



Dear Councillor

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL (PERFORMANCE AND GROWTH) -
WEDNESDAY, 3 JANUARY 2024**

I am now able to enclose for consideration at the above meeting the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

**Agenda Item
No.**

4. CORPORATE PLAN UPDATE(Pages 3 - 12)

The Panel is to receive a presentation providing an update on the Corporate Plan.

Executive

Councillor:

S

Ferguson

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Corporate Plan measures update

Councillor Stephen Ferguson and Oliver Morley
Update and Discussion

Purpose

- Update O&S on the next steps with the HDC Performance Framework
- Brief Members on Government plans for 'Best Value' and the introduction of the 'Office of Local Government' (Oflog)
- Discuss how we can bring this work into our Performance Framework and how it may fit into the Corporate Plan

A quick reminder

- Cabinet recently approved the *Performance Management Framework*, it:
 - Clearly links the Corporate Plan and outcomes to what we do, and how we deliver things (via our Icare values)
 - Stresses that overall assessment of performance is driven by the actions we take in the Corporate Plan, operational metrics, broader outcome indicators, project performance, budget management & risk assurance
 - Sets out how we have management control via our internal board structures and how we engage with customers and listen to feedback
 - Explains the ways that Members are involved in the governance of performance



P R I O R I T Y

Delivering good quality, high value-for-money services with good control
and compliance with statutory obligations

Next steps at HDC...

- What's next?
 - Steps are underway to improve the *Operational Pls* – Retain/Amend/Remove for current metrics, seeking new measures and sharing with Members for scrutiny
 - *Contextual Pls* – bringing in metrics that report broader performance; often annually
 - *Risk Management Strategy approved* – focused corporate risks & plans are in place for Service risks to be updated
 - *Project Delivery* – communities of practice being formed, and ongoing improvements to reporting
 - *Data maturity assessment tool* - Working to better understand our readiness to do more with our data
 - *Unit costs* – we are intending to bring forward work on this aspect of VFM
 - *Peer Review* – we have invited a Peer Review from the LGA during 24/25
 - Managers are working on their *Service Plans for 24/25* which connect their work to the Council's Corporate Plan.

Next steps nationally

- What's happening nationally?
- Govt consulted on '[Best Value Guidance](#)' in the summer, and Oflog is finding its feet....

