good is our management?” is Key Area 6 - Policy development and planning. This, in turn, has three indicators associated with it - 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3.



Key Questions				
What key outcomes have we achieved?	How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?	How good is our delivery of key processes?	How good is our management?	How good is our leadership?
<p>1. Key Performance Outcomes</p> <p>1.1 <i>Improvement in performance</i></p> <p>1.2 <i>Adherence to statutory principles and fulfilment of statutory duties</i></p>	<p>2. Impact on service users</p> <p>2.1 <i>Impact on service users</i></p> <p>3. Impact on staff</p> <p>3.1 <i>Impact on staff</i></p> <p>4. Impact on the community</p> <p>4.1 <i>Impact on the local community</i></p> <p>4.2 <i>Impact on the wider community</i></p>	<p>5. Delivery of key processes</p> <p>5.1 <i>Delivering services</i></p> <p>5.2 <i>Developing, managing and improving partnerships and relationships with service users and other stakeholders</i></p> <p>5.3 <i>Inclusion, equality and fairness</i></p> <p>5.4 <i>Improving the quality of services to stakeholders</i></p>	<p>6. Policy Development and planning</p> <p>6.1 <i>Policy review and development</i></p> <p>6.2 <i>Participation of service users and other stakeholders</i></p> <p>6.3 <i>Planning</i></p> <p>7. Management and support of staff</p> <p>7.1 <i>Sufficiency, recruitment and retention</i></p> <p>7.2 <i>Deployment and teamwork</i></p> <p>7.3 <i>Development and training</i></p> <p>8. Resources</p> <p>8.1 <i>Partnership working</i></p> <p>8.2 <i>Financial management</i></p> <p>8.3 <i>Resource management</i></p> <p>8.4 <i>Information systems</i></p>	<p>9. Leadership</p> <p>9.1 <i>Vision, values and aims</i></p> <p>9.2 <i>Leadership and direction</i></p> <p>9.3 <i>Leading people and developing partnerships</i></p> <p>9.4 <i>Leadership of innovation, change and improvement</i></p>

What is our capacity for improvement?

- 10. Capacity for Improvement
- Global judgement based on evidence of all key areas, in particular outcomes, impact and leadership

Generic quality indicators and themes

2.4

Each quality indicator is, in turn, broken down into a number of themes that identify areas which may merit closer examination. For example, the indicator 6.1, Policy review and development, has four themes. The relationship between the high-level question, key area, generic quality indicator and themes is shown below.

Key Area → **Key Area 6: Policy development and planning**

Key Question → **How good is our management?**

No	Quality Indicator	Themes
6.1	Policy review and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range and appropriateness of policies • Coherence with council-wide policy • Links to vision, values and aims • Formulating, disseminating, evaluating and updating policies

Generic Quality Indicator →

Themes →

Gathering and evaluating evidence on these four themes will help evaluators to draw conclusions about indicator 6.1, Policy review and development. When they link the evidence and evaluations for indicator 6.1 with those compiled in a similar way for indicators 6.2 and 6.3, they can draw conclusions about Key Area 6. By carrying out a similar process for Key Areas 7 and 8, and combining the evidence and evaluations with those for Key Area 6, evaluators can answer the high-level question: “How good is our management?”.

The structure of all the high-level questions, key areas, generic quality indicators and themes is laid out in the following pages.

Key Area 1: Key performance outcomes

What key outcomes have we achieved?		
No	Quality Indicator	Themes
1.1	Improvements in performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance data and measures showing trends over time • Overall quality of services provided by individual services and across the Council as a whole • Performance against aims, objectives and targets
1.2	Adherence to statutory principles and fulfilment of statutory duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial performance • Compliance with legislation, and responsiveness to guidance and codes of practice

Key Area 2: Impact on users of services

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?		
No	Quality Indicator	Themes
2.1	Impact on service users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which service users are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - treated equally and fairly - satisfied with the quality of services provided - involved and engaged in development and delivery of services

Key Area 3: Impact on staff

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?		
No	Quality Indicator	Themes
3.1	Impact on staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - are motivated, confident and valued - improve their practice through training and development activities - have positive experiences of the quality of central services and external/partner agencies - work effectively in teams

Key Area 4: Impact on the community

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?		
No	Quality Indicator	Themes
4.1	Impact on the local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which the Council:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>engages with, and supports, organisations in the community</i> - <i>contributes to supporting community influence and representation</i> - <i>contributes to achieving social justice</i> - <i>engages local communities in, and contributes to, wider developments (eg national and international)</i> - <i>supports social and economic development</i> • <i>Extent to which members of the community report that the Council:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>engages with and supports organisations in the community</i> - <i>contributes to supporting community influence and representation</i> - <i>contributes to achieving social justice</i> - <i>engages local communities in, and contributes to, wider developments</i> - <i>supports social and economic development</i>
4.2	Impact on the wider community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which the Council:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>encourages and supports creativity and innovation</i> - <i>learns from, and adopts, leading-edge practice</i> - <i>influences wider policy or practice</i> - <i>anticipates and responds rapidly and flexibly to change</i>

Key Area 5: Delivery of key processes

How good is our delivery of key processes?		
No	Quality Indicator	Themes
5.1	Delivering services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Range and level of, and access to, services provided</i> • <i>Implementation of the Council's policies, strategies and plans</i>
5.2	Developing, managing and improving partnerships and relationships with service users and other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Involvement of service users and other key stakeholders in planning service delivery</i> • <i>Involvement of service users in developing service standards and monitoring performance</i>
5.3	Inclusion, equality and fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inclusion, equality and fairness in service delivery</i> • <i>Compliance with equalities legislation</i>
5.4	Improving the quality of services to stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Arrangements for quality assurance and improvement</i> • <i>Support and challenge</i> • <i>Evaluating outcomes and feedback from service users and other stakeholders</i> • <i>Planning for improvement and monitoring progress</i> • <i>Reporting progress to stakeholders</i>

Key Area 6: Policy development and planning

How good is our management?		
No	Quality Indicator	Themes
6.1	Policy review and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Range and appropriateness of policies</i> • <i>Coherence with Council-wide policy</i> • <i>Links to vision, values and aims</i> • <i>Formulating, disseminating, evaluating and updating policies</i>
6.2	Participation of service users and other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Involvement in policy development</i> • <i>Communication and consultation</i> • <i>Active participation in the work of the Council</i> • <i>Effective structures and mechanisms to link with partner organisations</i>
6.3	Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Developing, implementing and evaluating plans</i> • <i>Structure and content of plans</i> • <i>Use of management information</i> • <i>Joint planning with partner organisations and services</i> • <i>Planning for sustainability</i> • <i>Risk management</i>

Key Area 7: Management and support of staff

How good is our management?		
No	Quality Indicator	Themes
7.1	Sufficiency, recruitment and retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Identifying and meeting human resource needs</i> • <i>Recruitment, appointment and induction procedures</i> • <i>Care and welfare</i> • <i>Equality and fairness</i> • <i>Recognition and parity of esteem across partner organisations</i>
7.2	Deployment and teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Appropriateness and clarity of remits</i> • <i>Understanding of respective remits and responsibilities across sector/service boundaries</i> • <i>Deployment to achieve planned priorities</i> • <i>Communication and involvement in decision-making</i> • <i>Teamworking</i>
7.3	Development and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Professional competence and confidence</i> • <i>Processes for staff review and support</i> • <i>Training and development</i> • <i>Joint training with staff from partner agencies</i>

Key Area 8: Resources

How good is our management?		
No	Quality Indicator	Themes
8.1	Partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Clarity of purposes and aims</i> • <i>Service level agreements, roles and remits</i> • <i>Working across agencies and disciplines</i> • <i>Staff roles in partnerships</i>
8.2	Financial management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Budget management</i> • <i>Range and implementation of financial procedures and controls</i> • <i>Processes for collecting, analysing and evaluating financial information</i> • <i>Providing Best Value</i>
8.3	Resource management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Strategic resource planning</i> • <i>Resource deployment</i> • <i>Efficiency and effectiveness in use of resources</i> • <i>Health and safety</i>
8.4	Information systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Data collection, storage and retrieval</i> • <i>Sharing of information</i> • <i>Access to information</i> • <i>Processes for analysing, evaluating and using information</i>

Key Area 9: Leadership and direction

How good is our leadership?		
No	Quality Indicator	Themes
9.1	Vision, values and aims	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Appropriateness and coherence of corporate and community vision, values and aims</i> • <i>Sharing and sustaining the vision</i> • <i>Promotion of positive attitudes to social and cultural diversity</i>
9.2	Leadership and direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Shared leadership of services</i> • <i>Strategic planning and communication</i> • <i>Strategic deployment of resources</i> • <i>Evaluation of risk</i>
9.3	Leading people and developing partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Developing leadership capacity</i> • <i>Building and sustaining relationships</i> • <i>Teamwork and partnerships</i>
9.4	Leadership of innovation, change and improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Support and challenge</i> • <i>Creativity, innovation and step change</i> • <i>Continuous improvement</i>

Key Area 10: Capacity for improvement

What is our capacity for improvement?

10

This high-level question requires a global judgement based on evidence and evaluations of all key areas. In answering this question, Services/the Council should take into account contextual issues such as impending retirements of senior staff, plans to restructure and significant changes in funding. They should also consider their ability to respond quickly to change and to be creative and innovative in the pursuit of excellence.

Services/the Council should make a statement about achievements to date and capacity for further improvement in relation to the following components:

- *improvements to key outcomes and to impacts on stakeholders*
- *effectiveness of leadership and management*
- *effectiveness of quality improvement arrangements*
- *the capacity to continue improving.*

Judgements of Services/the Council's capacity for improvement could be expressed in terms of a **degree of confidence** that it has the capacity to improve. The judgement may be that the evaluators are **confident that the Service/Council has the capacity to continue to improve**. This judgement would be made when highly effective leadership and management have sustained high levels of quality and brought about major improvements to outcomes and impact for services users. Evidence at the time would indicate that these improvements were sustainable and that improvement would continue. No significant changes in the internal or external context would be apparent or predicted at the time the judgement was made.

When there are reservations about one or more of these aspects, the use of other terminology would be more appropriate. For example, those carrying out the evaluation might have only 'limited confidence', or indeed, 'no confidence' that the Council has the capacity to continue to improve. It would be important for evaluators to note the nature of their reservations, for example, by pointing to specific aspects of the Council's work or its current or future context.

It should be noted that for some external inspections, this may not be requested as part of the submission.

Part 3 Using the guidance to complete a self-evaluation exercise

Using the guidance for self-evaluation

3.1

The corporate approach to self-evaluation is based on the following high level questions:

- 1 *What key outcomes have we achieved?*
- 2 *How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?*
- 3 *How good is our delivery of key processes?*
- 4 *How good is our management?*
- 5 *How good is our leadership?*
- 6 *What is our capacity for improvement?*

While the overall guidance also provides a number of themes and quality indicators linked to each question, it is intended that the first corporate and service based self-evaluation will be undertaken as a broad view of the first **five** questions only. The Executive Officer Team and Corporate Management Group will validate the self-evaluation undertaken and then give a collective view of the Council's overall capacity for improvement.

The process

3.2

It is intended that each service should undertake its own self-evaluation by the end of October 2007. This should be a broad look across the work of each Service to answer each of the first five key questions. The high level view will require a scan across each of the key questions and then a level given to each, on the basis of:

- *considered professional judgement;*
- *evidence gathered in the normal course of work;*
- *a focus on impact and outcomes.*

It is important to realise that such a high level exercise, although providing a fairly reliable, general overview of the Service's performance, will still be superficial to an extent. As a result, next steps would then be to examine specific issues in closer detail such as:

- *areas in which impact and outcomes are identified as cause for concern, in order to identify the causes of, and solutions to, weaknesses;*
- *areas where impact and outcomes are particularly strong, in order to identify the inputs and processes that are lending to these strengths;*
- *areas relating to local priorities.*

Further guidance on taking a closer look will be issued in due course.

The template attached as separate guidance should be used to undertake the self-evaluation. It should be completed as outlined overleaf.

Key Question 1-5		Level
Template to be completed for each key question		
How are we doing?	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
<p>Bullet pointed statements which highlight key strengths about the work of the service <i>and</i> the difference it has made.</p> <p>This should be based on a broad view of performance across each of the first <i>five</i> high level questions.</p>	<p>Supporting evidence based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Performance data</i> • <i>Relevant documentation</i> • <i>Stakeholder views and feedback</i> • <i>Direct observation of practice</i> 	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i> <p>A number of high level improvements in bullet point statements. These should be focussed on outcomes and making a positive difference for stakeholders. <i>This should reflect aspects of work which require a closer look identified from the broad self-evaluation.</i></p>		

Undertaking the high level exercise

3.3

It is suggested that the following process is used to complete the templates for each of the key questions. While this is not prescriptive, it is designed to assist services to undertake the exercise in a similar way, using identified good practice.

Key task	Specific actions	Possible tools
Small Service group to complete first draft of template	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of small group and 1-2 writers • Identification of wider group and establish date for exercise • Broad view of all 5 key questions undertaken and written up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate guidance • Template • Completed template from EOT/CMG session • Evidence gathered from key sources
Wider Service group to validate first draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider group divided into small teams to examine 2 key questions each - one in detail and then to validate the work of another group • Each group to examine the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are the key strengths really key strengths? - Does each statement outline the difference it has made to key stakeholders? - Is there sufficient evidence to support the key strengths? - Are there key strengths missing? - Is key evidence missing? - Is there more appropriate wording? - Are the next steps appropriate? - Are there any next steps missing? - What level would the group give this? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate guidance • Template • Completed first service draft • Evidence gathered from key sources
Small Service group to produce 2nd draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the information provided as part of the wider group exercise • Produce second draft based on information provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate guidance • Template • Revised information from wider group exercise • Other evidence

Key task	Specific actions	Possible tools
Service Management Team to validate second draft and agree levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>SMT to ask the following questions:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Are the key strengths really key strengths?</i> - <i>Does each statement outline the difference it has made to key stakeholders?</i> - <i>Is there sufficient evidence to support the key strengths?</i> - <i>Are there key strengths missing?</i> - <i>Is key evidence missing?</i> - <i>Is there more appropriate wording?</i> - <i>Are the next steps appropriate?</i> - <i>Are there any next steps missing?</i> - <i>What level would the group give this?</i> - <i>Final version of service self-evaluation to be produced</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Corporate guidance</i> • <i>Template</i> • <i>Second draft</i>
Submission to Head of Strategic Management & Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Final version to accommodate Service Management Team's overview and agreement of levels.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Corporate guidance</i> • <i>Template</i> • <i>Final version of Services' self-evaluation</i>
EOT/CMG corporate validation exercise report to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Peer review exercise to validate each Services' self-evaluation</i> • <i>Consistency of appropriate levels reached</i> • <i>Overall corporate self-evaluation undertaken</i> • <i>Council's overall capacity for improvement agreed</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Corporate guidance</i> • <i>Template</i> • <i>Final version of Services' self-evaluation</i>
Report to Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Council self-evaluation completed</i> • <i>Next steps identified</i> • <i>BV submission prepared</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Corporate guidance</i> • <i>Template</i> • <i>Sharepoint site established for storing evidence</i>

Identifying the groups to support the process

3.4

The advice in using groups to undertake the self-evaluation exercise again is not intended to be prescriptive. However, including more people in the exercise makes the overall process more inclusive, ensures greater ownership and is likely to produce a more balanced, rigorous and robust self-evaluation within each Service.

It is recommended that a small team is established to take the overall lead within the self-evaluation exercise. The remit of this group will be to:

- *produce the first draft of the Service self-evaluation*
- *organise the wider group event and take into account the views of this group*
- *finalise the second draft for discussion by the Service Management Team*
- *submit the final version to the Head of Strategic Management & Improvement, taking into account the views of the Service Senior Management team*

This group should be no more than 5-6 people with 1-2 of those responsible for writing and overall editorial control. This could include members of the Senior Management Team, the Extended Management Team, performance staff and members of the Service who have recently undertaken the self-evaluation training with HMIE. The names of these staff are attached.

The wider group should include all members of the Senior and Extended Management Teams, key managers/team leaders and staff involved in front line delivery. Consideration should be given, if possible, to including key service users in this exercise. As the overall Council self-evaluation exercise will require to be validated by Full Council, it is not deemed appropriate to involve elected members. This will allow for further scrutiny and greater objectivity

at a later stage. The wider group could also include those staff from other Services who have undertaken the self-evaluation training to perform a 'critical friend' function. Services may also wish to include the Chief Executive's Service representative who has been allocated to them in a support and challenge role for the same purpose.

Identifying the evidence

3.5

There are a number of sources of evidence which can inform a Service about how well the needs of stakeholders are being met and what differences are being made. There are four key sources of evidence from which evaluations can be determined. These are:

- *Performance data*
- *Relevant documentation*
- *Stakeholder views and feedback*
- *Direct observations of practice*

The following are examples of the sources of evidence which might inform the self-evaluation exercise, but it is stressed that this list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive:

Performance data:

- *analysis of a range of key performance data*
- *statutory performance indicators (Accounts Commission SPIs)*
- *thematic performance evaluations, for example: child protection, Managing Older People's Services*
- *national priorities' progress reports*
- *a range of public performance reports*

Documentation:

- *public performance reports*
- *inspection/audit reports*

- *Council and Service committee reports*
- *Community Plan, Corporate Plan and other relevant cross-cutting reports*
- *Business Management & Improvement Plans*
- *improvement plans*
- *cross-departmental and inter-agency strategy and operational plans*
- *agendas and minutes of meetings, for example: Council, committee, partnership groups*
- *Corporate and Service Management Teams*
- *one-to-one discussions*
- *consultations on single issues, for example, policy development*
- *cross-sectoral working groups*
- *targeted consultation groups*
- *established forums*
- *joint partnership groups*
- *suggestion boxes or equivalent*
- *inter-agency training forums*
- *trade unions*
- *corporate Council complaints procedures*

Stakeholders' views:

Stakeholders might include:

- *participants in community capacity-building activities*
- *service users*
- *their families*
- *community groups, including voluntary organisations*
- *Council staff*
- *staff from external partner agencies*
- *the Council's Executive Officer Team*
- *trade unions and professional associations*
- *members of the general public*

A range of forums, procedures and techniques can be used or accessed to gather stakeholders' views. These often include:

- *Council and committee meetings*
- *focus groups*
- *questionnaires and surveys to gauge satisfaction and to elicit suggestions for improving effectiveness*

- *staff grievances*
- *mediation and dispute resolution procedures*
- *visits by senior staff to Services, providing opportunities to engage in discussions with service users, staff, and other key stakeholders*

Direct observation:

- *Council and Service committees*
- *inter-agency strategy groups (political and officer)*
- *interaction with direct service providers, staff, service users, external agencies and a range of other key stakeholders through, for example: interviews, focus groups, conferences and seminars, staff meetings, pupil councils, voluntary group meetings, local area networks*
- *management team meetings*
- *quality improvement meetings*

These sources of evidence should be seen as complementary and it should be noted that a single source may not provide sufficient evidence to enable a robust or reliable evaluation to be made.

