

Title of Report:	The Association of Public Sector Excellence (APSE) Performance Benchmarking
Committee Report Submitted To:	Corporate Policy and Resources
Date of Meeting:	26th January 2020
For Decision or For Information	For Information

Linkage to Council Strategy (2019-23)	
Strategic Theme	
Outcome	
Lead Officer	Director of Corporate Services

Budgetary Considerations	
Cost of Proposal	N/A
Included in Current Year Estimates	YES/NO
Capital/Revenue	Revenue
Code	
Staffing Costs	

Screening Requirements	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	Yes/No	Date:
	RNA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	Yes/No	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	Yes/No	Date:

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on progress with the APSE Performance Benchmarking process within Corporate Services including proposed indicators, and with draft figures at this time.

2.0 Background

2.1 The context for Council's benchmarking activity is set out in its Duty to Improve within the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014, **Part 12, Section 91-(1)-(b)** which states that "A council must use the information it collects under section 90 to compare its performance, in so far as is reasonably practicable, with the performance of other councils in exercising those or similar functions during the financial year to which the information relates and during previous financial years."

2.2 Council's level of regional and national benchmarking of its performance has been limited and has regularly been the subject of NIAO Audit Recommendations. Council's Section 95 Audit and Assessment Report 2019/20 from the NIAO stated that:

- "Council should continue working with other councils and the Department to agree a suite of self-imposed indicators and standards. This will enable meaningful comparisons to be made and published in line with its statutory responsibility. Significant progress by all councils is essential in the coming year to allow a broader range of functions to be compared."

- "We expect that further progress by all councils will be necessary in the coming year to allow a broader range of functions to be compared."

3.0 APSE led National Performance Benchmarking

3.1 Council has taken the positive step and joined with 9 of the 10 other Northern Ireland Councils to be part of the "Northern Ireland Project". This is the National Performance Benchmarking Framework that is led and facilitated by APSE Performance Networks. Through membership of this network, Council will now be subject to and contribute data against over 160 Performance Indicators across 12 Services areas. Council will now be able to extensively benchmark its performance against that of other Councils in Northern Ireland in order to comply with its statutory duties, identify areas for improvement, share good practice and increase accountability of its performance through public reporting.

3.2 APSE performance networks is the largest voluntary public sector benchmarking service across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The network has been collecting performance data on key frontline service

areas since 1999, and the Northern Ireland project has been benchmarking data across Councils here since 2015. APSE is used by over 200 local authorities across the UK and it leads the way in local government benchmarking. The size of APSE's membership gives added benefits to members by being able to offer a wide variety of comparator groups.

- 3.3 The Corporate Services Directorate will be reporting against 26 Performance Indicators over 4 Service areas and these are set as follows.

Democratic and Central Services – 10 Indicators

Organisation Development/Human Resources – 10 Indicators

Policy & Community Planning- 1 Indicator

(Percentage of council buildings accessible to people with a disability)

Information and Communications Technology – 5 Indicators

- 3.4 The training and development for staff who will be involved in this process has been ongoing, and Council believes that this is a valuable and positive step towards our ongoing aim to foster a culture of service improvement.

4.0 Benchmarking Indicators

Democratic and Central Services		
Indicator Description	2019 NI Council Average	CCG Performance Actuals (M1-6 2020)
Registration Services performance indicators		
PI 12a - Cost of Registration Service per head of population	£1.43	£1.13
PI 13b - Number of births registered per 1,000 head of population	12.08	5.02
PI 13c - Number of deaths registered per 1,000 head of population	7.98	4.43
PI 13d - Number of marriages and civil partnerships registered per 1,000 head of population	4.14	1.02
PI 16b - Service user satisfaction with registration services (percentage of users that were 'Satisfied' or 'Very Satisfied')	96.00%	No data available
Democratic Services performance indicators		
PI 33a - Cost of Democratic services per head of population <i>Such service include committee administration, member services, member allowance and expenses and election costs.</i>	£9.38	£3.97
Complaints performance indicators		
PI 34b - Number of complaints received per 1,000 head of population	0.37	0.51

PI 35a - Average time taken (in working days) to successfully conclude a complaint	10.18	19.34
PI 36a - Percentage of complaints rectified within target time	85.60%	70.21%
Overall customer satisfaction performance indicators		
PI 37a - Percentage customer satisfaction with the overall service provided by the authority (percentage of users that were 'Satisfied' or 'Very Satisfied')	80.91%	No data available.

Organisational Development/Human Resources		
Indicator Description	2019 NI Council Average	CCG Performance Actuals (M1-6 2020)
OD/HR performance indicators		
PI 01b - Staffing cost per employee	£742.05	£564.09
PI 04a - Staff leaving as a percentage of average total staff for calendar year (excluding voluntary severance)	6.85%	1.34%
PI 05a - Percentage staff absence for all council staff (all staff)	4.94%	6.13%
PI 05d - Days staff absence per employee – short term	2.82	0.67
PI 05e - Days staff absence per employee – long term	9.63	6.38

PI 05f - Percentage of staff that have no incidences of sickness absence in the year	47.45%	81%
Training / learning performance indicators		
PI 17a - Cost of Training / Learning service per employee	£216.60	£28.94 *
PI 18a - Percentage of budget (overall net expenditure) on Training /Learning	0.38%	0.05%**
PI 21a - Number of days per employee spent on training	1.44	0.44***
PI 22a - Number of days per councillor spent on training	1.45	0.2

*Q1 and Q2 saw a decrease in training activity as a direct result of COVID 19 restrictions

** PI 18 Based on in-year Management Accounts actual figures as at Period 6 2020/21. Budget 0.46%

*** Q1 and Q2 saw a decrease in training activity as a direct result of COVID 19 restrictions

Information and communications technology		
Indicator Description	2019 NI Council Average	CC&G Performance Actuals
Information and communications technology (ICT) performance indicators		
PI 07a - Cost of ICT service per head of population	£6.07	£5.87
PI 08a - Cost of ICT service per employee	£1,095	£983
PI 09a - Percentage of overall net expenditure on ICT	1.84%	1.78%
PI 10a - Percentage of time (24/7) that network is fully available	99.36%	99.87%
PI 11a - Percentage of incidents requested / reported and resolved within agreed target times	96.83%	96.86%

5.0 Next Steps

Council will be involved in the “Second Batch” data submission exercise in January 2021, which will provide an opportunity to accurately benchmark significant areas of performance in 2020/21 against nine other Councils in Northern Ireland. Moving forward the relevant and applicable APSE performance indicators will be included in, and reported through, Service Business Plans and will act as a valuable set of supplementary performance indicators to each Service area’s own business related measurable outcomes and indicators.