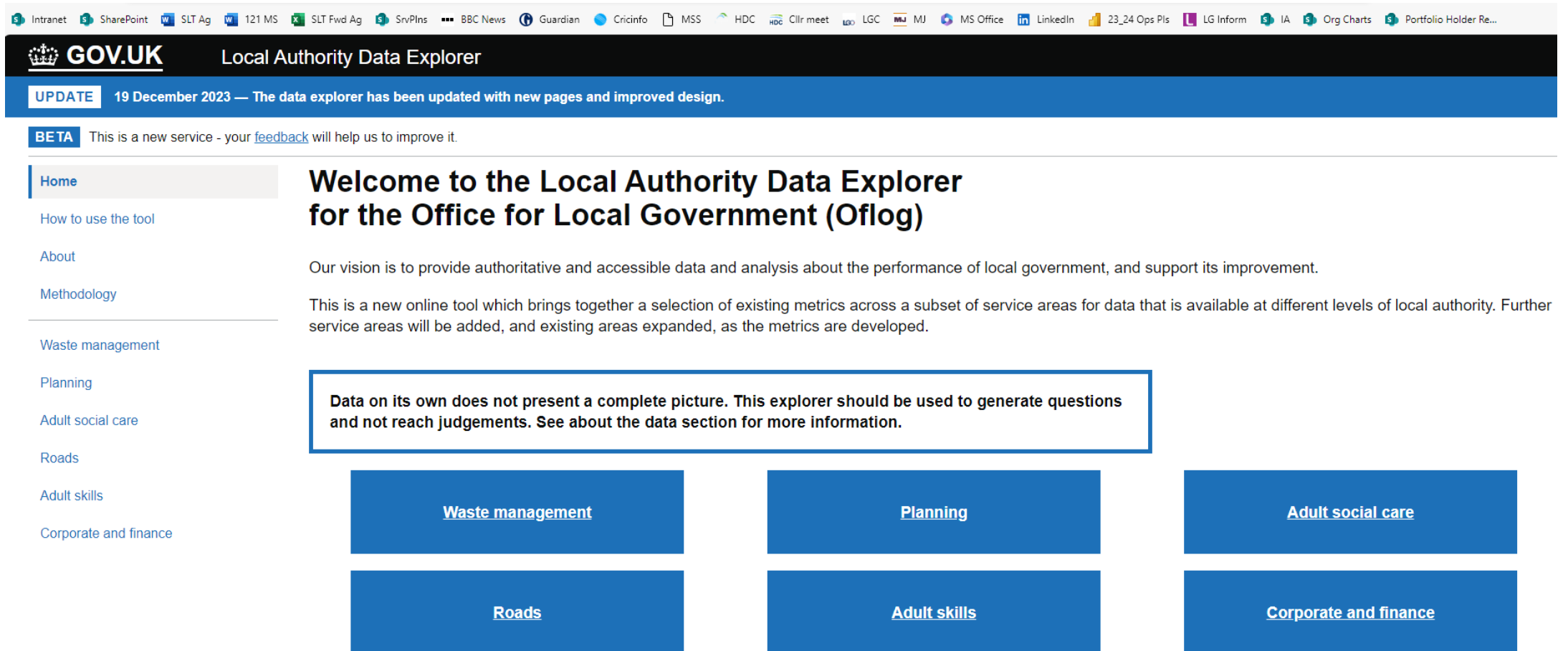


2. Leadership

Description	Characteristics of a well-functioning authority	Indicators of potential failure
<p>Effective political and administrative leaders who have a clear vision and set of priorities for their area, are key to building local economic growth, social cohesion and a healthy local democracy.</p> <p>When they model positive and effective leadership behaviours at all levels, this can be beneficial to a local authority's overall culture and governance.</p> <p>It is essential that all officers with statutory responsibility, including the Section 151 and Monitoring Officers, uphold their duties, both individually and collectively and, in accordance with good practice, report directly to the Chief Executive and, as necessary, to full Council. Statutory officers must work effectively together and all must have a voice for key decisions.</p> <p>An authority that either fails to recruit to its statutory officer posts on a permanent basis over an extended period of time or has a high turnover in these roles indicates instability and potential wider cultural concerns.</p> <p>When this is compounded by many senior positions being appointed to on an interim basis over an extended period, this can signal a problem.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members provide quality leadership by setting a clearly articulated, achievable and prioritised vision for officers to follow that puts place and local people at its heart. Senior officers have the capacity and capability to provide the authority with effective strategic direction. • The authority's corporate plan is evidence based, current, realistic and enables the whole organisation's performance to be measured and held to account. Strategic priorities are aligned with the authority's financial strategy and delivery arrangements, and respond appropriately to local need, including the plans of partners and stakeholders. • Members and officers, particularly those with statutory responsibility, including the Section 151 and Monitoring Officers, uphold their duties and speak truth to power. • Strong financial management and reporting runs throughout the whole organisation. • Robust systems are in place and "owned" by members for identifying, reporting, mitigating and regularly reviewing risk. • Effective succession planning, with the recruitment and nurturing of officers with the necessary skills, ensures organisational resilience. • Members and senior officers maintain constructive relationships and engage effectively with external stakeholders and the wider local community. • A demonstrable commitment to leadership development. • The authority has moved from multiple to all-out elections within the four-year cycle, which has enhanced stability and reduced ongoing campaigning that can hinder improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lack of corporate capacity or capability, resulting in a lack of strategic direction, oversight and sense of accountability. • Leadership losing sight of the authority's role and function as a leader of place and provider or enabler of services to local residents and businesses. • A lack of understanding of public sector standards, the Nolan Principles and appropriate behaviour. • Corporate plan is out of date, unrealistic and unaffordable and/or has too many priorities. • Poor ownership and accountability by the Section 151 Officer, leading to poor quality financial management. • Section 151 and Monitoring Officers do not report directly to the Chief Executive or are not involved in key decisions. • Risk management ownership and discussion is limited to the Audit Committee rather than across the organisation. • A lack of political and/or organisational stability, with high leadership turnover, key posts remaining vacant or an overreliance on interim officers, creating a lack of continuity and/or decisions in the long-term interests of the authority. • Leadership at both political and managerial levels is distracted and involved to an unhealthy extent on internal battles. • The absence of both a fit for purpose and regularly reviewed people plan, procurement strategy and IT strategy. • A loss of stakeholder and public confidence. • A sense of insularity, a failure to tolerate internal or external challenge, and to recognise the need for improvement.

