

AUDIT COMMITTEE – 28 November 2014

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| Title of paper: | Progress in implementing the Performance Management Framework for Nottingham City Council | |
| Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s): | Angela Probert, Strategic Director Organisational Transformation | Wards affected: All |
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| Recommendation(s): | | |
| 1 | That the Committee note the progress made since the Performance Management Framework (PMF) was adopted in April 2014. | |

1. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Reporting progress since adoption of the PMF shows the Council can demonstrate good governance of its services with the Audit Committee's oversight of this.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1. The PMF was approved for adoption by the Audit Committee on 28 February 2014. A request was made at that meeting to report back to the committee on the progress made six months following the initial implementation of the framework.

2.2. As outlined in the original report, the PMF was revised as part of the Good to Great ambitions for the City and the establishment of a strong performance culture which places citizens at the heart of everything the Council does. The PMF was approved by Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) on 21 January 2014.

3. Adoption and Implementation

3.1. The key to the success of the PMF as a driver for achievement and improvement is for it to be embraced as an integral part of our day-to-day activity. To this end the Organisational Planning & Performance (OPP) team worked with colleagues across the Council to embed and develop the PMF to ensure that it helps to deliver our ambitions and the best outcomes for the City and its citizens. This work included:

- A series of dedicated lunchtime learning events to introduce the PMF to managers. These were well attended by a good range of managers from across the Council.
- A series of Performance Management training workshops were held to introduce and refresh managers in relation to the key concepts and principles of performance management based on those outlined in the PMF.

- Support to services to develop their use of the Covalent performance management system. Effective use of the system relies on the service having good performance management principles in place e.g. links to key strategic objectives embodied in the PMF.
- Dedicated support and advice to services by the OPP team to develop good practice in performance management including improvements to business planning encompassed in the PMF.
- Availability of the PMF on the Council's intranet in a number of formats.
- In depth briefing sessions were conducted with departmental Executive Officers and performance leads to explain the PMF and how to optimise its use to allow them to promote it with in their departments.
- Inclusion of the PMF in the new employee starter/induction pack.

4. Assessing Progress

4.1. To date, nearly 100 managers have attended one of the performance management training workshops with nearly 2/3rd of attendees reporting their skills in performance management had improved by attending the course. Three months following their training, attendees were contacted again and 63% report that they have been able to use their skills to positively influence the performance culture of their service.

4.2. To further gauge the effectiveness of the promotional and support work undertaken in the last 6 months, consultation with key officers and managers has been undertaken including an online survey of all managers in October.

4.3. Overall, managers reported good levels of awareness and implementation of the PMF in their service areas. This was relatively consistent across the Council although in the Children's & Adults department implementation of key elements, such as the use of Covalent, was not as extensive.

4.4. A high proportion of respondents reported that they had the necessary skills to implement the PMF. This is very encouraging as it demonstrates that the Council managers feel confident in having key abilities to more effectively manage their services which will have a positive effect on what is delivered to our citizens.

4.5. Some comments were received that the PMF is hard to find on the intranet and steps will be taken to address this as part of the review of the intranet pages generally.

4.6. Survey Results

- 87 responses
- 69% were aware of the PMF principally via the intranet and attendance at a briefing session. Managers who responded who were most aware were in the Resources' department
- 85% said they had applied the principles in their service area. Again, Resources' managers reported the highest levels of implementation
- 93% reported having the necessary skills to implement the PMF
- 65% reported it had a positive effect on the service.

4.7. Consultation

In addition to the survey, a number of managers were directly consulted on their views and the following is a selection of the comments received:

“We [Traffic] follow the various corporate systems for the PMF using the respective electronic systems such as Covalent.

This has the advantage that we have a record of the current status and response and helps us review feedback and issues. This is fed into the relevant corporate plans and processes including our own service area procedures”.

“I would say that the principles of the PMF have been implemented as far as possible within my area [Housing Strategy]. We have an annual team plan which has as its overarching theme the Council Plan objective “Nottingham has a good mix of housing”. It will also naturally link to other objectives such as those for fuel poverty in the Nottingham Plan and Council Plan. Each member of the team has been given responsibility and accountability for the actions within the team plan via their Performance Appraisals. We are working towards getting the team plan on to Covalent and using this as a tool within team meetings to review progress and deal with issues or barriers to progress where necessary”.

However a manager in the Children’s & Adults department said that ‘benchmarking is done regularly but target setting is not. Performance [monitoring] is done on a weekly/monthly/quarterly basis (depending on service areas) which in turn is discussed at departmental team meetings based on those timelines. Covalent isn’t used for the majority but Adult Assessment do use it. The PMF isn’t something that is regularly referred to.’ There clearly is still some work to do in this particular department and officers will focus attention on specific support and advice to colleagues in this department.

5. Next Steps

The six months since adoption of the PMF would appear to have resulted in good awareness and subsequent implementation of its principles by managers in the way they manage their services and more work is to be done to build on this positive start. This will include:

- Further learning events (next due in December 2014)
- Continuation of performance management training workshops (to be held at least four times each year)
- Targeted support and advice by the OPP team to areas where awareness and implementation is not as high as others e.g. Children’s & Adults
- Improvements to the intranet to ensure easier access to the PMF and associated supporting documents
- Further revisions to the business planning process to embed the PMF principles (for introduction to coincide with the next Council Plan in 2016).

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING EXEMPT OR CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Performance Management Framework 2014 – attached.

7. PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

A revised Performance Management Framework for Nottingham City Council – Report to Audit Committee, 28 February 2014