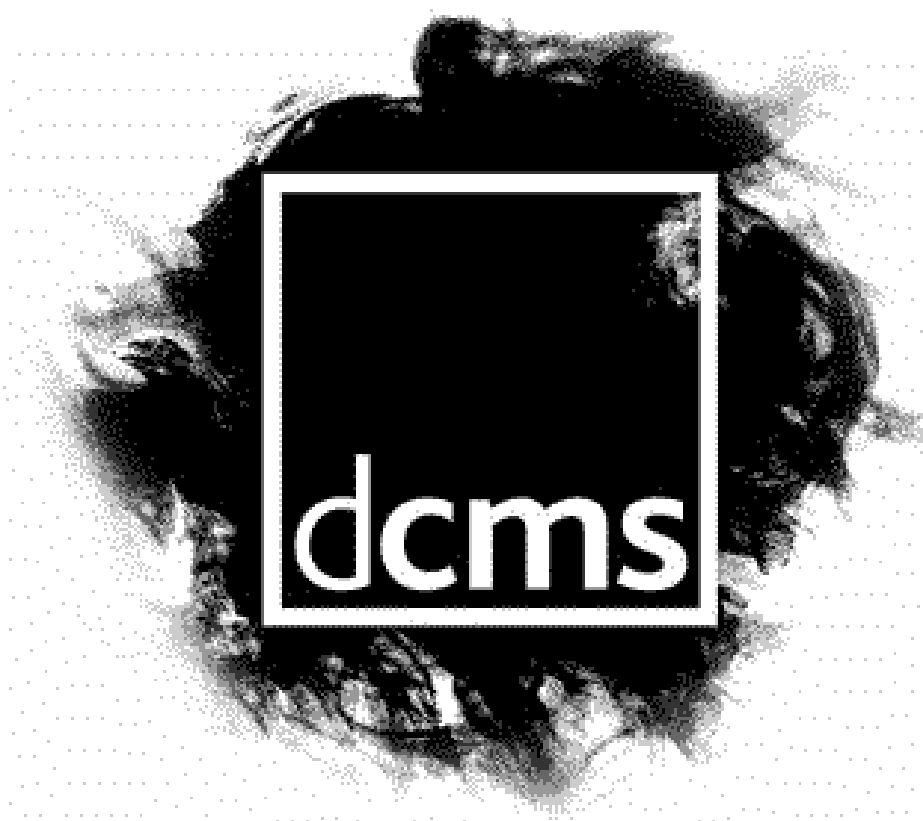


ANNUAL LIBRARY PLANS

Guidelines for the preparation of plans in 2000



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ANNUAL LIBRARY PLANS

GUIDELINES - 2000

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 These guidelines have been developed from those devised for the 1999 Annual Library Plans. They take account of the experience gained by both the Local Authorities and the Department in preparing and appraising those plans. They also take account of observations made by Local Authorities through the consultation process undertaken by the Department.
- 1.2 The guidelines provide a framework for what the Department regards as primarily a local planning exercise. The framework will provide Government with a consistent structure for the intentions and achievements of all parties, working together towards national, but also local, objectives for the library service.
- 1.3 In promulgating these guidelines the Department accepts that by definition guidance is not totally prescriptive. Authorities should adopt the structure, but use the described coverage to different degrees depending upon their own circumstances. The framework is promoted in the spirit of partnership where the Department wishes to support each authority in shaping its own library service to best meet the demands of the community it serves.
- 1.4 It is also accepted that the process of planning is more important than the publication and that this can only take place at the point of service management. Publication of the plan extends the knowledge of the plan to a wider audience.
- 1.5 To minimise the workload falling upon local authorities and to avoid unnecessary repetition, the plans are to be produced in two sections.
- 1.6 Part A should be produced every three years and should
- contain standing information about the Local Authority, its community and its library service;
 - review overall performance against the Authority's own standards and policies, and compared with other Local Authorities;
 - examine the pressures faced by the service, and make the best use of resources to overcome these pressures;
 - identify the opportunities which exist to adapt service levels to meet changing user demands.
- 1.7 Part B should provide the basis for a short term review and be produced annually. In the first year, and every third year thereafter, it will be produced in conjunction with Part A. It will contain:
- A rolling three year medium term strategic plan;
 - New initiatives and influences - which may impinge upon the medium term strategy;
 - An action plan for the immediate future, including steps the authority is taking to manage the quality of its service;
 - A review of comparative performance;

