

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Corporate Improvement Board</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> January 2010</b>
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Comprehensive Area Assessment</b>
4.	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Chief Executive's Department</b>

### 5. Summary

CAA replaced Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), which has been the inspection and assessment framework for local authorities since 2002 and came into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009. The new CAA Framework is designed to connect inspection and assessment activity across local government and key partners. As well as sharing the national indicator set and local area agreement targets, partner assessments will all use similar methodologies and be reported through a shared, public facing website.

The first round of CAA reports were released on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2009. The results are now available on the Audit Commission's Oneplace website at [www.direct.gov.uk/oneplace](http://www.direct.gov.uk/oneplace)

This report summarises the findings from the 2009 reports.

### 6. Recommendations

**Corporate Improvement Board note the content of the CAA reports for 2009 and discuss proposed next steps.**

## 7. Proposals and Details

The CAA is an independent assessment by six inspectorates which sets out how well local public services are tackling the major issues in Rotherham.

### a) Area Assessment

The Area Assessment takes the area's Local Area Agreement (LAA) and Sustainable Community Strategy as its starting point, along with statutory education and attainment targets, and looked at local priorities, in the context of wider national themes.

The Area Assessment asked three overarching questions:

- a) *How well do local priorities express community needs and aspirations?*
- b) *How well are the outcomes and improvements needed being delivered?*
- c) *What are the prospects for future improvement?*

The Area Assessment is not scored but areas are given green and red flags. Green flags are used to highlight where others can learn from outstanding achievements or improvements or an innovation that has very promising prospects of success. Red flags are used to highlight where there are significant concerns about results and future prospects that are not being tackled adequately.

### Results

In 2009 the Audit Commission have raised **neither any red or green flags as part of their assessment**.

However the Area Assessment Report clearly recognised many positives, areas where the partnership needs to remain focused and the key challenges for the borough. A copy of this report is attached at Appendix A.

Overall the Audit Commission have recognised that the Partnership have a good understanding of local communities which has led to responsiveness and focus on the right issues. The Audit Commission have indicated they have confidence in potential to improve in that there is an effective LSP in place providing good leadership, there is a clear alignment of strategy and good performance management.

The detail below summarises the areas of strength and areas of challenge for the borough by priority theme:

### **Rotherham Achieving**

Areas of Strength	Areas of Challenge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Business start ups</b> - More people are working and more new business are starting up or relocating to the borough</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Employment rate</b> - remains lower than regional and national averages in 2009 at 70.4%</li><li>• <b>Higher skills</b> - Fewer people educated to level 3 or above compared to nationally</li></ul>

Areas of Strength	Areas of Challenge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Responding to the economic downturn</b> – proactive partnership working to reduce the impact of the recession has been identified including working with a local Rotherham company and other employers to help people find jobs before factories closed</li> <li>• <b>Town Centre Developments</b> – redevelopment projects in the town centre continue to improve and make it more attractive and bring new shops and business to the area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Return to work</b> - Helping people who have not worked for a long time off of benefits</li> </ul>

### Rotherham Alive

Areas of Strength	Areas of Challenge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rotherham’s adult social care</b> is “performing excellently” amongst best in the country</li> <li>• <b>Good access to health and community services</b> – this is helping to reduce people dying early from heart disease and strokes. Rates have more than halved since 1992, faster than the English average</li> <li>• <b>Ministry of Food initiative</b> - encourages healthy eating</li> <li>• <b>Investment in leisure centres</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Life expectancy rates</b> – below national average for men and women</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Teenage pregnancy</b> - remains high and not closing the gap on national average despite attempts to improve sexual health and change behaviour. Targeted work achieving results in now being extended</li> <li>• <b>Obesity</b> - 27.7 per cent compared to the England average of 23.6 per cent and the problem is getting worse. Partners have good plans for tackling the problem, particularly amongst children, early signs are promising but too soon to claim success</li> <li>• <b>Smoking Cessation</b> - 1 in 5 people in the borough still smoke</li> </ul>

