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To: Corporate Policy Overview Committee – 28 May 2008

Subject: New National Indicator Set

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

2007/08 was the final year for BVPIs. They have been replaced by a new National Indicator set from April 2008.

This report seeks to provide background information for Members on the development of the new National Indicator set as well as set out those indicators that fall into the remit of this committee.

FOR INFORMATION

1. Introduction

Government is committed to reducing the burden of information collection and performance management on local government and its partners. The recent publication of the new National Indicator set represents a major milestone in this journey.

In total there are 198 indicators. All previous indicator sets for local government such as BVPIs are now abolished.

2. Reducing Burdens

The new 198 National Indicators meet many of the requirements that Kent argued for within the presentation given by the KCC Chief Executive to Treasury staff in 2006. We have a streamlined set of indicators, which all partners, agencies, quangos and government departments will be working to, tied to the national PSA targets of government, and consistently implemented throughout all public services. This is a significant step forward and provides a much more simplified and coherent framework.

All previous indicator sets such as BVPIs are now abolished. From 1 April only the new national indicators will be used for performance management arrangements and target setting in relationships between local areas and government departments.

All 198 National Indicators will need to be collected and reported upon and they will become a major evidence source for inspectors in the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) which replaces CPA from 2009.

Government will still require many detailed information returns covering financial, statistical and contextual information, which represent a greater collection burden than the 198 indicators and therefore there are concerns that this burden is potentially increasing.

However, government has made a clear commitment in the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 to reduce these types of collection burdens by 30% by 2010.

3. Discontinuities

While a large number of the 198 indicators are available from current data collections, most do, however, represent new indicators to be tracked within performance management processes. By way of example, the key crime national indicators for many years have been vehicle crime, domestic burglary and violent crime, whereas the new framework focuses in the main on particular forms of violent crime: guns, knives, murders etc with no indicators on crime car or burglary.

A number of indicators require new data collection processes as the government has set new priorities. Definitions for the new indicators were only finalised at the start of April 2008 and a number of ambiguities still require clarification. This means that for many indicators we are not yet in a position to establish baselines or consider whether performance requires attention as we don't have comparative benchmarks.

It will probably require 18 months for a number of the new indicators to bed down and for useful comprehensive data to be available for all indicators.

4. Corporate Related National Indicators

Set out on Appendix 1 are those National Indicators which have a direct relevance to this Committee.

5. Conclusion

The initiative of the new National Indicator set should be welcomed, and is exactly the sort of framework KCC has argued for very strongly. However, the major changes represented by the re-structuring of national indicators, and the move towards area assessment under CAA, represents a significant challenge as we adapt to the new framework over the next 18 months.

6. Recommendation

Members are asked to NOTE the report.

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