

Local Government Act 1992

Statutory Performance Indicators

Direction 2010

December 2010

Introduction

by John Baillie, Chair of the Accounts Commission

The Accounts Commission has a statutory power to define the performance information that local authorities, including police and fire and rescue authorities, must publish locally. The power is intended to ensure that sufficient information is published to allow appropriate comparisons over time and between authorities. Each December, the Commission considers the performance information that it will direct authorities to report on in the following financial year.

In December 2008, the Commission made a significant change to its approach by offering flexibility for authorities to develop a broad set of comprehensive information for local communities, through their own public performance reports, alongside a shorter list of specific comparable indicators. This change creates a clear link between the statutory performance information regime and the effective performance management and reporting required of all local government bodies by the Best Value duty.

In making those changes the Commission indicated that it would review its approach in 2010 once the first round of data was available. The Commission has examined the outturn data for the 2009/10 financial year, the first to be reported under the terms of the 2008 Direction. We were particularly interested in how authorities are responding to the flexibility offered by the Direction.

The data returned by authorities suggests that progress is being made towards meeting the new public performance reporting obligations, with some authorities showing commitment to developing rounded and user-friendly public performance reports. There remains, however, significant scope for further improvement, and the approach to and coverage of public performance reports is highly variable. Authorities need to continue to develop reporting on the quality, accessibility and value for money of all their services as part of their Best Value duties.

The Commission has decided, therefore, to maintain the terms of the 2008 Direction. Councils, and police and fire and rescue services, will be expected to report against that for the 2011/12 financial year. The associated guidance has been amended to clarify definitions where necessary.

In addition to examining the outturn data, the Commission reviewed carefully the wider context in considering how it might best use its statutory powers on performance information. We have paid particular attention to the initiatives that the local government community is currently engaged in to improve performance information, including the development of local outcome indicators and a suite of benchmarking indicators covering costs and services. We have also examined developments in scrutiny and auditing, and the Scottish Government's approach to performance measurement.

The Accounts Commission believes that it is of the utmost importance for authorities to have performance information that will enable them to report effectively to local communities and that will support robust decision-making about priorities. This is particularly the case in times of budget cutbacks.

We want to be able to use our statutory role to underpin performance reporting designed by authorities themselves, rather than impose an additional regime. We encourage the local government community to move forward quickly with its own performance information initiatives. It needs to implement and sustain the infrastructure that will be required to deliver an effective set of performance information. This needs to enable citizens and service users to understand how their services are performing. It must also enable comparison across authorities and over time, as required by the legislation.

We recognise that this is a considerable challenge, and will continue to engage with stakeholders as initiatives develop. We hope that we will see positive progress and will continue to review the position carefully. If significant year-on-year progress can be demonstrated, this may enable the Commission in future Directions to consider requiring authorities to produce information that draws on their own local outcome indicators and

benchmarking indicators. Ultimately, the Commission may be in a position to consider whether it needs to prescribe a set of specific indicators in future.

We wish you well in your efforts during the coming year.

John Baillie

Chair of the Accounts Commission for Scotland

December 2010

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1992
THE PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION
(STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE) DIRECTION 2008

1. This Direction is given by the Accounts Commission for Scotland (“the Commission”) under section 1(1)(a) of the Local Government Act 1992, which requires the Commission to direct relevant bodies to publish such information relating to their activities in any financial year or other specified period as will, in the Commission’s opinion:

“facilitate the making of appropriate comparisons (by reference to the criteria of cost, economy, efficiency and effectiveness and of securing best value in accordance with section 1 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003) between –

- i. the standards of performance achieved by different relevant bodies in that financial year or other period; and***
- ii. the standards of performance achieved by such bodies in different financial years or, as the case may be, other periods”***

2. This Direction is given to all local authorities and to joint committees and joint boards, as defined by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, and amended by the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994.
3. Each of the bodies referred to in paragraph 2 shall, in accordance with section 13 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and associated regulations and guidance from Scottish Ministers:
- a. publish the information specified in the schedule to this Direction for all those activities which are carried out by the body
 - b. ensure that publication facilitates the making of comparisons where appropriate and possible with performance in 2010/11.
4. The period for which the information must be published is the financial year ending 31st March 2012.
5. In determining the information to be reported, authorities should consider and, where appropriate, reflect:
- i the criteria set out in 1a) above recognising the need to balance efficiency & effectiveness information with cost and economy information

- ii achievement against their single outcome agreements with the Scottish Government
- iii the performance reporting requirements of any other legislation
- iv indicators/measures in relevant suites or frameworks of performance information determined by government, regulatory agencies, professional associations or others
- v national standards and targets for service delivery
- vi local service priorities and objectives
- vii service user views.

6 In the schedule, the term ' Best Value' shall be interpreted in accordance with the definition and requirements of Part 1 of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

Schedule

Councils

Corporate management

SPI 1: Each council will report a range of information, sufficient to demonstrate that it is securing Best Value in relation to:

- responsiveness to its communities
- revenues and service costs
- employees
- assets
- procurement
- sustainable development
- equalities and diversity.

Service performance

SPI 2: Each council will report a range of information sufficient to demonstrate that it is securing Best Value in providing the following services (in partnership with others where appropriate):

- benefits administration
- community care
- criminal justice social work
- cultural & community services covering at least sport & leisure, museums, the arts and libraries
- planning (both environmental and development management)
- the education of children
- child protection and children's social work
- housing & homelessness
- protective services including environmental health, and trading standards
- roads and lighting
- waste management services

The range of information to be reported in SPIs 1 & 2 above will include achievement against the following specific indicators:

- 1 The average number of working days per employee lost through sickness absence for:
 - Teachers
 - All other local government employees.
- 2 The number and percentage of the highest paid 2% and 5% of earners among council employees that are women.
- 3 The number of council buildings from which the council delivers services to the public and the percentage of these in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to people with a disability.
- 4 The gross cost per case for benefits administration.
- 5 The cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax.

