

Your ref:
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National Indicator Set
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Dear Sirs

Please find attached Warwickshire County Council's response to the recent consultation exercise for the new National Indicator Set issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government in November.

Whilst recognising you are not seeking views on whether individual indicators should be included in the new single set of national indicators we have a number of general concerns. There is a consensus view that in reality the CAA will actually take account of many more indicators than the 198 as a result of the need to measure local performance in the medium term against existing BVPI's and local indicators. However most importantly the 198 is in fact inaccurate as we have identified 12 indicators which are a multiple rather than single measures.

It is important to ensure that the proposed time to introduce the new indicator set coincides with when the current set are discontinued, so that no extra burden is placed on the authority.

Further we are concerned that perhaps CLG does not have the full "buy in" from other parts of Whitehall for the National Indicators being the 'definitive' set and as such the burden of inspection does not appear to be abating for the public services nationally. Will consequent changes to the performance regimes of other Government departments be guaranteed?

The indicator set is disproportionately weighted towards childrens' services. The role of place shaping survey is not overly clear how this will feed into performance. There is a complex mix of perception based and output based measures and it is not entirely clear how some will add value.

Looking at Warwickshire County Council's burden in particular, we took a snap shot of how much time is spent supporting the national audit and inspection process and we found this to be in well in excess of 7,000 hours.

One specific dimension concerns the proliferation of targets beyond the National Indicator set announced by CLG, which will not help to reduce our sizable burden.

There are disparities between CLG LAA targets and those established by other Government Departments, which impede regional agencies' capacity to meet other partners' expectations. This may play out by way of the economic development targets set by Government via the Regional Development Agency, which does not match or support the locally defined priorities agreed within a LAA. Yet the RDA has a duty to co-operate with the LAA in the resourcing and delivery of its (LAA) priorities.

We are concerned that the proposal to introduce a single set of National Indicators is not being followed through and the links made across all government departments. We have just recently responded to a proposal to introduce new indicators measuring our performance on Elections that are not part of the national Indicator Set.

Apparent contradictions between different services' targets further sustains the view that central government is not yet joined up. We were told for example that the Police Service has hard targets to increase the number of Youth Offenders entering the Criminal Justice system, whereas Youth Offending Services have targets to reduce the numbers. There are similar contradictions apparently in relation to alcohol and drugs.

Yours faithfully

Jim Graham
Chief Executive

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