Establishing the level - using the six point scale

3.5

The key questions are designed to be used in conjunction with an evaluation scale in which the quality of provision can be evaluated against six levels of performance.

The levels are:

- Level 6 **excellent**
outstanding, sector leading
- Level 5 **very good**
major strengths
- Level 4 **good**
important strengths with areas for improvement
- Level 3 **adequate**
strengths just outweigh weaknesses
- Level 2 **weak**
important weaknesses
- Level 1 **unsatisfactory**
major weaknesses

There are many ways in which provision can merit a particular evaluation. Awarding levels is more of a professional skill than a technical process. However, the following general guidelines should be applied consistently:

- An evaluation of **excellent** applies to provision which is a model of its type. The experiences of, and outcomes achieved by, service users are of very high quality. An evaluation of excellent represents an outstanding standard of provision which exemplifies very best practice and is worth disseminating beyond the Council. It implies these very high levels of performance are sustainable and will be maintained.
- An evaluation of **very good** applies to provision characterised by major strengths. There are very few areas for improvement and any that do

exist do not significantly diminish the experiences of service users. While an evaluation of very good represents a high standard of provision, it is a standard that should be achievable by all. It implies that it is fully appropriate to continue to make provision without significant adjustment. However, there is an expectation that the Council will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.

- An evaluation of **good** applies to provision characterised by important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh any areas for improvement. An evaluation of good represents a standard of provision in which the strengths have a significant positive impact. However, the quality of the experiences of service users is diminished in some way by aspects in which improvement is required. It implies that the Council should seek to improve further the areas of important strength, but take action to address the areas for improvement.
- An evaluation of **adequate** applies to provision characterised by strengths which just outweigh weaknesses. An evaluation of adequate indicates that service users have access to basic levels of provision. It represents a standard where the strengths have a positive impact on the experiences of service users. However, while the weaknesses will not be important enough to have a substantially adverse impact, they will constrain the overall quality of service experienced by service users. It implies that Council should take action to address areas of weakness while building on strengths.
- An evaluation of **weak** applies to provision which has some strengths, but where there are important weaknesses. In general, an evaluation of weak may be arrived at in a number

of circumstances. While there may be some strengths, the important weaknesses will, either individually or collectively, be sufficient to diminish the experience of service users in substantial ways. It implies the need for structured and planned action on the part of the Council in service provision.

- *An evaluation of **unsatisfactory** applies when there are major weaknesses in provision requiring immediate remedial action. The experience of service users is at risk in significant respects. In almost all cases, staff responsible for provision evaluated as unsatisfactory will require support from senior managers in planning and carrying out the necessary actions to effect improvement. This may involve working alongside staff from other services or agencies in, or beyond, the Council.*

Guide 2

Indicators, themes and illustrations



How Good is Our Council?

A guide to evaluating Council Services
using quality indicators

‘How Good is Our Council?’ is intended to be used across Perth & Kinross Council to assist services and the Council as a whole to evaluate how well it is doing in a rigorous, robust, systematic and consistent way.

It is meant to be used as a ‘toolkit’ to support the overall self-evaluation process. It is *not* intended to be read from cover to cover, but simply as guidance when undertaking any self-evaluation exercise - whether at individual Team, Division, Service or Council level. To assist with this, it has been divided into three parts:

Guide 1 <i>General introduction and a simple approach to using quality indicators to support self-evaluation</i>
Part 1 <i>The role of generic quality indicators</i>
Part 2 <i>The structure of the generic quality indicators</i>
Part 3 <i>Using the guidance to complete a self-evaluation exercise</i>

Guide 2 <i>Indicators, themes and illustrations</i>
Part 1 <i>Applying the generic quality indicators</i>
Part 2 <i>The six-point scale and illustrations</i>

Guide 3 <i>Asking questions and providing evidence to support the self-evaluation process</i>
Part 1 <i>Self-evaluation and sources of evidence</i>
Part 2 <i>Self-evaluation questions</i>

The section above highlighted in bold indicates which particular guide you are reading.



Part 1

Applying generic quality indicators

Application of generic quality indicators

1.1

The generic quality indicators are designed to be applied at three related levels of service provision:

- *at the level of **strategic management** across a Service or the Council as a whole;*
- *at the level of **operational management of services**; or*
- *at the level of **delivery of a specific service**.*

Evaluations made at one level can clearly influence evaluations at another.

For example, at a **strategic** level, the indicators can be used by individual Services, or the whole Council, to evaluate quality across a range of their services. This might be in relation to a specific issue such as the extent to which the Service or the Council is making effective provision for service delivery.

At an **operational** level, the indicators can be used to evaluate the quality of operational management of services provided by a single Service, or by more than one Service within the Council. For example, by selecting appropriate indicators and themes, it is possible to look at how schools and Social Workers co-operate at the operational management level to establish communication systems which ensure that the needs of potentially vulnerable children and families are met.

The indicators can also be used to evaluate service **delivery** within a single organisational unit. For example, staff may wish to evaluate how housing services are delivered within a Council, how that impacts on the services received by families, and the implications of working with other professions.

The indicators can be applied flexibly.

Using generic indicators in self-evaluation

1.2

Individual Services can use the indicators to give a systematic and rigorous structure to self-evaluation. Typically, they would choose to look first at the outcomes and impact of the services they provide and leadership (Key Areas 1-4 and 9) and, based on this, identify issues for further exploration, observation and analysis using the indicators within Key Areas 5-8.

Alternatively they may choose to address a particular Key Area or to group Key Areas for evaluation as part of a specific review. Evaluations can be organised at the level of individual Services or teams within a Service, or corporately across the Council. It can also be used to assess performance across cross cutting issues where a number of Services may be involved in delivering services to the same group of users.

Finally, it will be used to arrive at an evaluation of their overall capacity for improvement, using the guidance on Key Area 10.

Using generic indicators in inspection

1.3

During many external inspections of Services, inspectors will focus on specific Key Areas and indicators selected from the overall structure. Some of these Key Areas and indicators may be used across all areas being inspected, while others may be used only in particular contexts, depending on decisions taken during scoping activities. In some cases, inspectors may also choose to focus on those specific themes from individual indicators that provide the most appropriate tools for use in the context of a particular service. It will be the responsibility of the Council to provide evidence to support the level of performance indicated in their self-evaluation records.

Inspectors will use the guidance in Key Area 10 to arrive at an evaluation of the capacity for improvement of an individual Service or Council as a whole.

Sources of evidence

1.4

Evaluation activity should be designed to collect relevant evidence in a systematic way. Evidence should only be collected when it has a direct and valuable input to the evaluation. It should be gathered economically and efficiently, and evidence already gathered for different but related purposes should be exploited as much as possible. For example, evidence collected from service users on the extent to which they feel that services are well integrated at the point of delivery is clearly essential to the evaluation of Key Area 2 (Impact on users of services) but it could also be useful when evaluating how well staff work in partnership across service boundaries (Indicator 8.1).

There are, essentially, four main sources of evidence, on which evaluations can ultimately be based. These are:

- *performance data;*
- *relevant documentation;*
- *stakeholders' views and feedback; and*
- *direct observation of practice.*

These sources of evidence are complementary. No single source can provide sufficient evidence on its own to enable a reliable or robust evaluation to be made. The principle of triangulation should be applied. In essence, triangulation involves the scrutiny of one source of evidence, backed up by another and corroborated by a third line of enquiry. A good example would be an evaluation based on the examination of an influential policy document, the implementation of which was then discussed with senior staff and corroborated in further discussion with relevant stakeholders such as service users. Through this process of triangulation, it should then be possible to observe the outcome of putting policy into practice and, through this, to evaluate the impact of policy in meeting the needs of stakeholders.

Part 2

The six-point scale and illustrations

The six-point scale

2.1

The generic quality indicators are designed to be used in conjunction with an evaluation scale in which the quality of provision can be evaluated against six levels of performance.

The levels are:

- Level 6** excellent
outstanding, sector leading
- Level 5** very good
major strengths
- Level 4** good
important strengths with areas for improvement
- Level 3** adequate
strengths just outweigh weaknesses
- Level 2** weak
important weaknesses
- Level 1** unsatisfactory
major weaknesses

There are many ways in which provision can merit a particular evaluation. Awarding levels is more of a professional skill than a technical process. However, the following general guidelines should be applied consistently.

- An evaluation of **very good** applies to provision characterised by major strengths.

There are very few areas for improvement and any that do exist do not significantly diminish the experiences of service users. While an evaluation of very good represents a high standard of provision, it is a standard that should be achievable by all. It implies that it is fully appropriate to continue to make provision without significant adjustment. However, there is an expectation that the Council will take opportunities to improve and strive to raise performance to excellent.
- An evaluation of **good** applies to provision characterised by important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh any areas for improvement. An evaluation of good represents a standard of provision in which the strengths have a significant positive impact. However, the quality of the experiences of service users is diminished in some way by aspects in which improvement is required. It implies that the Council should seek to improve further the areas of important strengths, but take action to address the areas for improvement.
- An evaluation of **adequate** applies to provision characterised by strengths which just outweigh weaknesses. An evaluation of adequate indicates that service users have access to basic levels of provision. It represents a standard where the strengths have a positive impact on the experiences of service users. However, while the weaknesses will not be important enough to have a
- An evaluation of **excellent** applies to provision which is a model of its type. The experiences of, and outcomes achieved by, service users are of very high quality. An evaluation of excellent represents an outstanding standard of provision which exemplifies very best practice and is worth disseminating beyond the Council. It implies these very high levels of performance are sustainable and will be maintained.

substantially adverse impact, they will constrain the overall quality of service experienced by service users. It implies that the Council should take action to address areas of weakness while building on strengths.

- *An evaluation of **weak** applies to provision which has some strengths, but where there are important weaknesses. In general, an evaluation of weak may be arrived at in a number of circumstances. While there may be some strengths, the important weaknesses will, either individually or collectively, be sufficient to diminish the experiences of service users in substantial ways. It implies the need for structured and planned action on the part of the Council.*
- *An evaluation of **unsatisfactory** applies when there are major weaknesses in provision requiring immediate remedial action. The experience of service users is at risk in significant respects. In almost all cases, staff responsible for provision evaluated as unsatisfactory will require support from senior managers in planning and carrying out the necessary actions to effect improvement. This may involve working alongside staff from other services or Councils.*

Illustrations of levels of performance

2.2

There are many ways in which performance can merit a particular level of evaluation.

The illustrations on the following pages exemplify performance at levels 5 (**very good**) and 2 (**weak**) for indicators in Key Areas 1 to 9. These illustrations should not be regarded as criteria or checklists. Rather, they describe situations which would merit evaluations of **very good** or **weak**, respectively. By comparing given situations with these exemplifications, evaluators can reach secure evaluations on each indicator.

Performance in a given context that is broadly equivalent to a level 5 illustration would merit an evaluation of **very good**, while that broadly equivalent to a level 2 illustration would be **weak**. Evaluations at other levels would be made by a process of extrapolation (better than 5, or worse than 2) or interpolation (between 5 and 2 - either 3 or 4).

It should be noted that a level does not necessarily have to be awarded to the key areas. The dialogue between the evaluators is seen as the vital part of the process, where discussion takes place and consensus is reached about the key strengths and areas for improvement.

Key Area 1: Key performance outcomes

What key outcomes have we achieved?

1.1 Improvements in performance

Themes

- *Performance data and measures showing trends over time*
- *Overall quality of services provided by individual Services and across the Council as a whole*
- *Performance against aims, objectives and targets*

Key Features

This indicator is concerned with the evaluation of outcomes from services delivered to those who use them, particularly the extent to which improvements in outcomes have been achieved over time.

It evaluates continuous and sustainable improvement against local and national objectives such as those contained in the Community and Corporate Plans. Examples of performance data and measures might include measurable outcomes from the Council's strategic and operational plans.

Evidence of trends in performance will normally include comparative data measured against appropriate benchmarks such as Statutory Performance Indicators.

Performance will also be measured against objectives within each Service's Business Management & Improvement Plan. This will include progress in meeting local targets across the Council.

Inspection reports and reports of self evaluation exercises provide evidence of the overall quality of services delivered, especially in relation to the overall capacity for improvement in individual Services. The analysis of responses by the Council and Services to inspection and internal review reports show the extent to which the Council is maintaining and improving high standards of service.

Evidence will be published in progress reports and public performance reports.

Illustration QI Level 5

Performance information clearly demonstrates high levels of success against both local objectives and, where appropriate, national objectives. Positive trends and standards of performance measured against appropriate benchmarks and comparative data indicate a high level of continuous improvement. Services make a significant and comprehensive contribution to meeting the aims, objectives and targets of the Council. The Council provides statutory services very effectively.

Illustration QI Level 2

Performance data and measures demonstrate limited improvement based on trends linked to local and, where appropriate, national objectives. Trend and benchmark information indicate that performance is weak in a number of key areas. Services make a limited contribution to meeting the aims, objectives and targets of the Council. There is little evidence that statutory services are provided effectively.

1.2 Adherence to statutory principles and fulfilment of statutory duties

Themes

- *Financial performance*
- *Compliance with legislation, and responsiveness to guidance and codes of practice*

Key Features

Evaluation of financial performance will be based on financial data and measures derived from internal audits and external audits undertaken on behalf of Audit Scotland. It will also examine the budget construction and management systems in place.

The extent to which the Council, individually or in partnership, complies with legislation and is responsive to related guidance and codes of practice in terms of:

- *their awareness of the legislation, guidance and codes of practice which apply in given situations;*
- *their knowledge and understanding of the relevant legislation, guidance and codes of practice;*
- *the quality of systems for ensuring that staff comply with relevant legislation and act in accordance with relevant guidance and codes of practice;*
- *the extent of compliance and adherence that is evident in the course of providing services; and*
- *evidence from evaluation, feedback and complaints processes.*

Illustration QI Level 5

The Council has in place robust financial procedures for monitoring and regulating the budget which takes account of Service and Council priorities.

The Council effectively complies with all appropriate guidance and legislation. Statutory requirements are well embedded in individual practice as well as in Service and Council documentation. The Council builds on best practice and ensures that the rights and needs of stakeholders are well met.

Illustration QI Level 2

The Council has in place a number of financial procedures to monitor expenditure. However, expenditure is not always appropriately linked to meeting Service and Council priorities. Staff comply with appropriate guidance and legislation. Practice guidance and documentation does not sufficiently take account of statutory requirements. The Council does not take appropriate account of best practice and the rights and needs of stakeholders are not always well met.

Key Area 2: Impact on service users

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

2.1 Impact on service users

Themes

- *Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which service users are:*
 - *treated equally and fairly;*
 - *satisfied with the quality of services provided;*
 - *involved and engaged in development and delivery of services.*
- *The extent to which service users report that they are:*
 - *treated equally and fairly;*
 - *satisfied with the quality of services provided;*
 - *involved and engaged in development and delivery of services.*

Key Features

This indicator relates to the impact of services provided to users, focussing particularly on current experience. Some examples of appropriate sources of evidence are shown below but they should not be considered as either comprehensive or prescriptive. The range of evidence should demonstrate that the work of the Council is having a positive effect on people's lives.

The first theme draws on quantitative and qualitative data and evidence gathered from direct observation, documentation and discussions with stakeholders. Examples may include:

- *the extent to which the needs of service users are met;*
- *rates of attendance at meetings and forums and participation in events;*
- *achievement of customer service awards such as Charter Mark;*
- *correspondence and contact with the Council, including complaints and compliments and the way these are handled;*
- *access to services, including original approaches to encouraging innovation;*
- *movement into and from the Council area; and*
- *evidence from inspection reports relating to specific aspects such as the quality of the users' experience.*

The second theme deals with the views as reported in responses to questionnaires, surveys, focus groups and unsolicited comments. These responses provide evidence of the extent of user satisfaction with the Service or Council and may cover aspects such as:

- *the quality and range of services provided by the Council;*
- *attitudes to involvement with the Council;*
- *rates of response to consultation;*
- *engagement in formal and informal contact with the service users to meet their needs;*
- *the extent to which service users feel valued and supported by Council staff and are treated fairly and equally;*
- *opportunities to express their views, shape services and influence plans for the future.*

Evaluation should take into account both themes and result in a considered view of the overall impact on service users.

Illustration QI Level 5

The majority of users have very good access to a wide range of services. Users are kept well informed and up-to-date on services available. They are included and actively participate in the development of services to meet their needs. Participation rates in activities are high and include users with disabilities and from vulnerable and minority groups. The Council works collaboratively to ensure that service users are referred to the most appropriate agencies according to need. Service users are supported by well integrated services. Almost all users report that they are fully satisfied with the quality and range of services provided. Users express high levels of satisfaction with the service. They are positive about the support provided through formal and informal contact with the Council which meets their needs. Users consistently feel that they are valued and have appropriate opportunities to express their views, and that these views influence planning for the future. The Council is appropriately responsive to complaints and consistently achieves a satisfactory result.

Illustration QI Level 2

A minority of users are unable to access a wide range of services. The information produced by the Council is outdated and there is no effective process to ensure that all who need to access the information can do so. They are not appropriately included in the development of services to meet their needs. Participation rates in activities are improving but are still low and users with disabilities and from vulnerable and minority groups are under represented. Service users are not supported well enough by the Council. In some areas, users express low levels of satisfaction with the quality and range of services provided. They are not always positive about the support provided to meet their needs in some important areas. They generally feel valued by staff, but do not feel that sufficient account is taken of their views on decisions affecting the future. The Council is responsive to complaints but is inconsistent in its attempts to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

Key Area 3: Impact on staff

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

3.1 Impact on staff

Themes

- *Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which staff:*
 - *are motivated, confident and valued;*
 - *improve their practice through training and development activities;*
 - *have positive experiences of the quality of central services and external/partner agencies;*
 - *work effectively in teams.*
- *The extent to which staff report that they:*
 - *are motivated, confident and valued;*
 - *improve their practice through training and development activities;*
 - *have positive experiences of the quality of central services and external/partner agencies;*
 - *work effectively in teams.*

Key Features

This indicator relates to the impact of the Council on staff, as well as their views of the quality of service delivery within the Council. Some examples of appropriate sources of evidence are shown below but they should not be considered either comprehensive or prescriptive.