- 6 The income due from Council Tax for the year, net of reliefs and rebates, and the percentage of that which was received during the year
- 7 The number of invoices paid within 30 calendar days of receipt as a percentage of all invoices paid.
- 8 The proportion of operational accommodation that is:
- in a satisfactory condition
 - suitable for its current use.
- 9 Home Care
- a) The number of people age 65+ receiving homecare
 - b) The number of homecare hours per 1,000 population age 65+
 - c) As a proportion of home care clients age 65+, the number receiving:
 - personal care
 - a service during evenings/overnight
 - a service at weekends.
- 10 The number of attendances per 1,000 population for:
- pools
 - other indoor sports and leisure facilities, excluding pools in a combined complex.
- 11 The number of visits to/usages of council funded or part funded museums per 1,000 population and the number of those visits that were in person per 1,000 population.
- 12 Library usage
- a) number of visits per 1,000 population
- 13 The number of householder and non-householder planning applications determined during the year and the proportion of each that were dealt with within two months.
- 14 Response repairs to council houses:
- The number of response repairs completed during the year
 - The overall % of repairs completed within the target times
 - The repairs categories used by the council and the target times for each
- 15 The number and proportion of the council's housing stock that comply with the following Scottish Housing Quality Standard by criteria.

Criteria	Number	Percentage
Total meeting tolerable standard		
Total meeting free from serious disrepair		
Total meeting energy efficient		
Total meeting modern facilities and services		
Total meeting healthy, safe and secure		
Total dwellings meeting SHQS		
Total number of dwellings owned by the council		

- 16 The total annual rent loss due to voids expressed as a percentage of the total amount of rent due in the year.
- 17 Managing tenancy change

a) Stock which is **not low demand** - the number of dwellings that were re-let within the following time bands.

Void period	Number of houses relet
Less than 2 wks	
2 – 4 wks	
5 – 8 weeks	
9 – 16 weeks	
More than 16 weeks	
Average re-let times	days

b) **Low demand stock** - the number of dwellings that were re-let within the following time bands.

Void period	Number of houses relet
Less than 2 weeks	
2 – 4 weeks	
5 – 8 weeks	
9 – 16 weeks	
17 – 32 weeks	
33 – 52 weeks	
more than 52 weeks	
Average re-let times	days

c) For low demand stock,

i) the number remaining un-let at the year end

ii) the average period these dwellings had been un-let at the year end

d) The number of dwellings considered to be low demand at the year end? (includes both void and occupied properties)

e) The number at d) above considered to be low demand at the start of the year? (includes both void and occupied properties)

f) The number at d) above that were not actively being re-let because they were subject to a disposal strategy.

18 Housing Rent arrears

- Current tenant arrears as a percentage of the net amount of rent due in the year
- The percentage of current tenants owing more than 13 weeks rent at the year end, excluding those owing less than £250
- The proportion of those tenants giving up their tenancy during the year that were in rent arrears
- The average debt owed by tenants leaving in arrears, as a proportion of the average weekly rent
- The percentage of arrears owed by former tenants that was either written off or collected during the year.

	Council duty to:	
	secure permanent accommodation for household	secure temporary accommodation, provide advice and guidance or take reasonable measures to retain accommodation
a i) Number of households assessed during year		
a ii) % of decision notifications issued within 28 days of date of initial presentation		
a iii) number of cases open and the % who are housed		
a iv) % of cases reassessed within 12 months of completion of duty		

b) The proportion of those provided with permanent accommodation in council stock who maintained their tenancy for at least 12 months.

20 Domestic noise complaints

- a) The number of complaints of domestic noise received during the year:
 - i) settled without the need for attendance on site
 - ii) requiring attendance on site and not dealt with under Part V of the Antisocial Behaviour etc (Scotland) Act 2004
 - iii) dealt with under Part V of the Antisocial Behaviour etc (Scotland) Act 2004.
- b) For those in a)ii and a)iii above, the average time (hours) between the time of the complaint and attendance on site.

21 The number of trading standards complaints and advice requests received, and the proportion completed within 14 days:

	Number received	% completed within in 14 days
Consumer complaints		
Business advice requests		

22 The percentage of the road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment.

23 The net cost per premises for:

- refuse collection
- refuse disposal.

24 The percentage of municipal waste collected during the year that was recycled or composted

25 The cleanliness index achieved following inspection of a sample of streets and other relevant land.

Fire & Rescue Services

SPI 3: Each Fire & Rescue service will report a range of information on its performance sufficient to demonstrate that it is securing Best Value in relation to:

- community fire safety
- intervention in response to emergency incidents
- staff
- equalities & diversity

The range of information to be reported will include the following specific information:

- a) Fire casualties
 - the number of incidents resulting in casualties per 10,000 population
 - the number of fatal and non-fatal casualties per 10,000 population.
- b) The number of accidental dwelling fires per 10,000 population.
- c) The average number of:
 - rider shifts lost due to sickness and light duties per fire officer
 - working days lost to sickness absence per employee for all other staff.

Police Services

SPI 4: Each police service will report its performance in accordance with the requirements of the Scottish Policing Performance Framework.