### Rotherham Learning

Areas of Strength	Areas of Challenge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Imagination library</b></li> <li>• <b>GCSE Results</b> - Improvements in % of children achieving 5 or more GCSE grades A*-C including maths and English are amongst the best in the region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Key Stage 2</b> - Despite improvement KS2 is below the national average</li> <li>• <b>A level attainment</b> is lower than both regional and national averages</li> </ul>

Areas of Strength	Areas of Challenge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Enterprise</b> - Work of Rotherham Ready to encourage enterprise amongst school children</li> <li>• <b>School Improvement</b> - Improvement has resulted in half the secondary schools are now being rated as “good” or better</li> <li>• <b>Reduction in NEETS</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>School Improvement</b> – remaining half of Secondary schools rated as “adequate”</li> </ul>

### Rotherham Safe

Areas of Strength	Areas of Challenge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Safe Place to Live</b> – crime reduced by 13% in 2008/09 and conducted successful pilots in vulnerable neighbourhoods and good progress in strengthening neighbourhood management arrangements</li> <li>• <b>Increases in recycling rates</b></li> <li>• <b>Decent Homes</b> - Expected to meet Government’s Decent Home target by 2010</li> </ul>	<p><b>Safeguarding</b> – Lack of social workers to perform tasks effectively and respond quick enough to all referrals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Affordable Homes</b> - need to increase number of affordable homes</li> <li>• <b>Uncertainty around ALMO</b></li> </ul>

### Rotherham Proud

Areas of Strength	Areas of Challenge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Large scale and high profile events</b> - Diversity Festival, Rotherham Show, Ministry of Food and Imagination Library</li> <li>• <b>Approach to challenging EU migration</b> - Neighbourhood Management projects to provide information and training to new residents on how public services work and ensure people from different backgrounds get on well in their changing neighbourhoods</li> <li>• <b>Prevent Agenda</b> – Rotherham rated as best practice</li> </ul>	<p><b>Public perception</b> – the perception of how well people get on together and of the area are not as good as other places</p>

## b) Organisational Assessment

Rotherham MBC has been rated 2 out of 4 (performs adequately) for the Organisational Assessment. A copy of this report is attached at Appendix B. The Organisational Assessment score is made up from two assessment scores. The annual scores for Adult Social Care and Children's Services heavily impact on this score.

### Results

<b>Use of Resources Overall Score = 3 / 4</b>	<b>Managing Performance Overall Score = 2 / 4</b>
Managing Finances = 3 Governs the Business = 3 Manages Resources = 3	Score heavily influenced by the annual assessment of; Children's Services = 1 out of 4 Adult Social Care = 4 out of 4

The detail below summarises the areas of strength and areas of challenge for the council by assessment:

### **Use of Resources**

Only five councils managed to obtain a maximum 4 / 4 for Use of Resources in 2009. Rotherham obtained a 3 / 4 immediate findings from each Use of Resources theme are as detailed below:

#### Managing Finances

- Sound arrangements for managing its finances and are able to demonstrate clear outcomes for these
- An established integrated budget, business and performance management planning process, enabling reallocation of resources to priority areas
- Set and monitors challenging targets and have driven some £33m in efficiency savings over recent years, £11m more than its target

#### Governs the Business

- Strong arrangements for commissioning and procurement
- Proactive in redesigning services - ensuring responsive to local need (i.e. Intermediate care)
- One of only 5% of councils to have "excellent" data quality
- Good risk management enabling reduced insurance cover generating £300k for service investment

Manages Resources

- Strategic asset management – recognition of delivering council and partner priorities (i.e. PFI and BSF)
- Performing adequately at managing natural resources

**Managing Performance**

This assessment looks at:

- How well is the organisation delivering its priority services, outcomes and improvements that are important to local people
- Does the organisation have the leadership, capacity and capability it needs to deliver future improvements?

This score heavily determined by Adult Social Care and Children’s Services Score and information used for Area Assessment. Many of the findings in the organisation assessment mirror those identified in the area assessment report and are highlighted above. In addition the information below identified the areas of strength and areas for development in relation to Children’s Services and Adult Social Care.