The first theme draws on quantitative and qualitative data and evidence from direct observation, documentation and discussions with other stakeholders. Examples may include:

- *rates of attendance at meetings and forums;*
- *rates of participation in Employee Review & Development;*
- *rates of participation in training and development and qualifications gained;*
- *rates of response to consultation;*
- *evidence of empowerment and involvement;*
- *the extent to which the individual support needs of staff are met;*
- *achievement awards such as Scottish Health at Work and Investors in People;*
- *access to services, including innovative approaches to encouraging involvement;*
- *opportunities to work in multi-disciplinary teams and across service sector boundaries;*

- *levels of absence, turnover and recruitment;*
- *recognition schemes; and*
- *benchmarking data.*

The second theme deals with the views of staff as reported in responses to questionnaires, surveys, focus groups and in unsolicited comments. These responses provide evidence of the extent of their satisfaction and may cover aspects such as:

- *the quality and range of services provided by the Council;*
- *employee review;*
- *training and development, including leadership training, shadowing and secondments;*
- *career development;*
- *peer and line management relationships, including teamworking;*
- *the extent to which they feel valued and supported by the Council and are treated fairly and equally;*
- *conditions of work, facilities and services; and*
- *communication and opportunities to express their views and to shape and improve services.*

Evaluation should take into account both themes and result in a considered view of the overall impact on staff.

Illustration QI Level 5

Staff are highly motivated, meaningfully involved in the development of the Service and enjoy a high level of satisfaction with their work. Staff are well prepared for future leadership responsibilities through their involvement in secondments, projects and programmes. They have good opportunities for career development and access to a clearly understood Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme. They consider that the opportunities for development support their performance effectively and contribute to developing their professional competence. Staff report positively about the quality of support provided by central services and external agencies. Staff are confident in their ability to carry out their duties and engage in effective teamwork at all levels. They are deployed appropriately and feel engaged and valued within the Council.

Staff have a good understanding of the vision for the Council and respect and share its aims and values. They are involved in an appropriate range of Service, Council and agency working groups and are regularly consulted by management which engenders a sense of corporate ownership. Staff retention is high with low absence levels (or which are reducing over time), they are willing to work flexibly to meet agreed targets and feel enabled to deliver services of high quality. The professional interaction of staff with service users is very good and appropriate to needs. They are involved effectively in partnership working and decision-making through the application of Best Value principles.

Illustration QI Level 2

There are important weaknesses in levels of staff satisfaction with the Council. Staff are motivated but are not always meaningfully engaged in service development. Although they feel that there are good opportunities for CPD these are not always taken up. Provision for leadership development is seen as insufficient. Although staff have a positive view of the quality of support provided by central services and external agencies overall there are concerns about its consistency and timing. Staff work well within their Service teams but do not identify with the wider Service/Council. They do not feel that Council and agency services are making a consistent contribution to delivering services of high quality to service users. Overall staff deployment does not reflect Service and Council needs.

Staff have only a general awareness of the vision, values and aims of the Service. They are aware of, and are involved in, supporting the development and implementation of only a narrow range of projects. Although staff are consulted by service managers, such consultations are considered to be irregular and ad hoc. As a result there is a lack of corporate ownership. Staff are willing to work flexibly but such arrangements are not consistently focused at meeting agreed targets. Although in the main staff try hard to provide services of high quality they are not always supported or challenged by service managers to improve their performance. Staff are not sufficiently involved in partnership working and joint decision-making.

Key Area 4: Impact on the community

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

4.1 Impact on the local community

Themes

- *Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which the Council:*
 - *engages with and supports organisations in the community;*
 - *contributes to supporting community influence and representation;*
 - *contributes to achieving social justice;*
 - *engages local communities in and contributes to wider developments (eg national and international);*
 - *supports social and economic development.*
- *Extent to which members of the community report that the Council:*
 - *engages with and supports organisations in the community;*
 - *contributes to supporting community influence and representation;*
 - *contributes to achieving social justice;*
 - *engages local communities in and contributes to wider developments;*
 - *contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.*

Key Features

This indicator relates to the impact of the Council on individuals, groups and organisations in the community, focussing in particular on their current experience. Some examples of appropriate sources of evidence are shown below but they should not be considered either comprehensive or prescriptive.

The first theme draws on quantitative data and evidence from direct observation, documentation and discussions with other key stakeholders.

Examples include:

- *support for staff involvement in activities to support community participation in decision-making such as community forums;*
- *impact on the local economy;*
- *effectiveness of environmental actions such as recycling schemes and waste management;*
- *achievement of awards relating to community service and sustainable development; and*
- *evidence from inspection reports relating to links with the community.*

The second theme deals with the views of members of the community as reported in responses to questionnaires, surveys, focus groups and in unsolicited comments. These responses provide evidence of the extent of their satisfaction with the Council and may cover aspects such as:

- *the reputation of the Council and the extent to which it meets the full range of stakeholders' needs; and*
- *opportunities for members of the community to express their views and shape services.*

Evaluation should take into account both themes and result in a considered view of the overall impact on the community.

Illustration QI Level 5

Almost all members of the community have a consistently high level of satisfaction with the services provided by the Council and its partners. Community members have access to high-quality services. Community representatives, including those from the voluntary sector, are fully informed about and able to influence the activities and services being delivered by the Council in the community. The Council supports and engages with them in building capacity within the community and includes them appropriately in decision-making activities.

The Council engages with members of the community, including the voluntary sector, appropriately in improving local services. This includes, where appropriate, providing services directly to service users. The Council actively involves community members in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of community planning objectives.

The Council works collaboratively with partners to ensure priority needs are being met, particularly those of socially excluded groups. The Council is successful in achieving very high levels of engagement with them on issues of local concern and on wider policy issues. Members of the community consider that the services offered by the Council have led to a positive impact on the area as a whole.

Active community members receive very effective support and training to develop their skills and confidence. They report growth in their confidence, skills and abilities. This has resulted in improvements in their personal, family, work and community lives. They are confident in their ability to influence and shape local and wider decision making about priorities for their community.

Members of community groups are fully informed about changes that affect their communities and are able to influence and shape the local impact of these changes. They are able to engage as equal partners with public agencies in relevant consultation and planning arrangements. They experience a sense of ownership of changes and improvements in local services and facilities.

Almost all community groups, where appropriate, deliver high-quality services and activities that respond to priority needs in their community. They have been very well supported to identify and research local priorities and to develop their capacity to address these priorities.

Illustration QI Level 2

There are important weaknesses in levels of satisfaction with the service provided by the Council and its partners. Community representatives, including the voluntary sector, are informed about the activities and services being provided by the Council, but have insufficient opportunities to influence these activities and services. The Council's support for, and engagement with, them in building capacity within the community is inconsistent and lacks focus. They are not always sufficiently included in decision-making activities. The authority provides insufficient opportunities for stakeholders to engage in supporting the learning and development of children, young people and adults.

The Council does not engage community members, including the voluntary sector, regularly and systematically in improving local services. Where it does engage them it may not do so appropriately. The Council involves a narrow range of community members in the development and implementation of community planning objectives. It offers insufficient opportunities for involvement in monitoring and evaluation. While the Council works collaboratively with its partners, they do not always ensure priority needs are being met, particularly those of socially excluded groups. The Council successfully engages with local stakeholders but it does not focus sufficiently on issues of local concern or on wider policy issues. Most members of the community consider that the provision offered by the Council has had insufficient impact on the area as a whole.

A minority of active community members are satisfied with the support and training they receive to develop their skills and confidence. Most report little growth in their confidence, skills and abilities. Their work in the community has resulted in few improvements in their personal, family, work and community lives. They are not confident in their ability to influence and shape local and wider decision-making about priorities for their community.

A minority of members of community groups are well informed about changes that affect their communities and few are able to influence and shape the local impact of these changes. Most are unable to engage as equal partners with public agencies in relevant consultation and planning arrangements. They experience a sense of powerlessness in relation to changes in local services and facilities.

A minority of community groups, where appropriate, deliver high quality services and activities that respond to priority needs in their community. Most have not been adequately supported to identify and research local priorities and to develop their capacity to address these priorities.

4.2 Impact on the wider community

Themes

- *Quantitative and qualitative data that demonstrate the extent to which the Council:*
 - *encourages and supports creativity and innovation;*
 - *learns from and adopts leading-edge practice;*
 - *influences wider policy or practice;*
 - *anticipates and responds rapidly and flexibly to change.*

Key Features

This indicator focuses on the impact the Council has on the wider community. It deals with the culture of the organisation in encouraging and supporting creativity and innovation, being open to new ideas and being pro-active. It is about being a Council that deals well with change. It also relates to the influence and impact of the Council on wider developments, nationally and internationally.

The theme draws on quantitative and qualitative data from direct observation, documentation and discussions with stakeholders. Examples may include:

- *a range of innovative strategies and programmes that impact beyond the services delivered by the Council;*
- *programmes that have origins in national or international best practice;*
- *staff who have made major influential contributions to national developments; and*
- *anticipating demographic, economic or social changes and responding with the re-allocation of resources and services.*

Illustration QI Level 5

The Council has initiated a range of innovative programmes, many in partnership with other public, charitable and commercial organisations. These have led to major improvements in services for residents. Staff are actively encouraged to innovate and any associated risks are managed well. There are many examples of leading-edge practice from other Councils and countries being adopted and adapted within the Council. Managers at all levels serve on a range of national advisory groups and committees. Some of these have had a major impact on national policy and practice. The Council places great emphasis on forecasting change, assessing probable impacts and responding swiftly to provide appropriate service to meet changing needs. This ability to respond rapidly and creatively is keeping the Council close to the leading edge of national and international developments, and ensuring that users receive consistently good services.

Illustration QI Level 2

The service broadly meets the needs of a number of stakeholder groups but is seldom innovative and rarely adopts and adapts leading-edge practice from other services or from national and international research. Creativity is not encouraged and change tends to be reactive. There is little Council representation on national committees or advisory groups and, as a result, the Council makes little impact beyond its own locality and responds slowly to change. Council staff make no attempt to predict major changes nor do they respond pro-actively to the changing needs or aspirations of service users.

Key Area 5: Delivery of key processes

How good is our delivery of key processes?

5.1 Delivering services

Themes

- *Range and level of, and access to, services provided*
- *Implementation of the Council's policies, strategies and plans*
- *Action to meet the needs of service users*
- *Recognising achievement in the community*

Key Features

This indicator is concerned with the effectiveness of delivery of a comprehensive range of well integrated services for users. The expectation is that services should be delivered in line with the policies and plans of the Council. The focus in delivery of well integrated services should be on the effective realisation of the community and Community Plans. This requires Services/the Council to work in close partnership to ensure that services are appropriately integrated at the point of delivery.

Illustration QI Level 5

The Council is successful in sustaining the quality of service delivery at a high level and can demonstrate that it has a clear strategy, based on its vision, values and aims, and planned approaches for improvement. The structure for the delivery of services within services is very well planned and includes aspects of innovative practice. The Council has clear policies and guidance in place in the appropriate areas. It reviews and revises this guidance through systematic analysis of stakeholders' views, reference to up-to-date national advice, analysis of best practice and evaluation of measurable outcomes and impact. Flexible provision of services is very well planned and monitored. The Council delivers statutory services in a highly effective way.

There are clear systems in place for implementing the Council's policies. These provide clear lines of responsibility and accountability with timescales and measurable targets. They take account of resource implications and include procedures for evaluation/review. Central to the implementation of the Council's policies is its clear focus on outcomes and the impact on service users.

The Council places the needs of its citizens at the forefront of its work. It ensures the health and safety, security and well-being of key stakeholders. Service delivery provides effective support for transition at key stages of service users lives. The Council engages systematically with users, staff, external agencies and other key stakeholders to identify specific priorities and needs. Targeted and effective actions are taken to provide for these, and these actions are regularly monitored and reviewed.

The Council provides a range of opportunities to promote and support achievements through participation in award schemes, voluntary work, environmental projects, the arts, sports and other creative pursuits. Suitable arrangements are in place to ensure that all community based initiatives are recognised and celebrated within the Council, for example, through special events, newsletters and award ceremonies.

Illustration QI Level 2

The quality of service delivery is inconsistent across the Council. While some good quality and innovative practice exists, it is developed by individual teams, units and establishments rather than by means of a strategic approach. Individual improvements and innovations may be effective, but they are not always delivered as part of a planned approach across the Council. While there are examples of good guidance on a range of issues, these are not developed as part of a coherent and comprehensive approach. Some of the guidance is out of date or developed without reference to stakeholders' views, national advice, best practice and measurable outcomes and impact. While there are some effective arrangements for flexible delivery of services, they do not form part of a coherent and well-planned approach.

The Council's key policies on improving quality are not implemented consistently. Individual policies do not give a clear enough indication of their practical application. They are uneven in terms of specific elements such as roles, responsibilities, procedures, and expectations of quality or evaluation processes. There is a lack of clear systems to drive the consistent implementation of the Council's policies. While examples of good practice are evident in discrete areas of the Council, there are no clear arrangements for routinely monitoring the effectiveness of policy implementation.

Insufficient attention is given to formally identifying and reviewing the needs of service users. Staff and other key stakeholders do not have a clear picture of priorities for meeting users' needs. Discussions involving users, staff and partners do not lead to focused and targeted actions. There is insufficient consistency and rigour in the Council's approach to measuring and analysing the impact of the action taken to meet users' needs.

The Council gives insufficient priority to promoting, supporting and celebrating the achievements of individuals and community groups.

5.2 Developing, managing and improving partnerships and relationships with service users and other stakeholders

Themes

- *Involvement of service users and other key stakeholders in planning service delivery*
- *Involvement of service users in developing service standards and monitoring performance*
- *Effective structures and mechanisms to link with partner organisations*

Key Features

This indicator is designed to show how well the Council works with those it delivers services to and the partners it works with to help deliver those services. There should be clear and effective partnerships with those who use the services provided and service users are involved in the planning of service delivery. The experiences of using the services are taken into account both at an individual and collective level. They are also involved in developing service standards and in monitoring performance. Partnership working is characterised by consistency, co-ordination of multi-disciplinary responses, the effectiveness of service delivery, compliance with procedures and the involvement of service users.

Illustration QI Level 5

The Council has a culture for considering service users' views and feelings. All Services actively involve service users in developing and designing the way services are provided. Discussions with them ensure that they are aware of possibilities linked to the way services are delivered.

The Council seeks feedback from service users when carrying out reviews. It acts on this feedback and can demonstrate that service users value the services provided. It commissions and uses surveys of the views of people to improve service delivery. Performance information about the way services are improving is clear, user friendly and readily available for anyone who requires it.

Complaints are handled according to the Council policy. The complaints procedure is handled promptly and courteously. The complaints/comments procedure is well publicised, user friendly and effective in improving services.

Effective advocacy services are in place and individuals are able to access them easily if required.

The Council demonstrates a clear commitment to partnership working. The value of this approach and how it can deliver better outcomes for service users is well understood by staff. It is promoted at a strategic level and permeates to front line working. There is a clear commitment to providing multi-agency and multi-disciplinary training to underpin and promote joint working.

Protocols on information sharing are well publicised and understood by staff.

Illustration QI Level 2

There is limited evidence of working in partnership with people who use services. Much of the guidance and procedures within the Council does not stress the importance of obtaining the views of those who use services. There is limited evidence of consultation with service users and their involvement in how services are delivered and improvement is not a common feature in designing services.

The Council has made little systematic attempt to seek feedback from service users. It is unable to demonstrate an understanding of, or an ability to value, any comments. Performance information does not show effectively where services have improved and there is little evidence of the balance between good and poor performance. There is little evidence to show that resources are being effectively used to deliver services together.

The complaints procedure is not readily accessible. Any analysis of the nature of complaints or trends is therefore of limited value to the Council in developing services. Advocacy services are not available or are difficult to access.

Joint working between the Council and partner agencies is poor. Most staff have a largely indifferent or defensive attitude to multi-disciplinary working. This attitude is also found at senior management level so that although strategic partnership arrangements may be in place, there is little evidence that they are being used to deliver improvements to services.

Most staff are not familiar with information sharing protocols, either because of a lack of appropriate policies and procedures or because compliance is poorly monitored.

5.3 Inclusion, equality and fairness

Themes

- *Inclusion, equality and fairness in service delivery*
- *Compliance with equalities legislation*

Key Features

This indicator provides a basis for evaluating how well excluded communities, groups and individuals are included, how well the barriers to access and participation are addressed and how positive attitudes to social and cultural diversity are fostered. It also examines compliance with equalities legislation.

Illustration QI Level 5

A strong ethos and practice of inclusion permeates the work of the Council at all levels. Staff at all levels and other key stakeholders are clear on Council policies and strategies and their own responsibilities. A range of clear and appropriate written guidance is readily available to all staff. The Council promotes opportunities for all users and reaches out to potentially excluded individuals, groups and communities. It provides effective services for vulnerable adults, children and young people, including arrangements for early intervention and support within universal services and targeted additional support where required.

Managers use outcome and impact information to identify under-represented and under-performing groups, and take appropriate action to improve their participation. Managers also consult regularly with members of, and those that represent, minority groups. There are effective systems in place across the Council for tracking and supporting those who are potentially vulnerable.

Staff consistently demonstrate good practice in promoting equality and addressing areas of concern.

Illustration QI Level 2

Staff and stakeholders are not always clear about the Council's vision for, and approach to, inclusion, equality and fairness. Staff are aware of the existence of policy statements in these areas, but are less clear about how to translate them into practice. The Council does not place a sufficiently high priority on these areas. The key principles and values underpinning them have been subject to only limited consultation with a narrow range of key stakeholders.

Stakeholders are generally positive about their relationship with the Council but some groups feel that their views are not fully recognised. Minority groups and those with specific interests, such as gender and race groups, disability forums and those representing the interests of children, young people and adults with additional support needs, sometimes feel disenfranchised or excluded. Systems for tracking potentially vulnerable service users are not fully effective in ensuring that their needs are being addressed. The Council receives a number of complaints from stakeholders about their lack of involvement in key decisions with regard to inclusion, equality and fairness issues. Many of these complaints are not addressed.

5.4 Improving the quality of services to stakeholders

Themes

- Arrangements for quality assurance and improvement
- Support and challenge
- Evaluating outcomes and feedback from service users and other stakeholders
- Planning for improvement and monitoring progress
- Reporting progress to stakeholders

Key Features

This indicator provides a basis for assessing how well services are evaluated, improved and reported to stakeholders. The Council should view improving the quality of services as a major priority and as a result, have robust, consistent and coherent arrangements for evaluating the quality of service delivery and monitoring the quality of outcomes for service users. A culture of support and challenge is an essential element in quality improvement along with a commitment to involve stakeholders in the evaluation and improvement of services.

Illustration QI Level 5

The Council provides clear advice to establishments and Services on quality improvement, development planning, standards and quality reporting, and professional review and development. There is rigorous validation of service self-evaluation. The roles and responsibilities of key staff in ensuring quality improvement and monitoring and evaluating the work of establishments and Services are clearly understood. There is a well-developed culture of support and challenge across the Council.

Robust discussions on performance lead to the identification of strengths and areas of underperformance. The Council provides strong advice and support to staff in Services to help them make improvements. Identified strengths are routinely celebrated and built upon by the Council and its Services. Equally, identification of areas of under-performance, or those requiring attention, result in the development of detailed action plans that impact positively on the quality of provision. Officers provide strong support through direct input and targeted resources.