- A review of local performance against targets and against national standards when these are published;
 - Identification of targets;
- 1.8 Part A of the plan should be amended when necessary during the planning cycle to take account of changing circumstances and such amendments should be forwarded to DCMS when Part B is submitted.
- 1.9 When an authority is requested, or chooses to, submit Part A it is important that all sections of Part B are also completed.
- 1.10 Plans are to be submitted to DCMS by 30th September in each year. This provides a “best fit” to the corporate management and budget strategy processes of local authorities, and facilitates the production and incorporation of performance measures relating to each financial year. They may, of course, be prepared within the authority at whatever prior date is most convenient. This time-scale reflects the fact that, by the time of submission, the Plan is covering a year which is half way through and for which key budgetary decisions are already taken. It also provides the opportunity for planning data to be available for local budget setting, purposes in preparation for the next year, and allows the opportunity for authorities to reflect prospective cost and service changes in overall national expenditure projections and grant negotiations.
- 1.11 Appendix 2 sets out a time frame for the elements included in both Part A and Part B of the Plan.
- 1.12 Primarily the plan is an expression of the authority’s own commitment to the development of the library service. However, it is also important to consider the use of the plans by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, and any research bodies who may have access to plans from all authorities and who will find analysis and comparison greatly facilitated by a common approach.
- 1.13 The guidelines are, therefore, structured in terms of a common format - with chapter and subject headings specified - and a general description of the content that might be expected to form part of each. (See Appendix 1).

2 COMMON FORMAT

2.1 The format for Part A (Planning Platform) will be as follows:

- Chapter 1 - Mission Statement**
- Chapter 2 - Background**
- Chapter 3 - Service Delivery**
- Chapter 4 - Resources**
- Chapter 5 - Public/Customer Response**
- Chapter 6 - Performance Appraisal**
- Chapter 7 - Summary of Existing Strengths and Areas for Development**

2.2 The format for Part B (Rolling Review) will be as follows:

Chapter 8 - Rolling 3 year Medium Term Strategy

Chapter 9 - Review of last year, including review against national standards when these are published

Chapter 10 - External and local influences

Chapter 11 - The Way Ahead

3 AUDIENCE AND PRESENTATION

3.1 Council officers and members, Government Departments and external advisers will be the primary users this strategic plan. It is appropriate, therefore, that it should mainly be framed in terms that are relevant from a managerial and professional standpoint. Some elements of the annual plan may be particularly appropriate for distribution to a wider audience such as users, staff and stakeholders, although a simplified presentation may be preferred.

3.2 Given the intention that Part A is intended to stand for three years, it is important that it is compiled in a way that enables it to be easily updated. DCMS expect that authorities will, in future submit copies of all plans in electronic format (using a standard word processing format) with a hard copy. For hard copy a loose leaf format in a binder will greatly assist maintenance of the plans. Where new/amended pages are submitted, amended content should be sidelined.

3.3 Library Plans should be submitted to the relevant member forum for approval. This will give the plan the appropriate status for a strategic document. A foreword in the name of the Committee Chair, Cabinet member (or other appropriate member) can be used to add status and set the plan in context.

3.4 On the basis of experience, plans are best when kept to a maximum of between 80 and 100 pages for Parts A and B together, though smaller authorities may find a shorter document suffix's. They should be expressed clearly for the benefit of the prospective readership. A 'contents' page would be valuable. Some cross-referencing of sections may be helpful, but overall coherence must be maintained. Appendices should be kept to a minimum and information should be presented in a summarised form where possible. If an authority decides to use a different arrangement than the one in these *Guidelines*, it should provide a concordance showing in which section information requested in the Appendix is located.