Children’s Services – 1 / 4 = Performing Poorly

Areas of Strength	Areas for Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The out of hours service is staffed by suitably qualified and experienced staff and, in addition to responding to emergency referrals, undertakes ‘welfare visits’ in appropriate cases</li> <li>• Taking positive steps to respond to the needs of the Slovak Roma community</li> <li>• Adoption Service rated “Good”</li> <li>• Large majority of national indicators in line with similar areas and national figures</li> <li>• Healthy schools – 93% on target to meet LAA target 95%</li> </ul>	<p>Unannounced inspection identified 3 priority areas for action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workload of social workers in undermines their capacity to deliver effective services to safeguard vulnerable children</li> <li>• Performance management systems / auditing policies restrict local and senior managers are able to fully exercise their decision making and supervisory responsibilities</li> <li>• Information systems do not appear to provide up to date and accurate information on all contacts and referrals and the status of investigations, assessments and plans</li> </ul>

Adult Social Care - Maximum 4 / 4 = Performing Excellently

All of the outcomes are performing “well” or performing “excellently”.

Areas of Strength	Areas for Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single point of Contact Assessment Direct</li> <li>• The high number of direct payments for carers</li> <li>• Improved access for older people from BME communities</li> <li>• Raised the profile of adults safeguarding / progress in raising awareness</li> <li>• Demonstrating the management of incidents of institutional abuse and poor standards of care</li> <li>• Approach to customer services / listening to customers</li> <li>• Working with partners the council can demonstrate;               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– reduces crime and making people feel safer</li> <li>– improvement in the differences in how healthy people are</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Assistive technology to promote the safety and well-being of people in their own homes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with NHS Rotherham in sustaining improvements - healthy people</li> <li>• Identify gaps in the market and support work on services tailored to meet individual needs</li> <li>• Increase the number of assessments (4 weeks) and the numbers of first contact assessments</li> <li>• Access to individual budgets – people with physical disability and/or sensory impairment</li> <li>• Work with the Young Adult Transitions team ensure young adults (14+) receive the care in a safe and timely manner</li> <li>• Invest in technology to support people feeling safe at home</li> <li>• To increase employment for people in vulnerable groups</li> <li>• Address all of the recommendations from the Service Inspections</li> </ul>

c) The Way Forward

The results of the first Area Assessment provide the partnership with a good baseline and clearly identify areas of strength and future challenges. This information needs to be made available to relevant people within each partner organisation so they are aware of its content.

In order to move the forward in our improvement agenda we need to learn from our experience of CAA in its first year.

Work has already commenced in Children’s Services to address the issues and implement the recommendations which were raised in the Children’s First Review conducted in Spring 2009 and the recent Unannounced Inspection.

In addition it is proposed that:

- Arrangements between the Audit Commission and the Partnership are strengthened to ensure that ongoing dialogue throughout the year is obtained to ensure that any progress being made is evidenced throughout the year to the commission and is fed into next years assessment.
- Performance management arrangements and challenge of LAA targets is strengthened using a more robust performance clinic regime.

## **8. Finance**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

It is very clear that although we already have a strong LSP and partnership performance management arrangements in place, improved joint working is required to ensure coherence of specific working practices to meet the requirements of CAA.

The strength of local partnership working is key CAA, and organisational performance of all partner agencies will inform the area assessment. It is therefore essential that we work with partners and to take forward all the areas identified in the area and organisational assessments.

The current position with our Children's Services remains a risk in relation to the overall future CAA judgements.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

CAA has provided the first holistic independent assessment of the prospects for local areas and the quality of life for people living there.

The focus on outcomes requires CAA to look across all organisations responsible for local public services which are expected to work in partnership to tackle the challenges facing communities. CAA will specifically recognise the importance of effective local partnership working and the enhanced role of the Sustainable Community Strategies and Local Area Agreements.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Appendix A – CAA Area Assessment Report

Appendix B – CAA Organisational Assessment Report

### **Contact Name :**

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