Effective procedures are in place for carrying out rigorous audits to inform the planning, design and delivery of services. These are based on a range of appropriate measurement and monitoring techniques. The Council has developed systematic approaches to gathering and analysing stakeholders' views. Results are used to identify issues for further investigation and action. Information is also gathered from regular visits to Services, performance reports and inspection reports. Senior managers are confident and accurate in their use, and interpretation, of a wide range of performance data.

Quality indicators and accreditation schemes are used as a sound basis for self-evaluation and planning for improvement. The information from performance data and stakeholders' views are used to set priorities and targets for improvement. These targets are included in Business Management & Improvement Plans and result in effective action.

The Council rigorously evaluates the effectiveness of its improvement strategies in relation to their impact on the quality of the services it delivers.

There is an overarching strategy to record and report publicly on performance standards. The information is provided to key stakeholders in a form that is accessible, evaluative and well presented. The timing of reports informs decision-making and leads to improvements in planning and provision. Reports are appropriately linked to agreed priorities. Strengths and areas for further improvement are clearly identified. There are many examples of significant improvements to outcomes and impact that have resulted from the Council's arrangements for self-evaluation and quality improvement.

Illustration QI Level 2

The Council's advice on self-evaluation and quality improvement is insufficiently clear. As a result, the roles and responsibilities of key staff in monitoring and evaluating the work of the Council are not clear. There is too much variation in the quality of development planning, performance reporting, and employee review and development.

Approaches for supporting and challenging establishments are not applied consistently. Discussions take place between managers and other responsible officers but these do not always enable staff to identify strengths or result in well-targeted plans and action for improvement.

The Council has a range of systems for monitoring performance and seeking views from stakeholders but the information gathered does not sufficiently inform future planning. Staff make insufficient use of some sources of evidence such as benchmarking or comparative data when planning for improvement. The rationale for selection of Best Value service reviews is unclear. Managers have not fully involved stakeholders in contributing to a systematic approach to evaluating the quality of the service.

A few senior managers have a good understanding of the information available and how it contributes to planning but a majority have little awareness. The Council has not clearly identified what should be measured or set well-defined targets for improvement. Its effectiveness in assisting Services to identify and plan future improvements is limited. In evaluating the effectiveness of improvement strategies, the Council does not focus sufficiently on the impact on the needs of service users.

Procedures for recording and reporting on performance standards are not rigorous or consistently in place. Reports are not fully linked to agreed improvement priorities. Information provided is insufficiently evaluative and not always presented in a suitable form for the range of stakeholders. Only a few improvements have been made to outcomes and impact for users as a result of quality assurance activities.

Key Area 6: Policy development and planning

How good is our management?

6.1 Policy review and development

Themes

- *Range and appropriateness of policies*
- *Coherence with Council-wide policy*
- *Links to vision, values and aims*
- *Formulating, disseminating, evaluating and updating policies*

Key Features

This indicator focuses on approaches to policy review and development. A successful, modern Council will have a systematic and well documented approach to management. This will be supported by a range of effective policies and advice that inform and impact on practice throughout Services and which in turn are linked to the wider policies of the Council. These policies provide clear strategic direction and help to ensure consistency in practice across the Council and improved outcomes for service users.

Illustration QI Level 5

The Council's work is directed by a straightforward policy framework which covers all its main areas of activity and responsibility. This policy framework sets clear expectations for effective service delivery. Policies reflect national and local priorities and related improvement objectives. Policy advice is wide ranging and very well balanced in its coverage of strategic and operational matters. Individual policies are supported by specific information about roles, responsibilities and procedures, expectations of quality, outcomes and evaluation processes. The range of policies provides clear guidance to staff and helps to ensure consistency in practice across the Council as well as achieve continuous improvement.

The Council's policy framework is coherent with the Community and Corporate planning aspirations and outcomes. The links among cross-cutting policy initiatives, and Services' contribution to these, are indicated clearly and are reflected in policy and practice at Service and Council levels.

Key service objectives and key policies are based on the Council's vision, values and aims. These provide a very sound basis for policy making and service delivery and relate well to national priorities. They are also directly reflected in establishment policies and have a significant impact on the development of services across the Council. The vision, values and aims serve as useful criteria against which structures, policies and practices are regularly reviewed and evaluated.

There is a clear procedure in place for the coherent development and review of policies. Policies are regularly reviewed and updated taking into account the views of stakeholders.

Illustration QI Level 2

The Council has policies in most, but not all, of its main areas of activity and responsibility. Areas of the Corporate Plan have been developed independently from these policies and the links are not always clear or explicit. Individual policies do not give a clear enough indication of their practical application and are uneven in terms of specific elements such as roles, responsibilities, procedures, and expectations of quality or the evaluation process. Operational practice occasionally develops separately from the policy itself, largely in response to individual situations, producing some inconsistency.

Service policies do not sufficiently reflect corporate policy. The policy framework does not systematically inform the structure and content of the Corporate Plan and has little influence on outcomes and impacts. The links among cross-cutting policy initiatives, and Services' contribution to these, are unclear and have insufficient impact on policy and practice at Service level.

The vision, values and aims of the Council do not systematically inform the construction and development of policies. The links between aims and policies are not always clearly perceived. The Council and individual Services develop their policies in isolation from each other. This results in a lack of coherence between Council and Service policy development. Managers do not display full commitment to the corporate vision or values and do not use these consistently as criteria against which policies and practices can be regularly reviewed and evaluated.

Policies are not implemented consistently across the Council. The Council does not review and amend policies on a sufficiently regular basis. Many policies are not updated to take account of changing circumstances and national and local priorities. The Council takes steps to monitor the implementation of its policies, but often the mechanisms are too informal and Services do not always feel that the Council has a clear picture of the impact of its policies on continuous improvement. The engagement of stakeholders in the process of reviewing and updating policies is limited.

6.2 Participation of service users and other stakeholders

Themes

- *Involvement in policy development*
- *Communication and consultation*
- *Active participation in the work of the Council*

Key Features

This indicator focuses on involving service users and stakeholders in policy development and review. Mechanisms need to be in place to link management decisions to the needs of the community to fulfil the requirements of Best Value and to conform to accepted good practice. There is, therefore, an expectation that all stakeholders should be actively involved in the Council's development. This will require a wide range of approaches and mechanisms that can be applied over the Council's areas of activity. To complement consultative mechanisms, there needs to be an effective approach to communication. This will recognise that there are a number of different audiences which have the right to be informed of the Council's activities. There should also be a Public Performance Reporting Framework to communicate clearly and simply with various stakeholders. This will also require a variety of approaches that are suited to the audiences concerned and will therefore involve a wide range of communication channels

Illustration QI Level 5

A broad range of cost-effective consultation processes, involving a wide range of stakeholders, shapes the Council's policies and helps to drive planning for improvement. The Council has appropriate stakeholder representation on groups undertaking policy development. Such arrangements result in a high level of ownership of changes to policy and services, and have a clear impact on establishing improvement in performance and service quality at all levels.

The Council has a planned framework for communication and consultation. This provides clear strategic and operational advice and identifies key stakeholder groups. The Council is committed to effective communication and full consultation with all service users and interacts regularly with a wide range of consultative groups. There is a clear overall policy framework for communication and for public performance reporting. Where there is a legal requirement to consult, this is done effectively. Consultation services provide value for money and very good feedback to stakeholders on outcomes.

Senior managers encourage and enable the active participation of stakeholders and users in the work of the Council. Effective structures and systems are in place to support and encourage participation. Staff at all levels engage with learners and stakeholders. The Council has effective procedures and processes to enable sharing of information within and across inter-agency teams.

Illustration QI Level 2

Identification of stakeholders omits some important groups. The views of some of the Council's stakeholders are sought but not on the full range of services. The process of involvement is not sustained beyond the early stages of a development or conversely is at too late a stage to have significant impact. It draws too heavily on the input of staff and does not sufficiently involve other stakeholders.

Information given to stakeholders about the outcomes of the Council is generally sound but not consistently systematic or comprehensive. There is no clear overall policy framework for communication and for public performance reporting. Only a limited range of communication methods is used, and some of these are not well matched to the context or differentiated sufficiently to the needs of groups. Those being consulted have only an incomplete understanding of the rationale, intended outcomes or processes of the exercise. The active empowerment of participants does not feature strongly in the work of the Council. Participants do not always feel consulted about the nature of the activity in which they are participating. There are insufficient structures and systems in place to support and encourage participation. Although a majority of staff are committed to engaging with service users and stakeholders, staff attitudes towards them are not consistently positive. There are insufficient procedures in place to enable effective communication and sharing of information within and across inter-agency teams.

6.3 Operational planning

Themes

- *Developing, implementing and evaluating plans*
- *Structure and content of plans*
- *Use of management information*
- *Joint planning with partner organisations and services*
- *Planning for sustainability*
- *Risk management*

Key Features

This indicator is concerned with the coherence and impact of arrangements for planning, monitoring and evaluating services. The Corporate Plan and Service Business Management & Improvement Plans are central to performance management and planning. However, it is the processes that surround both the development of the plans and their implementation which are of critical importance. Operational planning should lead to improvements at Service level and across the Council as well as guide its focus, methodologies and mechanisms for reporting and future action. Business management and improvement planning will be embedded within the Council's approach to community and corporate planning and clear links should exist between them all.

Illustration QI Level 5

The Council has a clear framework for quality development including advice on development planning, performance reporting, and employee review and development. Performance planning and business management & improvement planning are integral to the work of the Council and each Service. A very well-managed planning cycle matches Service and team work cycles. The Council rigorously evaluates delivery options taking account of challenge and competition.

The Corporate Plan fully reflects local and national priorities and covers the range of work of the Council. The presentation and structure of the Plan, or different versions of the Plan, are clear, precise and immediately accessible to the various users. Service Business Management & Improvement Plans are taken forward very effectively through a series of team plans, drawn up by specific teams or individuals responsible for each major development. These plans identify resources and indicate the links between planning and budget-setting procedures.

Senior officers demonstrate a commitment to joint planning with partner organisations and services. Community planning is structured in a way that supports integrated working. There is an appropriate focus on a multi-disciplinary approach to achieving successful outcomes for the citizens of Perth and Kinross. Operational planning for integrated service delivery is well articulated and co-ordinated to ensure the involvement of all partners. Partners are fully involved in planning, and where appropriate, implementation. Inter-agency planning has a positive impact on the quality of provision across the Council area.

The approach to business management and improvement planning is well understood and there is a clear, succinct format for each Service to report on progress in addressing priorities and achieving outcomes. The Plan clearly sets out objectives in precise terms, linked well to criteria for success and identifies the person with lead responsibility for performance measures. Staff are clear about their roles in the monitoring and evaluation process. Senior officers make systematic use of the business management and improvement planning process to monitor and manage the work of services and the Council as a whole through a regular cycle of evaluation and reporting.

The Council fulfils all statutory requirements to report annually on its success in meeting its improvement objectives. This reporting process is consistent with the requirements for public performance reporting under Best Value. Operational planning is undertaken with a view to ensuring the sustainability of provision.

Illustration QI Level 2

There is a process of performance management and planning but it has limited coherence. The planning cycle is unhelpful to some of the key users. Although supportive of quality development activities, senior managers tend not to be actively involved. Performance management and business management and improvement planning are not integral to the work of the Council nor are they seen as key mechanisms to bring about continuous improvement. When planning, delivery options have not been fully considered.

The presentation and structure of the Corporate Plan and Business Management & Improvement Plans are not clear or sufficiently detailed. Plans include too many or too few improvement objectives and is not central to the quality improvement work of the Council/ service. Business management and improvement planning across the Council is only partially linked to relevant plans and to local and national priorities. It is not sufficiently informed by appropriate and clear aims, priorities and statements of planned action.

Knowledge of the overall performance of the Council is accurate but some sources of evidence are not used or benchmarking is not always appropriate.

Files are not up to date, knowledge is not written down or different aspects of information are dispersed among too many officers. Officers' evaluations of performance are generally accurate but lack convincing detail, or knowledge of Services/Council is inconsistent. There is a range of systems for monitoring and measuring performance but they do not always combine together effectively to provide comprehensive audit information.

Partner organisations and agencies have limited input into decision-making processes and areas of joint actions are not always fully effective. Where Council objectives involve working with other agencies, partners are not always fully aware of their respective roles in implementation. The Council has a limited focus on multi-disciplinary and partnership approaches to service provision. Operational planning is only partially successful in co-ordinating services and partner organisations and agencies, including working with key partners from the community and the voluntary sector. There is a lack of consistency in involving partners in identifying and addressing needs. There is insufficient activity to ensure the long-term viability of projects.

Key Area 7: Management and support of staff

How good is our management?

7.1 Sufficiency, recruitment and retention

Themes

- *Identifying and meeting human resource needs*
- *Recruitment, appointment and induction procedures*
- *Care and welfare*
- *Equality and fairness*
- *Recognition and parity of esteem across partner organisations*

Key Features

This indicator relates to the Council's effectiveness in managing the recruitment, appointment, induction and care and welfare of its staff. To provide a high quality service to its community, the Council will need to have a clear understanding of its human resource requirements and effective procedures to recruit, retain, support and develop its staff to a high level. This will entail the establishment of pro-active and imaginative recruitment procedures and clear staffing standards. The principles of equality and fairness, together with a commitment to recognise and celebrate achievement, will underpin the Council's practices in its management and support of staff.

Illustration QI Level 5

The Council has sufficient staff to deliver its services. It has an overall human resource management framework, supported by a comprehensive range of clear policies covering all key areas.

The Council has established effective recruitment procedures. All staff appointment procedures have been developed in partnership with the relevant trade unions/professional associations and are clearly stated and publicly available. In appointing members of staff to posts across the Council, due regard is paid to the skills, aptitudes and experience of all applicants and of the relationship of these to the stated selection criteria, job outlines and person specifications for each post. The Council has an effective induction policy and procedures for all new staff.

The Council has clearly established a positive culture in which staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities. Every manager is aware of the Service's duty of care to its employees and an appreciation of what that entails. Within its human resources policy framework, the Council has a range of policies and procedures which set out clearly the standards of conduct, care and welfare which all staff in the Service can expect and which are expected of them.

The Council has a well-established equal opportunities policy relevant to the needs of those who work in the Council as well as its service users. There is a clearly defined set of principles and procedures which underpins the Council's approach to recruitment and support of its staff. Issues of equality and fairness including race, religion, ethnicity, disability and gender are fully addressed and effectively monitored and recorded statistically.

The Council has established an ethos of positive recognition and celebration of achievement, within which all staff are encouraged and supported to do their best. Senior managers regularly communicate with the workforce to identify staff successes, examples of best practice and innovative practice. Staff achievement and success are appropriately recognised by the Council or Services.

Illustration QI Level 2

The Council has not been successful in recruiting staff to several key posts. This has a negative impact on the quality of aspects of provision and creates excessive work loads for some staff. The Council has produced a number of personnel policies but there are important gaps in key policy areas.

The Council's recruitment procedures generally operate satisfactorily but tend to be reactive rather than planned and pro-active. Appointment procedures are inconsistent, open to interpretation or fail to recognise or align the skills, aptitudes and experience of applicants to clearly defined selection criteria. Staff induction courses are available but senior managers have not systematically customised these to support the induction and development needs of different groups of staff. Staff are not always fully aware of their rights and responsibilities. Managers are sometimes uncertain about the parameters of the Council's duty of care to its employees. Personnel policies do not adequately specify the standards of conduct, care and welfare which staff can expect or which are expected of them.

The Council has produced a written policy on equality and fairness but this has not adequately influenced or been built into staff recruitment and appointment procedures nor has it been customised to meet the needs of those who work for the Council or make use of its services. The Council's job advertisement, recruitment and appointment procedures contain clear statements about its commitment to equality and fairness but these procedures do not always meet the needs or expectations of minority groups, nor are relevant statistics routinely monitored. Staff and service users with disabilities find it difficult to access and work in many venues operated by the Council.

Staff sometimes feel that senior managers are remote and that their own achievements frequently go unnoticed or feel that there is, within the Council, a blame culture rather than an ethos of reward for success. Senior managers do not formally and systematically identify examples of best or innovative practice or are, in the main, not well aware of staff achievements across establishments and services.

7.2 Deployment and teamwork

Themes

- *Appropriateness and clarity of remits*
- *Understanding of respective remits and responsibilities across sector/service boundaries*
- *Deployment to achieve planned priorities*
- *Communication and involvement in decision-making*
- *Teamworking*

Key Features

This indicator is concerned with the effectiveness of individual and team contributions. The main asset of any Council is its people. In order to achieve its objectives and to implement the Corporate Plan, staff need to be deployed effectively and develop effective teamwork and communication. Their work should be focused on the achievement of the Council's planned priorities and improvement objectives whilst also responding to key stakeholders' needs. Managers across the Council need to be conscious of the requirement to work together to achieve efficient and effective deployment of staff to avoid gaps in, or duplication of, services.

Illustration QI Level 5

All members of staff have been provided with clearly stated job descriptions and remits. Remits and activities relate clearly to the improvement objectives of the Council. The Council has developed clear lines of communication and accountability for its staff, in line with its scheme of delegation. Staff are appropriately empowered, challenged and supported.

Staff are generally well aware of the Council's Corporate Plan and their Service's Business Management & Improvement Plan and have a good understanding of the role they play in the organisation.

An ethos of teamworking has been established across the Council. Each team has a clear structure, composition and task-focused approach. Clear remits, lines of communication and accountability define the Council's approach to teamworking. Each team within the Council has produced an Improvement Plan. This plan relates the team's activities clearly to the stated priorities of the appropriate Service and the Council. Each team leader regularly monitors team and individual performance against achievement of agreed priorities, outcomes or targets. Senior managers meet regularly with team leaders to monitor and evaluate team performance.

Staff are clear about the contributions to be made across the Council in delivering joined up services. They understand the particular roles which they are expected to play, where the boundaries of their responsibility begin and end, and how they should work and communicate with colleagues across the Council to ensure that users benefit from integrated services.

Staff are very positive about the frequency, sufficiency and quality of information they receive. In general, they feel well consulted on major issues which affect their working practices. Staff feel that they have good opportunities to raise concerns or constructive suggestions with senior managers and that such are considered seriously. Staff generally consider senior managers to be visible and accessible. To take forward a range of developments, initiatives and innovations, the Council has established a systematic network of working groups (or equivalent).

Illustration QI Level 2

Most staff have detailed job descriptions and remits but there are important gaps or they do not always relate clearly to the improvement objectives of the Council. As a consequence, some staff do not always carry out their duties in an appropriately focused fashion. While the Council has established clear lines of communication and accountability for most staff, some feel isolated or uncertain about their roles and responsibilities. Senior managers lack confidence or demonstrate a reluctance to empower their staff to take decisions, and generally take such decisions themselves.