Next Steps nationally

- Oflog - [Local Authority Data Explorer - DLUHC Data Dashboards](#)



The screenshot shows the 'Local Authority Data Explorer' website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the 'GOV.UK' logo and the title 'Local Authority Data Explorer'. Below this is a blue banner with an 'UPDATE' notice dated 19 December 2023, stating that the data explorer has been updated with new pages and improved design. A 'BETA' notice follows, indicating that this is a new service and that user feedback will help improve it. On the left side, there is a vertical menu with links for 'Home', 'How to use the tool', 'About', 'Methodology', 'Waste management', 'Planning', 'Adult social care', 'Roads', 'Adult skills', and 'Corporate and finance'. The main content area features a large heading: 'Welcome to the Local Authority Data Explorer for the Office for Local Government (Oflog)'. Below the heading, there is a paragraph explaining the tool's vision: 'Our vision is to provide authoritative and accessible data and analysis about the performance of local government, and support its improvement. This is a new online tool which brings together a selection of existing metrics across a subset of service areas for data that is available at different levels of local authority. Further service areas will be added, and existing areas expanded, as the metrics are developed.' A prominent blue-bordered box contains the text: 'Data on its own does not present a complete picture. This explorer should be used to generate questions and not reach judgements. See about the data section for more information.' Below this box, there are six blue buttons arranged in a 2x3 grid, each representing a service area: 'Waste management', 'Planning', 'Adult social care', 'Roads', 'Adult skills', and 'Corporate and finance'.