4 PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

4.1 A 'Planning Profile' is being circulated with this guidance which sets out various statistical indicators. These provide a convenient summary of statistical measures defined by the Committee on Public Library Statistics of the available data for the last five years.

4.2 The profile is meant to be an aid to the authority in considering the scope and scale of its services both in time and in contrast with other authorities. Its purpose is to add context although it is accepted that no statistical measures can effectively summarise performance on their own. If the finally agreed set of National service standards so requires, a revised Planning Profile will be circulated.

4.3 The indicators should add the appropriate context within the following sections of the plan:

2.1 Profile of local authority statistics

- socio economic measures

5. Customer response and quality assessment

- significant results of user surveys/user research

6. Performance appraisal

- Assessment of service against national standards, [when these are agreed]
- Service deployment measures
- Indicators of use of the service
- Ratios of responsiveness to user demand
- Quantification of outputs for resources inputs

9.2 Performance review

- Achievements as measured locally against targets set out in previous plans

4.4 The first part of the profile provides a summary of trends for the authority within its class and against the National distributions:

- London Boroughs
- Metropolitan Districts
- Unitary Councils
- County Councils

Where the results of this analysis are significant, the authority may wish to comment in Section 6, or in section 9.2.

4.5 The second part of the profile provides more detail and a range of comparisons with other authorities chosen by the subject authority.

4.6 The profile also provides the recognised definitions for the statistical indicators. Authorities may wish to add other indicators to their review.

4.7 The intention is that authorities should react to any significant points that emerge from a review of these indicators and thereby set out clear strategies for developing the service as a result. The planning guidance does not require authorities to show in their plans a set number of statistical tables or diagrams. The emphasis is put on commenting on the authority's position in relation to national standards, and justifying an awareness of significant trends through the use of relevant statistics.

4.8 Much of the detail set out in the Profile will only be relevant to Part A of the Plan. In Part B the emphasis should be placed on reviewing progress made during the previous planning period in meeting stated objectives. If this can be demonstrated in the form of statistical measures the relevant indicators should be shown. Where trends observed in the Planning Profile reflect earlier progress and this is also relevant, then such indicators can be exemplified.

4.9 The Committee on Public Library Statistics is keeping the list of indicators set out in the Planning Profile under review, and will place priority on developing suitable indicators for the application of ICT. The format of the planning profile has been developed by a CPLS sub-group in response to comments received last year, and they are anxious to keep the format under review with particular regard for any National Standards, once these have been agreed.

5 GUIDELINES

5.1 Appendix 1 sets out guidelines for contents of the plan and links this to the common format above.

LOCAL AUTHORITY ANNUAL LIBRARY PLANS

GUIDELINES

PART A

CHAPTER AND SECTION HEADINGS	INDICATIVE CONTENTS
<p>1 Mission Statement</p> <p>1.1 Mission Statement</p> <p>1.2 Subsidiary aims/extended mission statement</p>	<p>“Short form” mission statement putting, in succinct terms, the aim of the service or, where appropriate the Department which includes the library service.</p> <p>This section should be used, where necessary, to extend the mission statement</p>
<p>2 Background</p> <p>2.1 Profile of Local Authority characteristics</p>	<p>This section should give a demographic and topographic picture of the authority. Demographic information should include trend data from local sources and the profile of statistical data (e.g. ethnic make up, age profile, migration between city centres and suburbs, day time population,) and a socio-economic analysis. The future implications for service delivery of demographic trend data should be noted for inclusion later in the plan.</p> <p>A map at the appropriate level of detail could usefully supplement the brief topographic description.</p>