Staff remits and job activities do not always align with the Council's improvement objectives. Staff do not always understand the main improvement objectives of the Council, the context of its work and the importance of their contribution to achieving priorities, outcomes and targets.

While staff are, in the main, employed in teams, some individuals do not relate to a specific team, or teamworking is generally not well developed across the Council. Deployment of teams and of individual team members is not always linked to agreed priorities. Not all departmental teams have produced an improvement plan or, where these are in place, staff and stakeholders have not been suitably engaged. Performance monitoring within some teams, and of teams by senior management, is lacking in focus, consistency and rigour.

Staff are generally aware about the contribution to be made to delivering joined up services. They know in general terms about the commitments of their Service in this respect, but are unsure of the detail. They are unclear about the parts played by other Services and how they relate to one another. When working in multi-disciplinary teams, they are uncertain about how their roles and responsibilities relate to staff from other Services.

Ineffective communication or inadequate consultation on major issues sometimes gives rise to complaints from staff. Senior managers can seem to be distant or remote. There are few opportunities to raise concerns or put forward constructive suggestions for improvement. The Council has established a good range of working groups (or equivalent). However, staff sometimes feel that few opportunities exist to become involved in the work of these groups. Selection criteria for being invited to join a working group are sometimes unclear.

7.3 Development and training

Themes

- Professional competence and confidence
- Processes for staff review and support
- Training and development
- Joint training with staff from partner agencies

Key Features

This indicator relates to the Council's management of its review processes and to the provision of training and development opportunities for its staff. This includes multi-disciplinary training and development for all Council and partner agency staff involved in the delivery of integrated services. It evaluates the Council's effectiveness in monitoring and reviewing the performance of its staff against agreed criteria, and facilitating their personal and professional development. All staff must be able to develop their skills to maximum effect in order to achieve continuous improvement in performance and in the quality of services to the community. Staff have an entitlement to receive a formal programme, and record of, employee review and development (ERD)/continuous development programme (CPD).

Illustration QI Level 5

The Council has a formal ERD/CPD framework for all staff. Senior managers have translated the framework into clear and user-friendly procedures and processes, all of which are well supported by relevant documentation and initial training for staff at all levels. The review process leads to the identification of strengths, skills and development needs.

The Council demonstrates a clear commitment to developing its entire staff. Training and development programmes arise from formal identification of staff development needs through the ERD/CPD processes, and from Council-driven developments aimed at achieving national or local priorities. The Council has a comprehensive catalogue of staff development opportunities, based on an audit of development needs arising from the employee review process and the Council's key priorities.

Senior managers from the Council and relevant partner agencies have joint forums which meet on a regular basis to discuss the provision of joint/inter-agency training. Senior officers and their partner agency colleagues create opportunities to bring their respective staff together, on a regular and planned basis, to provide joint training and development on shared priorities and inter-agency practices. Evidence is available to demonstrate that joint training and development for Council and partner agency staff has led to quantifiable improvements in identified, stated and measurable aspects of service delivery.

Illustration QI Level 2

Most staff employed by the Council participate in a ERD/CPD programme, but an overall framework does not exist across the Council as a whole. A significant number of staff are not reviewed on a regular basis. The ERD/CPD process can sometimes be open to misinterpretation and its application varies in quality and rigour across the Council. Associated documentation is not always clear or user-friendly and some staff may not have received initial ERD training. The review process does not clearly identify individuals' strengths, skills and development needs.

The Council provides a good range of in-service courses and development opportunities for staff, but they do not always derive from, or relate clearly to, identified staff development needs or Council priorities. Provision is patchy and groups of staff have needs which are sometimes omitted. The Council has produced an in-service catalogue which many managers use, but the catalogue does not systematically take account of identified staff development needs or corporate priorities. As such, it is limited in its use or usefulness.

Meetings take place involving senior staff from the Council and its partner agencies, but these are neither programmed regularly nor characterised by shared agendas. Joint training is seldom discussed or viewed as a priority. The Council and its partners have created few opportunities to bring their respective staff together for training and development purposes. There is no evidence to demonstrate that inter-agency training and development has led to quantifiable improvements in the provision of services.

Key Area 8: Resources

How good is our management?

8.1 Partnership working

Themes

- *Clarity of purposes and aims*
- *Service level agreements, roles and remits*
- *Working across agencies and disciplines*
- *Staff roles in partnerships*

Key Features

This indicator refers to the role of the Council in promoting and encouraging effective partnership working with service user, staff, other stakeholders and partner agencies. A central role of the Council is to secure and sustain cohesive and meaningful partnerships which will take forward its strategic vision, values and aims. To encourage and support this process the Council will require to bring key partners together at the strategic decision-making level. To fulfil the requirements of Best Value and to conform to accepted good practice, there must be mechanisms in place to link leadership and management decisions to the needs of all service users and the community at large. There is, therefore, an expectation that all stakeholders including, as appropriate, other partners should be actively involved in service development. This will require a range of approaches to consultation and communication that can be applied across the Council's areas of activity. There should also be in place a PPR framework to communicate clearly with the full range of stakeholders and partners.

Illustration QI Level 5

The Council engages appropriately with partner agencies including the voluntary sector in seeking to improve services. The Council has a strategic framework with all key partners within which joint working can be established and can flourish. To achieve sustainability and measurable impact, meaningful partnership working is built into strategic planning at the highest levels. It is monitored rigorously through the Council's structures for accountability. A culture is established which encourages all staff, users and partners to be involved. Service level agreements (or their equivalent) are established at strategic level and are monitored and evaluated at operational levels, within services, the Council and all partner agencies, to ensure that each has a positive impact. Consultation and communication with partners and agencies is regular, structured, supportive and efficient.

Almost all partner agencies have a consistently high level of satisfaction with the Council. The Council works effectively in a range of multi-disciplinary partnerships. Productive partnerships exist with key services, voluntary and community organisations and other public and private sector bodies. It works collaboratively to ensure that needs are appropriately prioritised and met. The Council encourages, develops and secures the commitment of key partners to multi-disciplinary working. This includes, where appropriate, providing services directly to service users. It engages partner agencies in the planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of joint projects and multi-disciplinary working.

Multi-disciplinary working contributes effectively to the achievement of the vision, values and aims of the Council and to meeting the needs and aspirations of users, stakeholders and partners.

Staff from the Council and partner agencies are very effective in a wide range of partnerships. They demonstrate or support leadership within the context of partnership working. They consistently seek opportunities for improvement and development in all partnerships. Council managers plan their engagement with partners to ensure the active participation of all relevant people and agencies. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities, what matters most and how their time will be best spent.

Communication and consultation between the Council and partner agencies is regular, structured, supportive and efficient. All those involved in partnerships are kept fully informed about the progress and aspects which require further consideration and improvement. There is an effective reporting framework to communicate with the full range of stakeholder groups and partnership agencies.

Illustration QI Level 2

The Council does not engage regularly with partner agencies and the voluntary sector to systematically improve services. The Council has made little progress in establishing a strategic framework with all key partners within which joint working can be established and can flourish. Partnership projects are frequently built into operational rather than strategic planning and often lack the necessary focus. Although a range of monitoring and evaluation techniques is used, methods are not applied rigorously nor are they part of the Council's structures for accountability. Insufficient effort is made to encourage partners and stakeholders to be involved in meaningful joint working. Service level agreements (or their equivalent) tend to be established at operational level and are not part of strategic planning. There is little evidence of a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluation of impact and outcomes. Consultation and communication with partners and agencies is not always efficient or supportive in nature.

There are important weaknesses in the levels of satisfaction with the service provided to partner agencies. While the Council works collaboratively with a limited range of partners, they do not always ensure that needs are prioritised and met. Partnerships with key services, voluntary and community organisations and other public and private sector agencies produce limited results. The Council has not yet secured the commitment of key partners to multi-disciplinary working. The Council is inconsistent in its approach to the engagement of partner agencies in the planning, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of joint projects and multi-disciplinary working. Multi-disciplinary working has an insufficient impact on the achievement of the vision, values and aims of the Council and does not have a clear focus on meeting the needs and aspirations of service users, stakeholders and partners.

Council staff are not key members of partnerships or those representing the Council are not at the appropriate level of seniority. They are engaged in a small range of partnerships. Their leadership of partnerships, or support to those leading partnerships, is indecisive and lacks focus. They are insufficiently pro-active in seeking opportunities for involvement and development in partnerships. They may not have allocated sufficient time for the tasks involved. Managers undertake insufficient planning for engaging with partners to ensure the active participation of relevant people and agencies. Within partnership working, senior managers are unfocused in their day-to-day practice and management of time.

There is little evidence of a commitment to continuous improvement through partnership working. There is a lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities, what matters most and how to make the best use of available time.

Communication and consultation with partner agencies is not always efficient or supportive in nature. Those involved in partnerships are not kept fully informed about progress and/or other aspects which require further consideration and improvement. The reporting framework is not sufficiently effective in communicating clearly to stakeholders and partner agencies.

8.2 Financial management

Themes

- Budget management
- Range and implementation of financial procedures and controls
- Processes for collecting, analysing and evaluating financial information
- Providing Best Value

Key Features

This indicator relates to the capacity of the Council to deliver planned national and local priorities. This will require the Council to have developed a rigorous, thorough and imaginative approach to financial management. Such an approach will require high level managerial planning and control coupled with rigorous operational management, monitoring and review of a wide range of financial systems and procedures. The working relationship between the Council Services and Financial Services will be critically important. The indicator also relates to the Council's capacity to deliver Best Value through its approach to financial management.

Illustration QI Level 1

The Council's budget construction process is corporately driven by elected members and the Chief Executive and is based on a three-year budget cycle which has the delivery of national and local priorities at its core. This budgeting process demonstrates clear links to the business management and improvement planning process. Budgets and financial matters are discussed regularly and rigorously at all management levels including at corporate level. There are clear procedures in place to deal rigorously with budgetary variances. Elected Members are kept well informed of budgetary matters. The Council and its committees routinely receive from officers, both financial reports and reports with a financial implication, in line with the scheme of delegation.

The Council regularly receives high quality financial reports from senior finance and service staff and actively monitors budgetary performance across all service areas, making well-informed decisions as appropriate. The appropriate committees regularly receive and consider high quality financial reports from senior officers and make clear financial decisions in line with their delegated powers. There is a systematic and well-organised approach to budgetary administration which provides senior staff with easily interpreted, accurate and reliable data to allow well-informed decisions to be taken. This process is routinely supported by the production of regular budget reports which are designed to monitor committed expenditure. Arrangements for financial planning and expenditure are transparent, dynamic in nature and fully utilise a wide range of management and performance information. Financial procedures are well known to budget holders and all other staff with financial responsibilities, all of whom are supported by clear and comprehensive procedures. The Council has established a fully effective scheme of delegated powers.

Senior managers across the Council have established fully effective working practices with their colleagues in Financial Services. This results in a two-way flow of reliable, accurate financial information to enable key decisions to be taken where appropriate. Fully effective financial and administrative procedures have been developed to plan and manage both mainline and non-mainline (specific grant and external funding) budgets. These procedures allow both planned and committed expenditure to be tracked.

The Council has established a clear policy on Best Value which informs all services generally of its expectations. The Services have set out a comprehensive programme of Best Value reviews (or equivalent) covering all aspects of service delivery. The Council's financial planning and management regime is characterised by efficiency, effectiveness, elimination of duplication and the provision of high quality services and value for money. All aspects are governed by the principles of Best Value. Likewise, all budgets, systems and procedures are formally reviewed on a regular basis, with the aim of securing continuous improvement and Best Value. Financial planning and decision making are characterised by the principles of option appraisal and Best Value.

Illustration QI Level 2

The Council's budget construction process is almost exclusively driven by the current financial year's budget and makes only marginal provision for the delivery of national and local priorities. Links to the service planning process are tenuous. There is regular discussion of financial matters by senior management but such discussions lack a clear focus and do not necessarily form a basis for well-informed financial decisions to be taken. Elected members receive reports containing financial information but these are often general in nature and frequently lack reliable, issue-specific information on which to base decisions. They are not always presented in a user-friendly format which is easily interpreted and understood by members.

The Council receives reports of a financial nature, but these are limited in frequency, detail, specificity or reliability. As a result, Elected Members are not always well enough briefed to make informed decisions. Likewise, committees receive financial reports which sometimes lack the quality of information and advice required by Elected Members in arriving at informed decisions. The Council has established financial procedures and although sound in themselves, they have neither been fully integrated with the Council's and Financial Service's corporate financial systems nor well supported by user-friendly, clear and accurate documentation, staff development and training. Arrangements for financial planning lack rigour and are not flexible enough to accommodate financial trends or a range of management and performance information. There is no formal system in place to rigorously and systematically monitor, review and improve financial management and performance within the Council. The Council has established a delegated scheme but its terms are not always clear to staff. These are open to interpretation and inconsistent application, or the scheme is limited in its range and implementation across the Council.

Although liaison takes place between Services and finance staff on financial matters no clear and consistent working practices have been agreed. The transfer of information is reactive and issue-specific rather than planned and pro-active or it lacks reliability, accuracy and rigour. The Council's financial and administrative procedures do not make sufficient provision for the planning and management of non-mainline budgets with the result that expenditure in this area is reactive, creating potential for underspends or overspends.

The Council has established a Best Value policy but this has only minimal relevance to Services which have not yet set out clearly its plans to review all services. While a number of specific service reviews have been carried out within the Services and across the Council, these have not emerged formally from a rigorous self-evaluation of its performance. Such reviews are therefore reactive and do not necessarily relate to those services in most need of examination or they lack rigour and focus. Financial planning and management within the Council is well organised in itself but lacks any means routinely to assess its efficiency and effectiveness. As a result inefficiencies, including over/under provision and over/underspends, sometimes occur. There are no formal systems in place routinely to review budgets and financial procedures. The Council does not routinely employ the principles of option appraisal and Best Value in its financial planning and management.

8.3 Resource management

Themes

- *Strategic resource planning*
- *Resource deployment*
- *Efficiency and effectiveness in use of resources*
- *Health and safety*

Key Features

The management of finances is closely linked to the wider management of resources. This indicator sets out to evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's approach to the management of its resources in the widest sense. The Council will need to demonstrate that it is fully aware of the range of resources at its disposal, from both internal and external sources, and that it has developed a planned, pro-active approach to resource management. This provides a firm base from which to promote Council development and continuous improvement.

Illustration QI Level 1

The Council has developed, in line with national guidance, a comprehensive asset management strategy/plan which makes provision for the management and development of its estate. There are clear links at corporate and service level between resource management/development and both the business management and improvement planning and budget processes. Elected Members and senior officers have assessed and made provision for resource allocation in the short, medium and long term. Resource planning, development and management operate on the principles of option appraisal and Best Value. This approach has yielded significant service improvements.

The Council's approach to resource management ensures that resources are allocated to meet national and local improvement objectives and priorities. The Council's performance is routinely reported to elected members. The principles of Best Value underpin the Council's approach to resource management and it has developed a clear programme of Best Value reviews. These use performance information linked to benchmarking and other relevant parameters, to deliver continuous improvement in efficiency and effectiveness. Senior managers regularly review resource management information, performance and proposals for performance improvement.

All staff involved in delivering services to stakeholders clearly demonstrate a commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of stakeholders. The Council has in place a comprehensive health and safety manual providing staff with clear guidelines governing the use of premises, the deployment of resource and all relevant aspects of operations. Appointed staff in each service have received appropriate health and safety training, including generic aspects from legislation and established best practice.

Illustration QI Level 2

There is no clear corporate rationale for allocation of resources to Services or, alternatively, it does not match closely the national guidance on resource allocation. Senior managers have a generalised view, lacking in detail and specificity, of the resources which are at the disposal of the Council. This partial view may derive from incomplete or unreliable information or from informal systems and sources.

The Council has developed an asset management strategy/plan but it is neither comprehensive in its coverage of the estate nor sufficiently detailed, for example on proposed rationalisation or planned capital investment plans relative to building stock. Links between resource allocation and the service planning and budget processes are tenuous at best. Elected Members and senior officers have only made provision for resource allocation in the short term. The Council's management of resources provides only limited evidence of adherence to the principles of option appraisal and Best Value. As a result enhanced efficiency and effectiveness cannot be delivered consistently. There is limited evidence of the Council's approach to resource management yielding discernible service improvements. Many of the Council's buildings are insufficiently accessible to people with disabilities.

Resource management and allocation are not linked closely enough to national and local improvement objectives. Management information on resources is incomplete or variable in quality, accuracy and reliability. The Council has initiated some Best Value reviews but its approach is one of reacting to prevailing circumstances rather than being planned and comprehensive. The range of management techniques and tools used in such reviews is limited. The Council's approach to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of its resource management is inconsistent and unplanned.

Some key staff involved in delivering services to stakeholders are unclear about certain procedures relating to health, safety and the well being of stakeholders. Procedures across the Council do not support or guide staff. Appointed staff in each Service have not received appropriate health and safety training, including generic aspects arising from legislation and established best practice.

8.4 Information systems

Themes

- *Data collection, storage and retrieval*
- *Sharing of information*
- *Access to information*
- *Processes for analysing, evaluating and using information*

Key Features

This indicator focuses on how the Council uses its management information systems to help it to evaluate its impact and outcomes. A Management Information System (MIS) is a system used to enter, store, manipulate and retrieve information about the Council, its services, establishments, staff and service users. Well-run, computerised management and administration systems support the key business processes of a modern organisation and provide the means of monitoring provision and improving effectiveness. MIS should be seen in the context of helping a Council to deliver its services and achieve its improvement objectives. Analysis of the data can give managers, staff and stakeholders a more informed view of current practice in the Council. It can provide information needed to help staff to plan and improve the delivery of services. Where possible, systems within the Council should be linked to share information and provide more effective delivery of services. Because data sharing is a central aspect of MIS, security is clearly important. Different levels of security are appropriate for different user groups.

Illustration QI Level 1

Structured and rigorously observed systems are in place for central and co-ordinated collection, analysis and evaluation of data. Information systems provide the Council and Services with access to robust information to inform planning for improvement and to target support and resources more effectively. The Council promotes the effective use of MIS through agreeing and defining core sets of data and providing training in the use of systems as a management tool. The use of MIS is a major contributor to the effective delivery of services and the achievement of improvement objectives.

The Council has in place an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) strategy. Appropriate managers and staff across the Council have established fully effective working practices with their colleagues in IS/T. Systems give managers a comprehensive overview of the work of services.

It also enables the Council and services to focus on the outcomes for service users. The Council provides very effective support to services in the systematic collection, collation and analysis of data on budgets, staffing, and other relevant performance information.

The system of access controls is tailored to the needs of the users, allowing quick access to address needs. The Council and Services use information generated for administration, planning and monitoring. The storage, filing and retrieval of information complies with the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts. There are clear agreements and protocols shared with staff, partner agencies and stakeholders regarding the confidentiality of data and the requirements of legislation. Protocols have been agreed with establishments, partner agencies and other services for data exchanges.