Districts

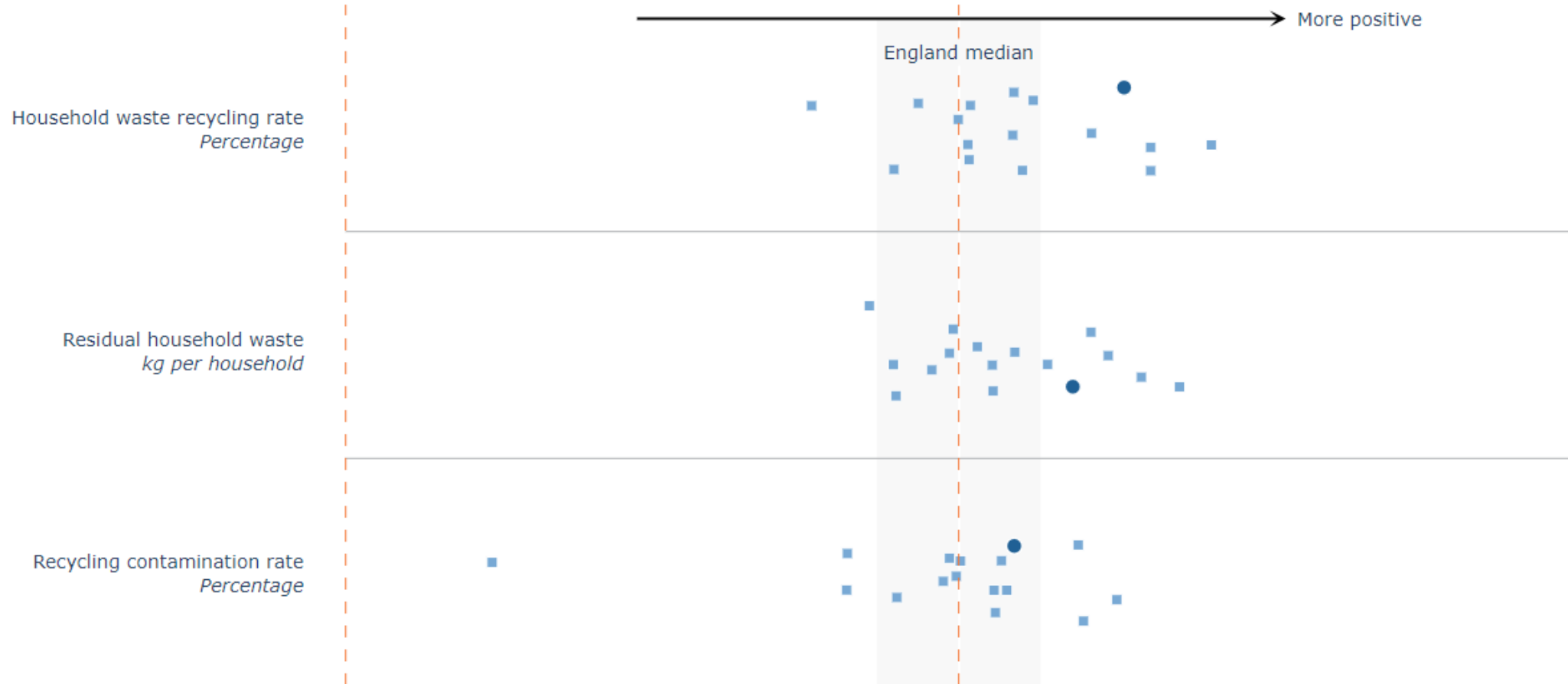
● Huntingdonshire

Similar authorities

■ Huntingdonshire's CIPFA Nearest Neighbours

England

● Other English local authorities with responsibility for this area



Median range

Next Steps nationally

- More updates are coming and Oflog intends to work with the sector, hosting best practice sessions and expanding the Data Explorer.
- Metrics are all from existing data returns, and many already feature in our reports to O&S
- Not all metrics are relevant to Districts, some are County or Combined Authority – but could be good contextual metrics for us
- Does offer an opportunity for benchmarking against others, but we need to compare 'apples with apples'
- The next areas are 'Business & Economic Growth' & 'Fly Tipping'
- But they say this will expand to cover 20 areas in total

Initial areas with metrics delivered in July 2023:

- Adult Social Care
- Adult Skills
- Finance
- Waste Management

Areas with metrics currently being shared for comment:

- Business and Economic Growth
- Corporate and Finance
- Planning
- Roads
- Waste Management (fly-tipping)

Areas proposed for development next (subject to change):

- Children's Social Care
- Homelessness and Rough Sleeping
- Public Health
- Youth Justice & Accommodation

Future areas:

- Animal Welfare
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Asylum Services
- Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- Early Years
- Employment Rate
- Environment
- Housing
- Neighbourhood Crime
- Parks and Green Spaces
- Public Transport
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Sport, Leisure & Recreational Services (inc. Libraries)
- Support Services for Vulnerable People

Discussion Items

- **Welcome feedback** and thoughts.
- The political focus on fewer more **critical performance measures** has been welcomed by members, and seen performance improve. Is this approach endorsed?
- **OFLOG measures are critical** – we intend to have actions in the Corporate Plan that consider how we bring them into our local performance framework and enable you to **track movement**. Does that make sense?
- Would the proposed **focus on unit costs** be welcomed, and how can we provide greatest value and oversight for you?
- Any other ideas or comments?

Thank you