CHAPTER AND SECTION HEADINGS	INDICATIVE CONTENTS
2.2 Corporate Objectives 2.3 Linkage to corporate or other plans 2.4 Organisational relationship with other council services and Departments. 2.5 The scope of the Library Service	<p>The library service does not exist in isolation. Those Local Authority objectives to address the needs of its population that impinge upon the library service should be stated.</p> <p>Any plan for an individual service must relate to the overall Local Authority planning process. The document should make clear where and how the Library Plan fits into the council wide process and the status of proposals and initiatives in relation to the approved corporate plan and budget forecasting arrangements. Similarly there will be, from time to time, proposals for plans in related areas of activity and the relationship to and any overlap with these plans might usefully be clarified.</p> <p>A simple chart(s) showing the council departments and/or committee structure will suffice to establish how the Local Authority structure is defined, and where the Library Service fits in.</p> <p>A simple breakdown of the range of services included within the ambit of the library services should be given for each tier of libraries. A grid presentation should be used to show the range of services provided and related user groups. This section should <u>not</u> include a detailed description of services.</p>
3 Service Delivery 3.1 Access	<p>Each relevant section should show the steps being taken to promote social inclusion, the community role of libraries, and their contribution to the social and economic well being of the community. The contribution made by libraries to the wider objectives of underpinning lifelong learning and the modernisation of Local Government Services should be included where relevant.</p> <p>This section should cover the policies on access agreed by the Authority including the location of libraries in relation to population, the balance between fixed and mobile libraries, and opening times and frequency of visits respectively. Co-operation on access to services with other library authorities should be set out here.</p>

CHAPTER AND SECTION HEADINGS	INDICATIVE CONTENTS
3.2 Lending Services for adults	This section will indicate the key points of any written policies, standards or guidelines relating to service provision. It should include a brief description of the range of services provided.
3.3 Services for children	Similarly the plan should include a summary of services for children, giving similar information as above. It will focus on special services for children, including encouragement of children to read and specialist activities. Links with the Schools Library Services can be detailed. As above, the key points of written policies and standards should be shown.
3.4 Services for special groups	This section will address particular services for those who have access problems, and those who require special materials, for all types of library services. Also to be covered are ethnic groups for whom services are specially provided e.g. for those learning English as a second language and/or materials in their native language. There may also be other groups for whom particular services are provided. In each case key points of policy should be identified and information given as to how the service is provided and delivered.
3.5 Reference, Information services and Specialist Collections	Key points of any relevant policies and standards should be given. The section should cover particular client groups, the range of services provided, relating this to community size and where the services are located. This section, in particular, will need to cover service delivery through ICT. Support for research through the maintenance / development of research collections should be referred to, including, where relevant, Archive Services and local studies.
3.6 Services to business	<p>Again this will largely be additional to services detailed under References and Information Services. It may include specialised commercial or business libraries in some authorities. Links established with Chambers of Commerce or TECs might be included.</p> <p>In some circumstances co-operative provision with business organisations or the provision by commercial organisations of IT services may be relevant.</p>

CHAPTER AND SECTION HEADINGS	INDICATIVE CONTENTS
3.7 ICT 3.8 Agency services 3.9 Other Council services 3.10 Wider community use	<p>Public access to ICT as an aid to communication, lifelong learning, self development and computer literacy is of growing importance. Policies on access to ICT for the public (e-mail, Internet, personal computing, learning centres, networks such as NGfL) should be defined and the services described.</p> <p>The services provided to schools, prisons, hospitals etc. should be identified. This should include information on service levels, availability, and how the service is funded.</p> <p>This should cover any services that are additional to those included under other headings that are particularly orientated towards supporting other council departments e.g. LGIS. It will also cover joint initiatives and any particular relationships that derive from joint planning or the council's corporate plan.</p> <p>Policies on access to, or use by, the community, information agencies and education providers of library facilities for other activities should be stated, especially any developments to increase the community role of the service.</p>
4 Resources 4.1 Finance	<p>This section will set out the overall level of expenditure involved in providing the service and examine the trend of growth or reduction in expenditure in real terms. In particular it will consider the prospects for maintaining or increasing net expenditure in the light of the Council's financial strategy and government constraints. The section should consider the broad disposition of expenditure between the three main components – staff, buildings and materials - and look at past trends and prospects for the future. This may be best illustrated graphically.</p> <p>(The section should separately describe the policy and practice on income generating services the charging policy and the opportunity to introduce new services funded by new sources of income).</p>