The Council provides effective central co-ordination and interpretation of data. It collates and analyses a range of data to monitor and demonstrate improvements in performance. MIS is used to identify trends, and provide benchmark and comparative information for services and officers to use in planning for improvement. Well-established and very effective report formats facilitate identification of high and low performing aspects of the work of establishments and departments so that support and challenge can be targeted. Systems enable high performance to be recognised and under-performance to be quickly identified and addressed. Managers and staff have access to effective training in the analysis of attainment data.

Illustration QI Level 2

Management Information Systems are in place for the collection of data but it is not co-ordinated and as yet provides limited data for analysis. It provides the Services and the Council with access to information but this has limited impact on planning for improvement or in assisting in targeting support and resources more effectively. The Council has not yet reached agreement on the core sets of data nor has there been sufficient training of key staff. The range of data which is maintained is limited and this prevents the use of MIS from impacting positively on the achievement of improvement objectives.

Although liaison takes place between Services and IS/T staff on IS/T matters, no clear and consistent working practices have been agreed. The Council has in place an IS/T strategy. However, the links and working relationships with the corporate IS/T section are ineffective. The systems are not yet sufficiently developed to give managers a comprehensive overview of the work of services and the Council.

Systems of access controls are cumbersome and do not always meet the needs of the users. The Council and Services make limited use of the information generated for administration, planning and monitoring. Data held does not meet the full range of information requested nor is this information always readily available in an appropriate form. Written protocols on the exchange and confidentiality of data and the requirements of legislation are not generally well understood by staff, stakeholders or partners.

There is limited evidence of the Council providing the necessary central co-ordination and interpretation of data. The Council collates and analyses a range of data but this is insufficient for staff to monitor and demonstrate improvements in performance. Some important information is not included in the collation and analysis.

Management Information Systems do not play a major role in identifying trends, or providing benchmark and comparative information for the Council and officers to use in planning for improvement.

Systems do not provide reliable enough evidence to identify high or under-performance. Analysis and evaluation of statistical data held within the systems do not play a significant role in self-evaluation and continuous improvement. Managers and staff have access to limited training in the analysis of data.

Key Area 9: Leadership and direction

How good is our leadership?

9.1 Vision, values and aims

Themes

- *Appropriateness and coherence of corporate and community vision, values and aims*
- *Sharing and sustaining the vision*
- *Promotion of positive attitudes to social and cultural diversity*

Key Features

This indicator relates to the corporate leadership of the Council and to the way in which it exercises its functions through unity of purpose. This will be expressed through the Council's effectiveness in establishing direction through its wider community vision. To demonstrate good practice, Council will have to ensure that this vision actively influences practice at the point of delivery. This indicator focuses on the extent to which vision, values and aims guide planning for, and impact on, maintaining and improving the quality of services for the community.

Illustration QI Level 5

The aims convey a distinctive picture of the aspirations for, and expectations of, the Council. There are clear links between the vision, values and aims contained within the community plan, the Council's Corporate Plan and the Services' strategic, improvement and operational plans. Clear and comprehensive statements of this vision, along with values and expectations, direct the work of the Council and its partner agencies. These statements encompass the purposes of the Council, as well as national and local priorities and expectations for service users, stakeholders and the wider community.

Leaders have established a shared vision for the Council. The Council's vision, values and aims provide a widely recognised and shared set of aspirations and expectations for all stakeholders. Services and partners have a very good awareness of the Council's vision, values and aims and of their own specific roles in their delivery. The aims have been developed through involving a wide range of stakeholders and clearly set out the Council's commitment to a culture of empowerment, improvement, innovation and excellence. The vision, values and aims are continually revisited and reinforced in events and activities which result in a strong sense of common purpose.

The aims and vision set out clear expectations for equality and social justice. Elected members and senior officers demonstrate commitment to and provide a clear lead in emphasising equality issues. Managers and staff are strongly committed to the aims and vision for equality and promote social and cultural diversity. Plans at all levels address the promotion of equality, diversity, sustainable development and inclusion.

Illustration QI Level 2

Leaders in the Council have established a vision which directs the work of the Council but does not significantly impact on its processes or outcomes or those of its partner agencies. The respective aims within community, corporate and business management and improvement plans are insufficiently linked. Managers do not always demonstrate the same level of commitment to corporate priorities. The purposes of national and local priorities, expectations and aspirations are insufficiently emphasised or explained. The vision, values and aims of the Council have only limited relevance to the main activities of the Council and its services.

Leaders have established a vision which directs the work of the Council but it has not been communicated sufficiently well to stakeholders. The Council's aims convey only a partial picture of the aspirations of local elected members for the Council. In developing the Council's aims, involvement of stakeholders has been insufficient and, consequently, understanding and ownership of the aims is limited. The aims are not sufficiently embedded in the work of the Council and do not emphasise a commitment to a culture of improvement, service excellence and innovation.

The aims and vision set out expectations for equality and social justice. These are not yet fully embedded in an appropriate range of operational policies and procedures. Managers and staff are committed to promoting social and cultural diversity but this commitment is not always translated into action.

9.2 Leadership and direction

Themes

- *Shared leadership of services*
- *Strategic planning and communication*
- *Strategic deployment of resources*
- *Evaluation of risk*

Key Features

This indicator is fundamentally about strategic planning for future sustainability. It focuses on the mapping out of future developments which are challenging, realisable and sustainable. This indicator also relates to the success of senior managers in linking the Council's vision to strategic deployment of resources to deliver services, secure Best Value and work towards contributing and promoting the promotion and achievement of sustainable development. Significant current and planned organisational activities will take place within a culture which supports and enables effective risk management.

Illustration QI Level 1

Senior Elected Members provide officers with strong political leadership and direction and demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement. Together, they communicate and demonstrate a very clear view of what the Council is aiming to achieve. Senior officers develop effective and strategic business plans and identify key actions, intended outcomes and major targets. Planning documents are accessible, succinct and set out key priorities within a well-managed planning cycle. Planning leads to sustainable change. Channels of communication are effective. There is strong leadership and direction on corporate priorities. Staff take full account of the need for succession planning, securing accountability, making appropriate use of data for informed decision-making and evaluating impact and outcomes. Strong leadership helps to steer individuals and teams successfully through the difficulties and challenges associated with strategic planning.

Senior Elected Members make transparent and evidence-based decisions on the allocation of resources to Services from the Council budget. Senior managers provide strong leadership in targeting resources at key agreed objectives and achieving Best Value. They have developed a clear Best Value approach to deliver continuous improvement. The Council has in place a very clear strategic planning framework which takes account of finances, asset management and human resources and which articulates well with its business management and improvement planning cycle.

The culture is one that is aware of risks. Risks are balanced against the benefits that may arise from taking these risks. Systems are in place to consult relevant partners and stakeholders in relation to risk management.

Illustration QI Level 2

Senior Elected Members and senior officers of the Council do not have a consistently clear view of the strategic role of the Council in planning for improvement. As a result the work of the Council is taken forward mainly at an operational level and change is often not sustainable. Elected Members and officers do not always demonstrate a clear or mutual understanding of the national context or local priorities. Officers are sometimes unclear about political priorities while members feel that they are not always provided with consistently high-quality advice and support. The Chief Executive does not systematically inform the Council's Senior Management Team of identified community and corporate priorities. Services operate in isolation from the corporate centre. Insufficient account is taken of the need for careful succession planning, securing accountability, making appropriate use of data for informed decision-making and evaluating impact and outcomes.

Resource allocation is not closely enough linked to key agreed objectives. The rationale for the strategic deployment of resources to Services is not transparent nor does it match closely any national guidance. The department has initiated some Best Value reviews but its approach is one of reacting to prevailing circumstances rather than being planned and comprehensive. While it has in place a strategic planning framework, this does not take full account of finances, asset management and human resources and it only articulates to a limited extent with its business management and improvement planning cycle. Financial decision-making pays insufficient attention to sustainability. The Council secures improvement through effective project management and resource management but does not consistently manage financial risk effectively and efficiently.

9.3 Leading people and developing partnerships

Themes

- *Developing leadership capacity*
- *Building and sustaining relationships*
- *Teamwork and partnerships*

Key Features

This indicator relates to the effectiveness of the Council in building capacity for leadership at all levels and securing positive working relationships and successful outcomes with stakeholders and partner agencies. The indicator relates to the ethos and culture of the Council and beyond, through its operations corporately within the Council and in joint working with its partner agencies. The effectiveness of the Executive Officer Team, their deployment, responsibilities and co-working in relation to organisational requirements and key strengths are relevant. Delegation to, and empowerment of, staff and partners are important features, alongside the development and support of effective teamwork.

Illustration QI Level 1

Leaders model a wide range of effective leadership skills and motivate others to give of their best. The range and balance of skills, personal qualities and experience make for a very effective Executive Officer Team. The Chief Executive and Executive Officer Team exemplify the Council's approach to quality improvement through active leadership and personal involvement in improvement strategies and activities. There is an empowering culture of improvement and an understanding that all staff, at whatever level, have a key role to play in taking forward the work of the Council. Staff feel able and confident to exercise initiative, share responsibility and adopt lead roles in their own areas. They understand their own leadership roles and those of others. The structures in place draw upon the collective knowledge, experience and personal interests of a wide range of staff and create opportunities for staff to lead projects. Effective systems are in place to promote and evaluate the impact of leadership programmes, sustainable developments and succession planning.

Leaders have developed a supportive work environment in which people share a sense of responsibility to improve the quality of services. Talents are identified and promoted. Working relationships are built on trust and reflect a genuine concern for staff and relevant partners. Systems are in place to help people tackle challenging problems, share information and deal with difficulties. Staff and partners have regular opportunities to share ideas, review their work and learn from each other. There are regular opportunities to give and receive constructive feedback. Staff are encouraged and supported to do their personal best. Their achievements are recognised.

There is a high level of commitment to partnership working and team development. Leaders are pro-active in establishing strong links with establishments, stakeholders, partners, agencies and other Council services and lead joint improvement activities. They are successful in mobilising and focusing the commitment and enthusiasm of staff across the Council along with key partners and stakeholders to secure continuous improvement. There is effective multi-disciplinary working and a positive impact on service users.

An ethos of teamwork and collegiality is evident at all levels of the organisation. There is a high level of participation and engagement by relevant partners. Team performance is regularly evaluated against agreed objectives and targets. Staff at all levels have developed and participate in a range of teams throughout the Council, each having a clearly focused role and remit.

Illustration QI Level 2

Individual members of the senior team demonstrate leadership skills in a few areas but there are important weaknesses in others which are key to the effective leadership of the Council. There are some important gaps or weaknesses in the range and balance of the skills, abilities and experience within senior management teams, impacting on the overall effectiveness of the Council leadership. The culture of the Council although positive, does not convey a full sense of challenge, change or progress. Senior Elected Members and senior officers do not have a consistently clear view of their own leadership roles and those of others. The Chief Executive and the Executive Officer Team are not always successful in gaining the commitment of key staff in the Council or external agencies and other key stakeholders. As a result, there is confusion about who is leading what, and a lack of ownership of key initiatives. There is a dependency culture where staff feel inhibited about taking the initiative and are overly-dependent upon others. Insufficient account is taken of the need for leadership training and development and succession planning.

The quality of relationships and the culture of the work environment are too variable across the Council and within Services. Staff in some services are not fully supported in their work and their contributions go unrecognised. Relationships with senior staff are inconsistent and interactions with other staff and/or partners inhibit the delivery of quality services. Staff have opportunities to meet and discuss programmes of work but these are insufficiently frequent. Systems are in place for giving and receiving feedback but the atmosphere is not conducive to open and honest dialogue. As a result, the outcomes of such meetings are not well focused and have little impact. The achievements of staff and partners are not regularly recognised or celebrated.

Managers have built and sustain effective working relationships with a narrow range of key partners but other relevant potential partnerships are under developed. There are some examples of effective partnership working but the overall picture is inconsistent. Senior staff do not systematically demonstrate a commitment to partnership working nor focus strongly enough on collaborative working and shared responsibility. They do not sufficiently evaluate their own performance individually or as a team. They maintain effective communication with a narrow range of interested partners, agencies and stakeholders. They undertake insufficient planning with partners to ensure effective multi-agency working. Relationships and interaction with colleagues, service users, partner organisations and the public can be inconsistent and punctuated by misunderstandings, lack of clarity and tensions. Service based teams may work well as individual units. In general, teamwork is not well established and, where teams are in operation, objectives and targets lack specificity or team performance is not routinely evaluated against agreed criteria.

9.4 Leadership of innovation, change and improvement

Themes

- *Support and challenge*
- *Creativity, innovation and step change*
- *Continuous improvement*

Key Features

This indicator is concerned with the effectiveness of the leadership of the Council to maintain high levels of quality, deliver continuous improvement, and work towards achieving excellence in the quality of provision for service users and the community. A critically important component of the leadership function is the need for managers and stakeholders to challenge staff continuously to improve the quality of provision for users, by setting demanding but realistic performance targets and by providing high-level support to assist them to achieve these. The indicator also relates to the ability and success of the Executive Officer Team systematically to encourage and support innovative and effective practices which bring about positive step changes in users' experiences.

Illustration QI Level 1

Senior managers actively and systematically take leading roles in ensuring appropriate support and challenge. They set demanding performance targets for the Council. They challenge staff and teams to improve their performance, including their own team, monitor performance and outcomes and support continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence. They align people, structures and systems to secure improvement.

Senior managers have a very good strategic overview of what constitutes best practice within the Council and regularly explore, research and adopt innovative practice being taken forward in other organisations. They routinely use the results of self-evaluation exercises, Best Value and other reviews to consider new methods of service delivery and innovative approaches aimed at enhancing the quality of provision. Senior managers welcome and support innovation. They lead and challenge staff at all levels in Services. They encourage staff to contribute suggestions to enhance the quality of service provision. Managers apply the principles and practices of risk management to proposed changes and innovations. Examples of excellence and innovative practice are celebrated widely. Innovative practice has led to qualitative improvements in service delivery. Senior managers lead and manage change effectively and strategically by prioritising and focusing on a manageable number of high priority initiatives and communicating them to staff at all levels.

The Chief Executive plays a very strong and focused leading role in driving the Council's commitment to continuously improving performance, service quality, impact and outcomes. She is well supported by the Executive Officer Team, all of whom have clearly focused quality improvement roles and responsibilities. Managers replicate such leadership in the Council's drive towards continuous improvement across services. The Council constantly explores ways to create more capacity for improvement. It builds capacity through developing talents and skills providing opportunities for shared and distributed leadership and nurturing expertise in its staff. Senior managers act as a collective collaborative group in support of the Council's vision, values and aims and work constructively to increase its capacity for improvement.

Illustration QI Level 2

The Executive Officer Team does not consistently support and challenge its services. Roles and responsibilities for senior managers do not focus sufficiently on setting performance targets and challenging staff to improve their performance. Senior managers do not place sufficient emphasis on monitoring performance and outcomes and supporting continuous improvement. There is insufficient emphasis on achieving excellence.

Senior managers are aware of a range of examples of good practice within the Council but have not yet established a strategic overview. They seldom look externally to identify or consider new approaches. The Council has conducted a number of self-evaluation exercises and reviews but these lead to improvements in only a few instances. Innovative practice is not systematically identified, supported, evaluated or disseminated across the Council. Senior managers do not consistently celebrate examples of excellence or innovative practice. Senior managers do not consistently manage change effectively and strategically and as a result the focus tends to be on often unrelated initiatives which are of varying degrees of importance and priority. Communication on change to staff is often insufficient to enable them to understand the reasons for, or the anticipated benefits from, implementing change.

The Executive Officer Team discusses quality and continuous improvement on a fairly regular basis, but senior managers do not consistently drive these forward. In the implementation of their remits they tend to focus on systems, functions and processes rather than on quality development or improved outcomes and impact. While the Council has a plan for improvement and supports its implementation, it does not have a strategic approach to develop capacity for improvement. Key staff and partners generally work hard, but their talents and skills are not recognised and developed. Senior managers meet regularly with managers as a group but this has little impact on co-operative working. Some managers do not consistently operate as officers of the Council.

Key Area 10: Capacity for improvement

What is our capacity for improvement?

10 Global judgement based on evidence of all key areas, in a particular, outcomes, impact and leadership

Key Features

This last of the high-level questions requires a global judgement based on evidence and evaluations of all key areas. In answering this question, the Council should also take into account contextual issues such as impending retirements of senior staff, plans to restructure and significant changes in funding. They should also consider their ability to respond quickly to change and to be creative and innovative in the pursuit of excellence.

The Council should be able to make a statement with the following components:

“The Council is confident/not confident that the evidence and evaluation to date indicates that:

- *overall improvements have been made to key outcomes and to impacts on stakeholders;*
- *leadership and management are effective; and*
- *quality improvement arrangements are effective and the Council has the capacity to continue improving.”*

The levels of confidence expressed for each component may be different and may include some reservations or caveats, but should lead to an overall statement of confidence in the Council’s capacity to improve in relation to its service delivery.

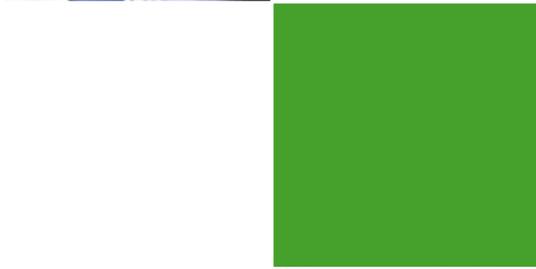
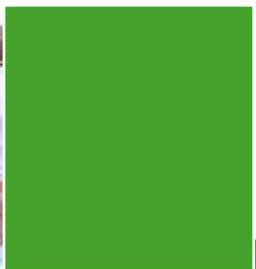
For example, the statement could say:

“The Council is confident that the evidence and evaluation to date indicates that:

- *improvements have been made to achieving almost all key outcomes and, overall, improvements have been made to meet the needs of service users but the level of some key aspect requires further improvement;*
- *leadership and management are currently effective but key posts will become vacant in the near future; and*
- *quality improvement arrangements are effective in all areas except a specific key target and the Council has demonstrated the capacity to continue improving.”*

Guide 3

Asking questions and providing evidence to support the self-evaluation process



How Good is Our Council?

A guide to evaluating Council Services using quality indicators

‘How Good is Our Council?’ is intended to be used across Perth & Kinross Council to assist services and the Council as a whole to evaluate how well it is doing in a rigorous, robust, systematic and consistent way.

