

Report To: Policy and Resources Committee **Date:** 30 March 2010
Report By: Corporate Director
Improvement and Performance **Report No:** PMP/01/10/PW/AS
Contact Officer: Andrew Spowart **Contact No:** 2039

Subject: Review of Public Service Improvement Framework – Phase 2

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this Report is to outline the findings of a review of Phase 2 of the implementation of the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) across the Council.
- 1.2 The report also identifies a number of issues for consideration by Committee.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 At its meeting on 27 May 2008, Policy and Resources Committee agreed that the Council should adopt the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) to provide a consistent approach for all the self-assessment of services of the Council.
- 2.2 Phase 2 of the PSIF Programme was concluded at the end of December 2009, with all three of the planned assessments completed, bringing the total up to seven.
- 2.3 The organisation has now nine trained assessors; this provides the necessary organisational capacity and capability to deliver the future PSIF Programme.
- 2.4 In terms of Inverclyde Council's arrangements for BV2 it has been agreed that each service should complete a self assessment exercise in terms of demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement and securing best value. Any self assessment needs to use a recognised and accredited system.
- 2.5 Discussions have taken place with Education on the issue of PSIF/QMIE in the context of the need to prepare a validated self assessment (VASE) for Education in 2010/2011. The service has begun its preparations for the VASE using the modified QMIE3. There is a preference within Education to utilise the more recognised QMIE3 to inform the final preparation of the VASE which is scheduled for completion in 2010/11.
- 2.6 A similar situation has arisen with regard to Social Work and SWIA. The move to a Community Health and Care Partnership means that consideration will need to be given to how the CHCP will carry out strategic planning, self assessment and performance management. Additionally in the Autumn of this year there will be a follow up visit in regard to Child Protection by HMIE and the next stage of a SWIA Audit.
- 2.7 It is considered that the self evaluation that will be carried out by Education and Social Care for these audits fulfils the Council's commitment to its programme of self assessment and it is recommended that Social Care, along with Education, is removed from the overall PSIF Programme.
- 2.8 The following amended Programme is suggested, although consideration will need to be given to any functions/services which have been missed out. This 'sweeping up' exercise can be carried out once the full detail of each service area is available.

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- Customer Service and Business Transformation
 - Organisational Development, Human Resources and Performance (omitting policy and performance who have already completed PSIF within its former service)
 - Planning and Regeneration

Phase 4: July – Dec

- Finance
- Safer and Inclusive Communities

3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The Council's commitment for services to continue to undertake self assessments is still considered to be paramount in terms of the Council's duty to demonstrate it is working to become a Best Value organisation. The requirement for rigorous self assessments is also a cornerstone of the Council's agreed preparations for the audit of Best Value. As part of the Best Value 2 Audit, Audit Scotland will place a degree of reliance on a Council's approach to self assessment, if a rigorous and robust methodology has been used and applied to services, the audit approach will be modified accordingly.
- 3.2 As part of the Council's overall preparations for Best Value 2, it is suggested that a Best Value Workshop be organised towards the end of April/beginning of May 2010 (programme to be determined). An ingredient will be the Council's approach to self assessment and the outcomes that have resulted from the current programme together with an update on the respective toolkits which have been looked at by lead officers as part of the Council's overall preparations for Best Value 2.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Policy and Resources Committee is asked to:
- a. Agree to the revised Programme of PSIF assessments planned for 2010 being conducted;
 - b. Agree to the use of the QMIE 3 by Education to prepare their validated self assessment for 2010/11;
 - c. Agree that the self evaluation undertaken for both SWIA and HMIE (with regard to Child Protection) represent a robust self evaluation process for Social Care;
 - d. Agree that a further "wash up" exercise be carried out to identify those services or parts of a service which have not been subject to a self assessment exercise.

Paul Wallace
Corporate Director
Improvement and Performance

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 At its meeting on 27 May 2008, Policy and Resources Committee agreed that the Council should adopt the Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) to provide a consistent approach for all the self-assessment of services of the Council.
- 4.2 Phase 2 of the PSIF Programme was concluded at the end of December 2009.
- 4.3 All three of the assessments in Phase 2 were completed bringing the total up to seven. The following services have been subject to a PSIF Service Assessment:
- Criminal Justice
 - Property Resources and Facilities Management
 - Environmental Services
 - Performance Management and Procurement
 - Legal and Administration
 - Corporate Communications and Public Affairs
 - Community Learning and Development
- 4.5 PSIF remains a sound basis for ensuring continuous improvement within the organisation and its services. Positive aspects of the assessment process include:
- Encouraging team working within a service
 - Building consensus on priorities for the future and service development initiatives
 - A prioritised Improvement Plan which dovetails with the Directorate Plan.