CHAPTER AND SECTION HEADINGS	INDICATIVE CONTENTS
4.2 Buildings	<p>This section should review the buildings used by the library service against the agreed access policies of the authority identified in section 3.1. The adequacy of the buildings to meet current user expectations and trends in library provision should be considered together with security of tenure, the state of repair and furnishing, and any prospective liabilities in this regard. Where provision for replacement, renewal or major repair has been made or is required, this should be stated.</p> <p>The plan might consider asset value (either in capital or rental terms) particularly where the library service occupies very high value premises and the value might be better deployed elsewhere within the service. Exceptional maintenance liabilities should be noted.</p>
4.3 Mobile Libraries	<p>The plan should note the age and serviceability of mobile libraries and note the availability, or not, of funds to replace vehicles. The plan might also consider the balance between fixed and mobile libraries and the cost and service implications of adjusting that balance.</p>
4.4 Staff	<p>This section will need to consider the adequacy of staffing both in terms of numbers and the level of training and experience. Statistics may be given of staff turnover and the profile of age, length of service and professional qualification, together with information about specialist skills and experience. The policy and practice on staff training and development, staff deployment and performance management should be given in the plan. Any incipient or foreseeable problems should be noted. A chart showing the management structure of the service should be included.</p>
4.5 Books and materials	<p>The plan will need to give information on the overall standards of stock provision agreed by the authority and the adequacy of the range and subject material of the book and materials stock. It will also consider the age and condition of the stock and note any shortcomings. The plan should give details of the service's approach to the conservation of its historic stock. The policy for acquisitions should be given (taking into account the demise of the NBA) and a view taken on the adequacy of the books and materials fund.</p>

CHAPTER AND SECTION HEADINGS	INDICATIVE CONTENTS
4.6 IT Systems 4.7 ICT services 4.8 Partnerships	<p>The IT systems in use to support lending services, stock management and cataloguing services, are an important resource. The plan will wish to consider the present and medium term adequacy of those systems, continued software support and the maintenance of dedicated hardware. This needs to be balanced against programmed replacement or upgrading of systems and the installation of new systems. Weaknesses in this area should be noted.</p> <p>As for stock management and other ‘housekeeping’ systems, the hardware, software and networks used to support the public use of ICT services should be identified, together with their present and medium term adequacy, especially in relation to the Public Library Network. Weaknesses in the long term adequacy and support should be noted.</p> <p>Details of formal schemes of co-operation or partnership with other library and information providers (e.g. LIPs) should be given, including membership of Regional Bureaux. This should include partnerships with both public and private sector partners identifying the costs and benefits to the authority.</p>
5 Customer Response and Quality Assessment 5.1 User surveys 5.2 Public Consultation Exercises 5.3 Market Research	<p>Where user surveys have been carried out the principal results should be summarised for this section. If not self explanatory, some commentary should be added to interpret the data and to identify the main sources of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.</p> <p>The nature and subject of any public consultation undertaken should be given, together with a summary of the response/feedback. Any broad lessons to be drawn from the exercise should be identified.</p> <p>The purposes and nature of the research should be given, and the main conclusions should be summarised.</p>