It is meant to be used as a ‘toolkit’ to support the overall self-evaluation process. It is *not* intended to be read from cover to cover, but simply as guidance when undertaking any self-evaluation exercise - whether at individual Team, Division, Service or Council level. To assist with this, it has been divided into three parts:

Guide 1 <i>General introduction and a simple approach to using quality indicators to support self-evaluation</i>
Part 1 <i>The role of generic quality indicators</i>
Part 2 <i>The structure of the generic quality indicators</i>
Part 3 <i>Using the guidance to complete a self-evaluation exercise</i>

Guide 2 <i>Indicators, themes and illustrations</i>
Part 1 <i>Applying the generic quality indicators</i>
Part 2 <i>The six-point scale and illustrations</i>

Guide 3 <i>Asking questions and providing evidence to support the self-evaluation process</i>
Part 1 <i>Self-evaluation and sources of evidence</i>
Part 2 <i>Self-evaluation questions</i>

The section above highlighted in bold indicates which particular guide you are reading.

Part 1

Self-evaluation and sources of evidence

Measures and Indicators

1.1

The process of self-evaluation employs three main types of measures and indicators:

- *Quality Indicators (QIs);*
- *ethos indicators and perception measures; and*
- *Performance indicators and outcome measures.*

The following commentary outlines the purpose and function of each within the self-evaluation process.

Quality Indicators

1.2

Many services are now well experienced in the use of QIs. They are important management tools that assist an organisation in checking whether its aims and expectations are being met. They can be used to evaluate the organisation's overall performance and effectiveness, or to examine specific aspects of performance in more detail. This assists the evaluators to develop a clear picture of the effectiveness of the Council. When used most effectively, therefore, the QIs become objective reference points against which judgements can be made by experienced practitioners. Consequently, areas of strength and those in which improvement is required can be identified and action taken. This is the essence of effective self-evaluation. The aim for all Councils should be to develop and embed a culture at all levels, where systematic, robust and ongoing self-evaluation permeates every establishment and every Service.

The careful evaluator will always recognise the complexity of the system that is being reviewed, and the interplay of organisational factors, competing priorities and local circumstances. It is important that QIs should not be used as simple checklists or in isolation from other evaluation techniques or processes. Self-evaluation should be able to focus on the Council's mission or central purpose, which must always be the key reference point for contextualising the QIs and suggesting features to examine.

Councils are complex organisations and are subject to change. The QIs in the 'How good is our Council?' framework provide a flexible structure for evaluating key inputs such as:

- *leadership;*
- *policy development and planning;*
- *management and support of staff; and*
- *partnership and resources.*

The QIs in the framework also address the delivery of key processes and the impact on stakeholders such as:

- *service users*
- *staff; and*
- *the local and wider community.*

Ethos indicators and perception measures

1.3

Ethos indicators and perception measures provide a structure for evaluating the views or perceptions of key stakeholders, who include:

- *service users;*
- *their families;*
- *staff, whether temporary or permanent, full-time or part-time, in substantive posts, on secondment or working as volunteers;*
- *partner organisations and external agencies; and*
- *members of the wider community and other stakeholders.*

Ethos indicators and perception measures are used to evaluate the **impact** on stakeholders of services provided by the Council. They draw on evidence from a range of sources such as stakeholder surveys, satisfaction questionnaires, focus group discussions and a range of quantitative indicators.

Performance indicators and outcome measures

1.4

Performance indicators measure the **key outcomes** of the Service. They measure the extent to which the Council has achieved its vision, values, aims and targets, as expressed within its local Service and/or Improvement Plans. They also measure the extent to which the Service is delivering those outcomes established through the national priorities agenda. When judging performance in these respects, the Council will rely on increasingly sophisticated analysis of a wide range of quantitative management and performance data such as Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) and benchmarking with comparator Services and Councils.

It is important not to concentrate on one type of indicator at the expense of others. While good processes do, in the main, tend to lead to good outcomes, the direct relationship may not be quite as simple to observe. For example, there may well be a time lag between improving a process and being able to identify evidence which demonstrates that this has had an impact or has led to improved outcomes. Equally, where outcomes are not particularly good, it is important to evaluate which processes require to be improved to impact positively on these outcomes. A further and very important step is to benchmark those inputs which are being used in the process, for example staffing levels, costs and time allocations, so that performance can be compared with that of similar organisations and Best Value judgements made.

Finally, it may be misleading to look at any one key area of the framework or at isolated QIs without cross-referencing these with others in order to corroborate evaluations. A much more considered and holistic approach is essential to develop a clear picture of the Council's effectiveness.

The self-evaluation cycle

1.5

In developing a systematic and manageable approach to self-evaluation, the Council will plan its work across a rolling period or cycle. In the course of this cycle, the Council might aim to evaluate the evidence available to it in order to judge the effectiveness of its performance against the six high-level questions:

- *What key outcomes have we achieved?*
- *How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?*
- *How good is our delivery of key processes?*
- *How good is our management?*

- *How good is our leadership?*
- *What is our capacity for improvement?*

Through systematically keeping these high-level questions and their component parts under review over the lifetime of the self-evaluation cycle, the Council should be able to identify, celebrate and build on areas of strength and address areas of under-performance, thereby identifying key priorities for improvement. It is expected that, in addition to using national frameworks of performance and quality indicators, the Council will wish to use a range of other tools and measures, for example, through their involvement in quality schemes such as Charter Mark, IiP or EFQM, through benchmarking activities in Best Value, or by using service based local measures and targets.

Scoping the self-evaluation programme 1.6

The self-evaluation programme needs to be planned and resourced systematically. One way to decide on the most relevant and appropriate activities across the cycle is to carry out a scoping exercise, which takes account of the following:

- *previous inspection evaluation evidence and reports including external inspections of the Council and its services;*
- *progress against previous inspection or self-evaluation action points;*
- *progress against other action points and targets, such as national priorities, local improvement objectives and social justice milestones;*
- *analysis of performance data;*
- *outcomes of Best Value audits and reviews;*

- *standards and quality and associated public performance reports;*
- *progress against targets in plans;*
- *evidence available from relevant quality models, such as Charter Mark, IiP and EFQM;*
- *evidence of local or national quality awards, such as council-recognised schemes and COSLA quality awards;*
- *the context, background, demographics, economy and characteristics of the Council area;*
- *outcomes of stakeholder satisfaction exercises such as surveys, questionnaires and focus groups;*
- *evidence from external partner agencies;*
- *assessment of capacity for improvement (including facilitating and constraining factors).*

The scoping exercise should establish how the six high-level questions and their component parts are to be addressed across the self-evaluation cycle and the indicators and measures to be used in each case. **However, the impact of meeting the needs of service users and the achievement of key outcomes need to be kept under close review on a regular basis.**

The rolling programme should be subject to review every year and should, if appropriate, be adjusted to take account of such factors as new inspection evidence, Best Value audits, the outcomes of improvement plans and activities, changes to national or local policy and rising or falling trends across a range of performance measures. It is important to view the self-evaluation programme as an ongoing, organic and dynamic process with a clear focus on impact, outcomes, continuous improvement and the pursuit of excellence.

The external inspection process

1.7

An inspection/audit of a Council is a major exercise which can be carried out through:

- *evaluation by HMIE, SWIA, Communities Scotland, Care Commission etc;*
- *Best Value Council review by Audit Scotland; and*
- *evaluation by external assessors, using the criteria or standards of another quality system, such as EFQM or Charter Mark.*

The extent to which such a framework covers the full range of inputs, processes and outcomes will vary according to the system deployed.

Taking a high-level view and taking a closer look

1.8

To answer the six high-level questions, the Council will wish to take a proportionate approach to **taking a high-level view** and **taking a closer look** in terms of using relevant indicators and/or measures. In reaching an evaluation of performance across a Service, some indicators/measures may only be used to gain a high-level view, while others will be used to take a closer, more focused look at specific areas of service delivery. A balance of high-level views and taking a closer look activities, using appropriate indicators and measures, should allow the Council to:

- *provide a good range of telling evidence;*
- *judge how well it is performing and meeting the needs of stakeholders;*
- *establish how favourably it performs in relation to the most comparable Councils; and*

- *identify those actions required to make further improvements.*

On a regular basis, Council staff can take a **high-level view** by scanning across selected indicators and outcome measures and assigning one of the six levels to each, on the basis of considered professional judgement, using evidence that has been gathered in the normal course of work. This will provide an ongoing impression of areas of perceived major strength and of those where more attention is required. The focus and emphasis should always be on impact and outcomes, which can then direct appropriate audit trails into selected inputs and processes. It is neither necessary nor practicable to audit all inputs and processes on an annual basis.

It is important to bear in mind that:

- *such a high-level exercise, while providing a fairly reliable, general overview of the Council's performance, is to an extent superficial;*
- *performance in specific areas can rise or fall from year to year and thus, for example, a Level 5 evaluation against a specific indicator one year may not necessarily be sustained the following year; and*
- *the importance of tracking processes through to impact and outcomes cannot be over-emphasised.*

In addition to taking this broad, high-level view, Services/the Council will also wish to **take a closer look** at specific areas, which might include:

- *areas not covered thus far within its regular audit cycle;*
- *areas in which impact and outcomes are identified as cause for concern, in order to identify the causes of, and solutions to, weaknesses;*
- *areas where impact and outcomes are particularly strong, in order to*

investigate the inputs or processes that are leading to these strengths; and

- *areas relating to local priorities.*

It is vital for the Council, in its scrutiny of performance through the close examination of impact and outcome measures, to identify those areas in which a closer look is required.

Identifying the evidence

1.9

The process of gathering evidence at establishment or Service level is essentially the same as that at Council level. However, there will be considerable differences in the range and sources of evidence that might be used. The following are examples of the sources of evidence which might inform a Council's self-evaluation, but it is stressed that this list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive:

Council self-evaluation:

- *Using other relevant quality frameworks, such as EFQM or Charter Mark;*
- *Collating from other external inspection such as QMIE 2, SWIA, Communities Scotland, How Good is Our School? 3 (HGIOS?3), How Good is Our Community Learning and Development? 2 (HGIOCLD?2) and a range of associated self-evaluation evidence; and*
- *Using other relevant self-evaluation exercises and sources of evidence.*

Performance data:

- *Analysis of a range of key performance data;*
- *Statutory Performance Indicators (Accounts Commission SPIs);*
- *Thematic performance evaluations, for example, child protection; Managing Older People's Services;*

- *A range of public performance reports.*

Documentation:

- *Public performance reports;*
- *Council and Service committee reports;*
- *Community Plan, Corporate Plan and other relevant cross-cutting reports;*
- *Business Management & Improvement Plans;*
- *Improvement Plans;*
- *Cross-departmental and inter-agency strategy and operational plans;*
- *Agendas and minutes of meetings, for example: Council, committee, partnership groups;*
- *Corporate and Service Management Teams.*

Stakeholders' views:

Stakeholders might include:

- *participants in community capacity-building activities;*
- *service users;*
- *their families;*
- *community groups, including voluntary organisations;*
- *council staff;*
- *staff from external partner agencies;*
- *Elected Members;*
- *the Council's Executive Officer Team;*
- *trade unions and professional associations;*
- *members of the general public.*

A range of forums, procedures and techniques can be used or accessed to gather stakeholders' views. These often include:

- *Council and committee meetings;*
- *focus groups;*
- *questionnaires and surveys to gauge satisfaction and to elicit suggestions for improving effectiveness;*
- *one-to-one discussions;*
- *consultations on single issues, for example, policy development;*
- *cross-sectoral working groups;*
- *targeted consultation groups;*
- *established forums;*
- *joint partnership groups;*
- *suggestion boxes or equivalent;*
- *inter-agency training forums;*
- *trade unions;*
- *corporate Council complaints procedures;*
- *staff grievances;*
- *mediation and dispute resolution procedures;*
- *visits by senior staff to Services, providing opportunities to engage in discussions with service users, staff, and other key stakeholders.*

Direct observation:

- *Council and Service committees;*
- *inter-agency strategy groups (political and officer);*
- *interaction with direct service providers, staff, service users, external agencies and a range of other key stakeholders through, for example: interviews, focus groups, conferences and seminars, staff meetings, pupil councils, voluntary group meetings; local area networks;*
- *management team meetings;*
- *quality improvement meetings.*

The selection of evidence should be kept to manageable proportions by, for example, a process of sampling. The extent and nature of sampling should be thought through carefully and systematically, taking into account considerations of **depth** and **breadth**.

For example:

*The principle of **triangulation** has been tried and tested over many years by independent external evaluators and by Councils themselves. In essence, triangulation involves the scrutiny of one source of evidence, backed up by another and corroborated by a third line of enquiry. A good example would be an evaluation based on the examination of a key policy document, the implementation of which was then discussed with senior Council staff and corroborated in further discussion with relevant stakeholders such as school staff, parents or young people. Through this process of triangulation, it should then be possible to evaluate the impact of policy in meeting the needs of key stakeholders.*

The self-evaluation questions

1.10

The last section of the document contains a few selected practical examples of questions which Council managers might ask themselves and their staff to help them arrive at evaluations for certain indicators. These relate to features of the Council that may be present in whole or in part if that particular theme is being delivered effectively. The suggested questions are designed to support the evaluator in the search for evidence.

The questions provided are intended to be neither comprehensive nor prescriptive. They are not designed to be used as a checklist. It is properly a matter for the Council to determine for each indicator the relevant questions to ask and the appropriate features to look for. In asking these or other relevant questions and in considering the Level 2 and Level 5 illustrations of evaluations against the QIs, it is also important to recognise that it is not necessary for an aspect of provision to exhibit all of the features in a particular illustration before it is deemed to be 'good practice'. It is expected that evaluators will bring their own knowledge and experience to make a significant and important contribution to the evaluation process.

Recording and reporting

The Council will wish to develop a clear and reliable system to record the outcomes of all activities within the self-evaluation programme. The range of such activities will be broad and the management and administration of the programme itself and of its component parts will be important. The evidence from self-evaluation will have a very important place in external inspections, such as SWIA inspections and Best Value audits. It is important that the whole self-evaluation process is viewed as complementary to the external inspection process, with the Council's self-evaluation report potentially having a major influence on the scope of the external inspection. The ongoing process of self-evaluation and reporting on outcomes will assist the Council in providing the external evaluator with an evaluative statement on its performance in addressing the high-level questions at any given time prior to the scoping of an external inspection. Given the ongoing cyclical nature of self-evaluation and the potential for generating statistical and written evidence, maximum use should be made of IST systems.

Part 2

Self-evaluation questions

Key Area 1: Key performance outcomes

What key outcomes have we achieved?

1.1 Improvements in performance

1.2 Adherence to statutory principles and fulfilment of statutory duties

Questions you might ask

- *What measures of outcomes do we have?*
- *What trends do they reveal?*
- *What targets have we achieved or not achieved?*
- *How do we compare with other similar authorities?*
- *How did we perform in external scrutiny?*
- *What evidence do we have that our work complies with statutory requirements?*
- *Are we complying with the list of statutory obligations on time?*
- *Are we completing our statutory obligations on time?*
- *Is compliance with statutory procedures monitored externally?*
- *Are procedures related to statutory processes subjected to regular review internally?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Performance targets from the range of plans indicate positive trends over time*
- *Evaluation of Council performance data in relation to national and local objectives*
- *Year-on-year improvements in stakeholder satisfaction*
- *Benchmark data with comparative services*
- *Corporate Plan*
- *Community Plan*
- *Business Management & Improvement Plans and guidance*
- *Analysis of complaints and responses*
- *Evaluation of Services' contributions to Corporate Plan objectives and targets*

Key Area 1: Key performance outcomes

What key outcomes have we achieved?		Level
QI 1.1 Improvements in performance		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 1: Key performance outcomes

What key outcomes have we achieved?		Level
QI 1.2 Adherence to statutory principles and fulfilment of statutory duties		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 2: Impact on service users

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

2.1 Impact on service users

Questions you might ask

- *How much do users value the delivery of services to them?*
- *Do service users feel they have a contribution to make to what services are being delivered and that their opinions are respected?*
- *What does our analysis of the performance data tell us about the difference we are making?*
- *What evidence do we have that service users are:*
 - *treated equally and fairly?*
 - *satisfied with the quality of services provided by the Council?*
 - *involved and engaged in the development of service delivery?*
- *To what extent can we state that service users are:*
 - *confident that they will be treated equally and fairly by the Council?*
 - *aware of any complaints procedures?*
 - *satisfied with the way the Council dealt with complaints or queries?*
 - *satisfied with the quality of service provided by the Council?*
 - *involved and engaged in the development of service delivery?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Completed questionnaires, surveys, satisfaction surveys*
- *Focus groups of service users*
- *Availability of independent advice, support and/or advocacy to service users on a range of matters*
- *Attendance at events organised by the Council*
- *Accessibility of specialist services*
- *Staff training programmes related to supporting service users and the community*
- *Availability and flexibility of the services provided*
- *Survey of complaints and satisfactory outcomes*

Key Area 2: Impact on service users

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?		Level
QI 2.1 Impact on service users		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 3: Impact on staff

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

3.1 Impact on staff

Questions you might ask

- *To what extent can we state that staff:*
 - *are motivated and committed?*
 - *feel confident and valued?*
- *What range of mechanisms is in place to evaluate staff perceptions, experience and satisfaction?*
- *What evidence do we have that staff:*
 - *improve the impact of their practice through training and development activities?*
 - *are aware of the Council's policy and programme for CPD?*
 - *are confident that they can access CPD opportunities as appropriate?*
 - *are supported by central services and the work of partner agencies?*
 - *work well in teams?*
 - *are meaningfully involved in service development?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Staff focus groups*
- *Formal agendas, minutes and other relevant documentation*
- *Survey of staff views*
- *Procedures for dealing with staff suggestions and complaints*
- *Programmes of visits to Services by senior Council managers to engage with staff*
- *Analysis of absence, turnover and recruitment information*
- *Information contained in other external inspection/audit reports*

Key Area 3: Impact on staff

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?		Level
QI 3.1 Impact on staff		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 4: Impact on the community

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

4.1 Impact on the local community

Questions you might ask

- *How do we know that we help members of the community to develop their skills, abilities and confidence?*
- *To what extent does our provision empower members of the community to shape developments in their local area?*
- *To what extent has our provision resulted in communities developing self-help and social enterprise initiatives?*
- *To what extent has our provision resulted in increased civic involvement?*
- *How do we know that attitudes and behaviour in relation to social and cultural diversity are improving?*
- *To what extent has our provision resulted in increased networking and learning amongst members of the local community?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Programme of community events*
- *Number in attendance at meetings and events organised by the Council*
- *Evidence from other external/audit inspections*
- *Feedback from the local community*
- *Community focus groups*
- *Corporate and Community Plans*

Key Area 4: Impact on the community

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?		Level
QI 4.1 Impact on the local community		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 4: Impact on the community

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

4.2 Impact on the wider community

Questions you might ask

- *To what extent do we encourage and support innovation in the wider community?*
- *To what extent do we learn from, and adopt, leading-edge practice?*
- *To what extent do we influence wider policy and practice?*
- *To what extent do we anticipate and respond rapidly and flexibly to change?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Corporate Plan*
- *Community Plan*
- *Number of improvement targets met*
- *Views from the wider community*
- *Viewfinder*
- *Number of complaints and satisfaction levels*

Key Area 4: Impact on the community

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?		Level
QI 4.2 Impact on the wider community		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 5: Delivery of key processes

How good is our delivery of key processes?