Issues identified in the last year review have now been resolved, particularly the interface between PSIF and Directorate Planning.

- 4.6 The organisation has now nine trained assessors; this provides the necessary organisational capacity and capability to deliver the future PSIF Programme.
- 4.8 In terms of looking to the future the forthcoming BV2 regime will require each local authority to have a robust self assessment process in place for both the organisation and its component services. Experience from the Best Value pathfinder Councils suggests that where there has been a programme of robust self assessments the subsequent audit process has been modified as appropriate and is lighter in nature..
- 4.9 In terms of Inverclyde Council's arrangements for BV2 it has been agreed that each service completes a self assessment/evaluation exercise in terms of demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement and securing best value. Any self assessment needs to use a recognised and accredited system

5.0 INTERFACE WITH VASE/QMIE/SWIA

- 5.1 Discussions have taken place with Education on the issue of PSIF/QMIE in the context of the need to prepare a validated self assessment (VASE) for Education in 2010/2011. The service has begun its preparations for the VASE using the modified QMIE3. The service has looked at PSIF in a degree of detail and applied it to Community Learning and Development, however, on balance, there is a preference within Education to utilise the more recognised QMIE3 to inform the final preparation of the VASE which is scheduled for completion in 2010/11.
- 5.2 QMIE is a recognised and supported quality improvement framework specifically for Education. It has been mapped against PSIF by officers in Education and they are of the view that they are well aligned. Should Education use QMIE as its self assessment tool then this will be a departure from the original decision for all Council services to carry out a self assessment, albeit an acceptable departure. This requires a policy decision by the Committee.

In addition, a similar situation has arisen with regard to Social Work and SWIA. The move to a Community Health and Care Partnership means that consideration will need to be given to how the CHCP will carry out strategic planning, self assessment and performance management. Additionally in the Autumn of this year there will be a follow up visit in regard to Child Protection by HMIE and the next stage of a SWIA Audit.

It is considered that the self evaluation that will be carried out by Education and Social Care for these audits fulfils the Council's commitment to its programme of self assessment and it is recommended that Social Care, along with Education, is removed from the overall PSIF Programme.

5.3 Future Programme of PSIF

The previous plan for phases 3 and 4 was:

Phase 3: Jan – June 2010

ICT and Business Transformation
Organisational Development and HR
Planning and Housing

Phase 4: July – Dec 2010

Finance
Economic and Social Regeneration
Safer Communities

5.4 Consideration will need to be given to the make up of the Programme given the recent management restructuring within the organisation. The following amended Programme is suggested, although consideration will need to be given to any functions/services which have been missed out. This 'sweeping up' exercise can be carried out once the full detail of each service area is available.

5.5 Services to be subjected to a PSIF self assessment exercise in 2010 are:

Phase 3: Jan – June 2010

- Customer Service and Business Transformation
- Organisational Development, Human Resources and Performance (omitting policy and performance who have already completed PSIF within its former service)
- Planning and Regeneration

Phase 4: July – Dec

- Finance
- Safer and Inclusive Communities

6.0 CONCLUSION

The Council's commitment for services to continue to undertake self assessments is still considered to be paramount in terms of the Council's duty to demonstrate it is working to become a Best Value organisation. The requirement for rigorous self assessments is also a cornerstone of the Council's agreed preparations for the audit of Best Value. As part of the Best Value 2 Audit, Audit Scotland will place a degree of reliance on a Council's approach to self assessment/evaluation, if a rigorous and robust methodology has been used and applied to services, the audit approach will be modified accordingly.

As part of the Council's overall preparations for Best Value 2, a workshop be organised (programme to be determined). This will consider the Council's approach to self assessment and the outcomes that have resulted from the current programme together with an update on the respective toolkits which have been looked at by lead officers as part of the Council's overall preparations for Best Value 2.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Finance
None

7.2 Personnel

Assessors will require to be assigned to the future phases of PSIF assessments.

7.3 Legal

None

7.4 Equality and Diversity

None

8.0 CONSULTATION

8.1 This report has been prepared by Performance Management and Procurement in consultation with Education and Social Care.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 P&R Committee Papers, 27 May 2008.