RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (RESOURCES) COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 5th February 2009
title: Benchmarking and Comparison of 2007/08 Performance Indicator Data
submitted by: Chief Executive
principal author: Michelle Haworth - Corporate Policy Officer

1   PURPOSE

1.1   To inform Committee of our benchmarking performance against national quartile data, our Nearest Neighbours model Group and neighbouring Lancashire Districts.

2   RELEVANCE TO THE COUNCIL'S AMBITIONS AND PRIORITIES:

- Council Ambitions:

- Community Objectives:

- Corporate Priorities:

- Other Considerations:

Performance Indicators are an important driver of improvement, and allow authorities, their auditors, inspectors and service users, to judge how well a service is performing, and what needs to be done to bring performance up to levels which are being achieved elsewhere.

3   BACKGROUND

3.1   The Audit Commission collect every local authority's Performance Indicators on 30 June each year and these are then audited by the end of September. By December the Commission are able to produce a database which holds all of this information and they then create summary statistics of quartile information.

3.2   The database produced is sent to all authorities and show averages, median, top quartile and bottom quartile data against all comparable Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs). This is split and shown for All England, London Boroughs, Metropolitan Districts, Counties, Districts and Unitaries. We carry out comparisons against the summary statistics for Districts, which show the average and quartile information for all district councils nationwide. All councils should be aiming to achieve top quartile performance in every BVPI.

3.3   Corporate Services also undertakes an exercise whereby we capture the data for both all of the Lancashire Districts and all of the authorities in the Nearest Neighbours model. We compare our performance against other Lancashire Districts and also against our nearest 12 neighbours, using a tool on the CIPFA statistics website. These are authorities which have a similar spatial and rural nature to Ribble Valley, and therefore face similar issues of service delivery in a rural area. Our nearest neighbours in this model are: Harborough, Maldon, Melton Mowbray, North Shropshire, Bridgnorth, Congleton, North Dorset, Babergh, Richmondshire, Tewkesbury, Rochford, Mid Devon, Selby, South Northamptonshire and Castle Morpeth. Additionally, we compare our performance to the previous year in order to identify which areas we have improved in, and which areas our performance has become weaker in.

3.4   For BV 78a and 78b, data quality work has been carried out by auditors on behalf of the Audit Commission. The result of this work, and any subsequent application of qualifications, is still subject to final consistency checking by the Audit Commission. Therefore, the 2007/08 BVPI results spreadsheet does not include data for BV 78a and 78b at this time.

3.5   BVPI 156 - Quartiles have not been applied as different versions of Document M have been used.

3.6   BVPI 225 - Quartiles have not been applied as authorities had difficulties collecting the data.

3.7   BVPI's 174,175, 226a, b and c, 2a, 16b, 216a, 184b, 76c, 76d, 79b iii), 184a, 200a and b, and 219a – quartiles were not provided by the Audit Commission.

4   COMPARISONS

4.1   A table showing all the comparisons carried out is shown at Appendix A.

4.2   Analysis of performance indicators showed that in 2006/07:

- 38% were top quartile – an increase of 7% from the previous year

- 16% were above average

- 17% were below average

- 27% were bottom quartile – a reduction of 4% from the previous year

4.3   Similar analysis of performance indicators, based on comparing 56 indicators, for 2007/08 showed:

- 26.8% were top quartile – an decrease of 11.2 from the previous year

- 16% were above average

- 28.6% were below average

- 28.6% were bottom quartile – a increase of 1.6% from the previous year

4.4   Analysis and comparison of our nearest neighbours, using 70 PI's, shows the following:

- 50% are average or better than the average of our rural nearest neighbours – an decrease of 4% from the previous year

- 50% are worse than the average – a increase of 4% from the previous year

4.5   Analysis against the Lancashire districts average, using 70 PI's, shows that:

- 40% are better than the Lancashire average – a decrease of 5% from the previous year

- 60% are worse than the Lancashire average – a increase of 12% from the previous year

5   CONCLUSION

5.1   Members should be aware of this analysis, as it is used as a measure of how the Council performs in comparison to others. Inspectors also use this information to see how well the Council is performing, and whether performance is improving.

5.2   In areas where we are performing at below average or bottom quartile levels, we need to assess whether performance could be improved. Furthermore, councillors should consider if any of the PI's reported in the analysis document (annex A) would benefit from a performance clinic to ensure that areas where performance has worsened do not deteriorate further. This is particularly important if a poorly performing indicator is directly linked to the Council's priorities.

6   RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1

- Resources: None

- Technical, Environmental and Legal: None.

- Political: None

- Reputation: It is important that correct performance information is available to facilitate decision-making and improvement.

7   IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

7.1   Consider the performance information presented in the appendix and consider if any of the PI's reported in the analysis document (annex A) would benefit from a performance clinic.

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For further information please ask for Michelle Haworth, extension 4421.