5.1 Delivering services

Questions you might ask

- *To what extent can we show that we have a clear strategy for the delivery of services?*
- *To what extent do we provide clear information on the services we deliver?*
- *To what extent do we provide clear guidance on policies to staff and service users?*
- *How effectively do we review and revise our guidance and information?*
- *To what extent do we have clear systems in place for implementing our policies?*
- *How well do we ensure that we provide effective transition between services when they need it?*
- *What systems do we have to ensure that we engage with service users and stakeholders to identify and meet their specific needs?*
- *How do we celebrate achievements and successes?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Corporate Plan*
- *Trend analysis of performance data over time*
- *Annual Performance reports*
- *Feedback from service users*
- *Evaluations from external audit/inspection reports*
- *Business Management & Improvement Plans*
- *Complaints records and outcomes*
- *Improvement plans*
- *Quality awards*
- *Staff recognition awards*
- *Strategic planning guidance*

Key Area 5: Delivery of key processes

How good is our delivery of key processes?		Level
QI 5.1 Delivering services		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 5: Delivery of key processes

How good is our delivery of key processes?

5.2 Developing, managing and improving partnerships and relationships with service users and other stakeholders

Questions you might ask

- *To what extent are service users and partners engaged in the way services are delivered?*
- *How effective is our feedback following any consultation exercise?*
- *Have the views of service users about the quality of services delivered improved?*
- *What is the response from service users and partners to our performance reporting?*
- *Are there good examples of where partnership working has improved outcomes for those who use our services?*
- *Do we make the best use of the resources available to us?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Community Plan*
- *Corporate Plan*
- *Business Management & Improvement Plans*
- *Evaluations for external audit/inspection reports*
- *Evidence of service users and partners involved in developing services*
- *Feedback arrangements to consultees*
- *Community Engagement Strategy*
- *Users and partners' surveys*

Key Area 5: Delivery of key processes

How good is our delivery of key processes? QI 5.2 Developing, managing and improving partnerships and relationships with service users and other stakeholders		Level
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 5: Delivery of key processes

How good is our delivery of key processes?

5.3 Inclusion, equality and fairness

Questions you might ask

- *What evidence do we have that:*
 - *staff at all levels and key stakeholders have a clear understanding of policies relating to equality and inclusion and their own responsibilities in this regard?*
 - *we have a range of written guidance for staff?*
 - *we provide effective services for vulnerable service users?*
- *How effective are our systems for:*
 - *tracking and monitoring the achievements of service users and those requiring additional support?*
 - *recording, analysing and addressing any under-representation or under-achievement of groups of users?*
- *Do we comply with all the relevant legislation?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Data available from equalities monitoring*
- *Analysis of trends over time*
- *Equalities Strategy and policies in place*
- *Levels of awareness by staff, service users and other stakeholders*
- *Equal opportunity monitoring for recruitment and employment*
- *Information on the accessibility of Council information and services*
- *Complaints and satisfaction levels in how they are dealt with*

Key Area 5: Delivery of key processes

How good is our delivery of key processes?		Level
QI 5.3 Inclusion, equality and fairness		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 5: Delivery of key processes

How good is our delivery of key processes?

5.4 Improving the quality of services to stakeholders

Questions you might ask

- *How effective are our methods for evaluating our services?*
- *How clear and effective is our advice to services on self-evaluation, quality improvement and performance reporting?*
- *How effectively do we gather and use information from users, participants and other stakeholders to improve our services?*
- *How do we ensure that the roles and responsibilities of key staff ensure quality improvement in our services?*
- *To what extent do we carry out regular and rigorous audits of our services?*
- *How effectively do we moderate services' self-evaluation?*
- *How effectively do we use information from self-evaluation to plan for improvements?*
- *To what extent do we have a clear strategy for recording and reporting on our standards to our stakeholders?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Improved trends in performance data - SPIs, local targets etc*
- *Letters of appreciation*
- *Minutes of meetings*
- *Complaints records and outcomes*
- *Published reports of outcomes of good practice*
- *Best Value reviews*
- *Self-evaluation exercises*
- *Information from external audit/inspection*
- *Improvement plans*
- *Stakeholder feedback*
- *Focus group meetings*

Key Area 5: Delivery of key processes

How good is our delivery of key processes?		Level
QI 5.4 Improving the quality of services to stakeholders		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 6: Policy development and planning

How good is our management?

6.1 Policy review and development

Questions you might ask

- *What evidence do we have that:*
 - *our policy framework guides our activities and is relevant, comprehensive and appropriate?*
 - *our policy framework is clearly presented and able to be understood at all levels?*
 - *our policies are linked to our strategic vision, values and aims?*
 - *the policy framework and the range of policies within Services cohere with corporate and broader policies?*
- *To what extent are our policies well implemented, evaluated and updated?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Business Management & Improvement Plans*
- *Improvement plan*
- *Team plans*
- *Statement of vision, values and aims*
- *Policy framework*
- *Planning cycle*
- *Interrogation of policies*
- *Key corporate documents*
- *Audit information*
- *Minutes of meetings*

Key Area 6: Policy development and planning

How good is our management?		Level
QI 6.1 Policy review and development		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 6: Policy development and planning

How good is our management?

6.2 Participation of services users and other stakeholders

Questions you might ask

- *To what extent can we state that:*
 - *we communicate and consult effectively with stakeholders about our aims, provision and performance?*
 - *stakeholders are involved in shaping the development of policies?*
 - *stakeholders actively participate in the work of the Council?*
 - *our Services work in partnership with each other and with partner agencies?*
- *To what extent are our policies well implemented, evaluated and updated?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Focus group, working groups, targeted consultation groups*
- *Area and local forums*
- *Joint working groups*
- *Service Level Agreements*
- *Consultation framework, policy and procedures*
- *Communication framework, policy and procedures*
- *Agendas and minutes of meetings*
- *Questionnaires and feedback from service users*
- *Policy and procedures for complaints*
- *Policy and procedures for inter-agency working*

Key Area 6: Policy development and planning

How good is our management?		Level
QI 6.2 Participation of service users and other stakeholders		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 6: Policy development and planning

How good is our management?

6.3 Planning

Questions you might ask

- *What evidence do we have that:*
 - *we have effective mechanisms for developing, implementing and evaluating plans?*
 - *Business Management & Improvement Plans fit and input to local planning?*
 - *Business Management & Improvement Plans articulate with the Corporate and Community Plans?*
 - *the work of the Council is systematically monitored and evaluated by senior officers?*
 - *we use management information effectively to inform planning?*
 - *senior officers plan jointly?*
 - *staff at all levels are involved effectively in planning and evaluation?*
 - *plans are sustainable?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Best Value reviews*
- *Performance management and planning audits*
- *Council website*
- *Minutes of meetings*
- *Membership of groups*
- *Questionnaires to stakeholders on the quality of provision*
- *Quality assurance policy*
- *Outcomes of self-evaluation processes*
- *Outcomes from a range of audits (internal and external)*
- *Performance monitoring strategy*

Key Area 6: Policy development and planning

How good is our management?		Level
QI 6.3 Planning		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 7: Management and support of staff

How good is our management?

7.1 Sufficiency, recruitment and retention

Questions you might ask

- *Are there sufficient staff to deliver agreed outcomes?*
- *How effective are our procedures for ensuring that we have suitably qualified and skilled staff?*
- *How effective are our arrangements for ensuring the care and welfare of staff?*
- *How effective are our procedures for ensuring equality and fairness in staff recruitment and promotion?*
- *How well do we recognise and celebrate the achievements of our staff?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Number and nature of policies pertaining to human resource needs within the Council*
- *Comparative trends from national perspectives*
- *Deployment to support ring-fenced initiatives*
- *Business Management & Improvement Plans*
- *Performance reports*
- *External audit/inspection reports*
- *Views of staff*
- *Number of compliments/complaints from service users*
- *Number of re-advertisements*
- *Recruitment procedures*
- *Post-interview feedback*
- *Council induction procedures*
- *Feedback from inductees*
- *Staff turnover rates*
- *Absence rates*
- *Number of times that grievance procedures are used*

Key Area 7: Management and support of staff

How good is our management?		Level
QI 7.1 Sufficiency, recruitment and retention		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 7: Management and support of staff

How good is our management?

7.2 Deployment and teamwork

Questions you might ask

- *How clear are all our staff about their roles, responsibilities and levels of authority?*
- *How clear are staff about lines of communication and accountability?*
- *How well do we deploy staff to meet planned priorities?*
- *How well do staff teams work collaboratively with other teams to achieve common aims?*
- *How good is our communication with staff and how well do we involve them in decision-making?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Number of staff with clearly stated job descriptions and remits*
- *Effective completion of designated tasks and projects*
- *Staff surveys*
- *Job descriptions/remits*
- *Records of supervision, annual review and development and CPD*
- *Information about Council/Service structures*
- *Business Management & Improvement Plans*
- *Analysis of deployment of staff across the delivery of key processes*
- *Evidence of positive contributions towards meeting the authority's improvement objectives*
- *Performance reports*
- *Evaluation reports*
- *Council procedures and guidelines*
- *Papers outlining staff remits*
- *Allocation of workload and responsibilities, eg Council projects and priorities*
- *Number of Council teamworking groups*
- *Number of training events/projects delivered collaboratively*
- *Evidence showing how staff are involved in decision-making*

Key Area 7: Management and support of staff

How good is our management?		Level
QI 7.2 Deployment and teamwork		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 7: Management and support of staff

How good is our management?

7.3 Development and training

Questions you might ask

- *How well do our induction procedures support all new staff to become effective as soon as possible?*
- *To what extent do our arrangements for Employee Review & Development result in enthusiastic, well motivated, confident and competent staff?*
- *How well do our training and development activities equip our staff to work effectively and meet new challenges?*
- *To what extent do shared training and development opportunities result in improved inter-disciplinary relationships and work practices?*

Some ways of finding out

- *ERD policy*
- *Number of staff who have had annual ERD*
- *ERD records*
- *Council personnel policies and procedures*
- *Staff information*
- *Performance reports*
- *Best Value reviews*
- *Self-evaluation exercises*
- *Number of sessions linked to identified staff training needs*
- *Resource allocation to staff development activities, including budget allocation*
- *Number of staff development activities linked to national and local authority priorities*

Key Area 7: Management and support of staff

How good is our management?		Level
QI 7.3 Development and training		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 8: Resources

How good is our management?

8.1 Partnership working

Questions you might ask

- *How clearly have the purposes and aims of the partnership been communicated?*
- *How useful and clear are partnership documents such as Service Level Agreements, protocols and other forms of agreement?*
- *How effectively do we work together across agencies and disciplines?*
- *How well do our staff work with others in partnerships?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Community Plan*
- *Corporate Plan*
- *Minutes of partnership meetings*
- *Outcomes from partnership working*
- *Self-evaluation exercises*
- *Annual Performance reports*
- *Number of active partnership arrangements*
- *Percentage of satisfied partnership staff*
- *Views of stakeholders regarding partnership working*
- *Minutes and notes of meetings involving partners*
- *Records of development days and of multi-agency working groups*
- *Service Level Agreements at operational and strategic levels with partner agencies*
- *Evidence of effective partnership working with other agencies to achieve agreed aims*
- *Number of joint targets successfully achieved*

Key Area 8: Resources

How good is our management?		Level
QI 8.1 Partnership working		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 8: Resources

How good is our management?

8.2 Financial management

Questions you might ask

- *How comprehensive and effective are our financial procedures and controls?*
- *How well equipped are budget holders to implement financial procedures and controls?*
- *How well do we allocate budgets in line with planned priorities?*
- *How enterprising are we in securing additional funding?*
- *How consistent are our budget allocations with local and national priorities?*
- *How well do we work with finance and other services to ensure effective budget management?*
- *How effective are our procedures to ensure Best Value?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Evidence relating to Best Value reviews*
- *Effectiveness of project management arrangements*
- *Statistical data regarding project action plans and evaluations*
- *Self-evaluation documentation*
- *Council documentation on financial procedures and controls*
- *Business Management & Improvement Plan and consequent budget deployment and review documentation*
- *Records of additional funding being secured to undertake planned initiatives*
- *Statistical data on effectiveness of financial procedures and controls*
- *Internal/external audit reports*
- *Improvement plans linked to audit reports*
- *Financial and administrative guidelines*
- *Council financial training materials and processes*
- *Numbers of staff trained in financial matters*
- *Documentation on the effectiveness of training events on improving financial procedures and controls*
- *Records of financial decisions and consequent spending*
- *Committee reports which refer to finance and priorities*
- *Policy led budgeting*

Key Area 8: Resources

How good is our management?		Level
QI 8.2 Financial management		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 8: Resources

How good is our management?

8.3 Resource management

Questions you might ask

- *How well does accommodation in the Council estate meet the needs of users?*
- *How appropriate are our plans to manage and develop the Council estate?*
- *To what extent do we know that resources and facilities meet the needs of all users?*
- *How do we ensure that resources are allocated to meet local and national needs?*
- *How do we know that all staff are applying health and safety and risk management procedures effectively?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Accessibility audit*
- *Health and safety audit*
- *Health and safety log*
- *Views of a range of service users through interviews and questionnaires on suitability of accommodation*
- *Evidence on improvements resulting from the effective and efficient use of resources*
- *Outcomes from corporate resource allocation*
- *Asset management plan*
- *Council and Service reports*
- *Business Management & Improvement Plans*
- *Corporate guidance on the use of resources*

Key Area 8: Resources

How good is our management?		Level
QI 8.3 Resource management		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 8: Resources

How good is our management?

8.4 Information systems

Questions you might ask

- *How effective are our arrangements for collecting, storing and retrieving data?*
- *How effective are our processes for analysing and evaluating data?*
- *To what extent do our protocols and procedures meet legislative requirements and service needs?*

Some ways of finding out

- *MIS contributions to the achievement of improvement objectives*
- *Compliance of data in relation to statutory requirements eg Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts*
- *Practice guidelines on how MIS is used and what data sets are kept*
- *Induction guidelines and training materials for new staff on MIS*
- *Regular training for users*
- *Data sharing arrangements*
- *Procedures for access to files*
- *Council guidance on retention/destruction*
- *Evidence of MIS being used to identify trends and provide benchmark and comparative information in planning for improvement*

Key Area 8: Resources

How good is our management?		Level
QI 8.4 Information systems		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 9: Leadership and direction

How good is our leadership?

9.1 Vision, values and aims

Questions you might ask

- *How do we ensure that vision, values and aims are reflected in our key strategic documents?*
- *How effectively have leaders established a shared vision for the Council?*
- *What actions do we take to demonstrate our understanding of, and commitment to, equality and diversity?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Statement of vision, values and aims*
- *Corporate plan*
- *Committee reports*
- *Policy frameworks*
- *Business Management & Improvement Plans*
- *Improvement targets*
- *Public display of the statement of vision, values and aims in service offices*
- *Information from external audit/inspection reports*
- *Active promotion of Council vision, values and aims*
- *Staff surveys*
- *Equality policies*
- *Feedback from service users on equality issues*

Key Area 9: Leadership and direction

How good is our leadership? QI 9.1 Vision, values and aims		Level
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 9: Leadership and direction

How good is our leadership?

9.2 Leadership and direction

Questions you might ask

- *To what extent do leaders:*
 - *develop effective and strategic business plans?*
 - *identify key actions, intended outcomes and major targets?*
 - *effectively communicate with stakeholders and staff at all levels?*
 - *ensure effective and efficient deployment of resources?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Community Plan*
- *Corporate Plan*
- *Business Management & Improvement Plans*
- *Evaluations from external audit/inspection reports*
- *Strategic Planning guidance*
- *Committee reports*
- *Annual budget exercise*
- *Self-evaluation exercises*
- *Performance reports*
- *Planning cycle for reviewing policies, procedures and guidelines*
- *Minutes of team and working groups*
- *Documentation produced by working groups*
- *Minutes of stakeholder reference groups*
- *Minutes of team and working groups*
- *Staff and other stakeholder surveys*

Key Area 9: Leadership and direction

How good is our leadership? QI 9.2 Leadership and direction		Level
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 9: Leadership and direction

How good is our leadership?

9.3 Leading people and developing partnerships

Questions you might ask

- *To what extent do our leaders model a wide range of effective leadership skills and motivate others to give of their best?*
- *To what extent is there a balanced range of skills and personal qualities evident in our leadership team?*
- *To what extent have senior managers encouraged an ethos of teamwork and collegiality at all levels of the organisation?*
- *How effectively have we developed a supportive work environment in which staff share a sense of responsibility to improve the quality of services?*
- *How effectively do we identify and promote talent?*
- *How effectively do we develop working relationships which are built on trust and reflect a genuine concern for staff and relevant partners?*
- *To what extent are systems in place to help people tackle challenging problems, share information and deal with difficulties?*
- *To what extent do leaders pro-actively establish strong links with establishments, stakeholders, partner agencies and other Council Services and lead joint improvement activities?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Evaluations from external audit/inspection reports*
- *Improvement plans*
- *Performance reports*
- *CPD records*
- *Evaluation reports from working groups*
- *Business Management & Improvement Plans*
- *Evaluation reports on teamwork and on joint projects*
- *Minutes of team and working groups*
- *Staff and stakeholder survey*
- *Council recognition scheme*
- *Investors in People awards*
- *Council staff development programme*

Key Area 9: Leadership and direction

How good is our leadership?		Level
QI 9.3 Leading people and developing partnerships		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i>		

Key Area 9: Leadership and direction

How good is our leadership?

9.4 Leadership of innovation, change and improvement

Questions you might ask

- *To what extent have senior managers embedded challenge and support of staff as a means of securing continuous improvement?*
- *To what extent have senior managers encouraged and supported innovative and effective practices which result in a qualitative step change in users' experiences?*
- *How have senior managers succeeded in building a strong capacity for improvement within the Council?*

Some ways of finding out

- *Quality assurance policy*
- *Protocols for annual/triennial reviews*
- *CPD online database*
- *Performance targets and measures*
- *Reports to Council*
- *Performance reports*
- *Stakeholder questionnaires*
- *Audit/inspection reports*
- *Protocols for follow-through*
- *Council improvement objectives*
- *Council progress reports on improvement objectives*
- *All sector and sector meetings - agendas and minutes*
- *Liaison group agenda and minutes*

Key Area 9: Leadership and direction

How good is our leadership?		Level
QI 9.4 Leadership of innovation, change and improvement		
How are we doing? <i>(Key strengths from self-evaluation)</i>	How do we know? <i>(What evidence do we have to support this view?)</i>	
<p>What are we going to do now? <i>(Next steps)</i></p>		