CHAPTER AND SECTION HEADINGS	INDICATIVE CONTENTS
5.4 Complaints and Commendations	A simple table setting out the numbers of complaints and commendations received, preferably showing a period of three years and with a breakdown by subject matter.
5.5 Quality Assessment	This section should indicate how the authority sets out to assess quality in its services and the principal conclusions from that assessment. Include references to areas of research being undertaken or proposed.
6 Performance Appraisal 6.1 Trend data for LA 6.2 Similar Group Comparisons	<p>A presentation of historic information spanning at least four years including the last financial year will provide a basis for identifying trends and comparing performance. This will be based upon the indicators included within the profile supplied to all authorities, but may include further indicators available locally which are useful in supporting the plan.</p> <p>Indicators are grouped into four sectors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Deployment of the Service (b) Use of the Service (c) Responsiveness of the Service (d) Resources employed on the Service. <p>N.B. Socio-economic information about the characteristics of the authority might more approximately be shown in Section 2.1.</p> <p>The plan should comment on the implication of trends within this historic data.</p> <p>The comparators chosen by the authority will be included in the profile. It is important in this section to identify and explain differences which are significant, and to consider whether they warrant any change of practice or priorities.</p>
6.3 Relationship to national standards	The plan should comment on the extent to which the library service meets the national standards (when these are published). Further guidance will be issued shortly.

CHAPTER AND SECTION HEADINGS	INDICATIVE CONTENTS
<p>7 Existing Strengths and Areas for Development</p> <p>7.1 Service levels</p> <p>7.2 Resource Issues</p> <p>7.3 Effectiveness and Efficiency</p>	<p>Previous chapters will have identified areas where service levels are either exceeding or falling short of National/LA policies, the performance levels of other authorities, or customer expectations. If market research has been carried out the appropriateness of present services to non-customers should also be evident. The strengths of the service and areas needing development should be shown, together with sufficient supporting narrative to define the issue concerned.</p> <p>Similarly the resource paragraphs will have identified risk factors and weaknesses within the present arrangements which need to be addressed. Again these need to be listed and defined sufficiently closely to enable solutions or courses of action to be proposed.</p> <p>These will be identified primarily by customer response, local trend data and the comparison of performance over time and/or against other authorities. They may need to be qualified by reference to particular local circumstances but a real attempt needs to be made to identify causal factors that can be considered in formulating the forward strategy.</p>

PART B

CHAPTER AND SECTION HEADINGS	INDICATIVE CONTENTS
<p>8 Rolling 3 Year Medium Term Strategy</p> <p>8.1 IT strategy</p> <p>8.2 Service improvements and variations</p> <p>8.3 Managing and utilising resources</p>	<p>The key points of the overall IT and ICT strategy for the service should be identified covering both computer systems and networks which are management based and those which provide a direct public service, including networks supporting Lifelong Learning. Links to corporate IT and ICT strategies should be identified. The plan should identify proposals for the digitisation of historic and/or cultural material.</p> <p>As a response to the issues identified in Part A and national standards, the strategy should consider which service improvements or variations are both desirable and achievable within the ensuing three years. Resource implications should be shown, as should an assessment of relative priority. Where appropriate, the consequences of changes to service levels should be expressed in terms of their projected effect on the quality of the service.</p> <p>Similarly, in response to strengths and areas for development identified in Chapter 7 the plan should develop a strategy for exploiting the strengths and improving the areas suitable for development in the provision or use of resources (subject to any over-riding constraints). As above, where appropriate, the effect on performance measures and complaints/commendations should be quantified. Cost implications must be assessed.</p>
<p>9 Review of Last Year</p> <p>9.1 Achievement of last annual action plan</p>	<p>The plan, in this section, should review the milestones, specific actions and target dates within last year's annual plan and note progress or achievement. Where the achievement differs from the plan, necessitating rescheduling (or indeed reconsideration) of the action plan this should also be identified for incorporation in Section 11.1</p>

CHAPTER AND SECTION HEADINGS	INDICATIVE CONTENTS
9.2 Performance review	This section should examine the latest trends in the main performance indicators, by adding a year's data to the information provided in the profile, and should compare the outcome for the previous year compared to the targets set in the previous year's plan. Variances should be identified and reasons given.
9.3 Comparison with national standards	The plan should include a review of the library service's performance in the previous year in relation to the national standards. Variances should be identified and reasons given. Further guidance will be issued shortly.
10 External and local influences 10.1 External influences 10.2 Local influences	<p>The plan should identify external influences that are germane to the development of the library service. This section should summarise the authority's response to the influences. The DCMS may issue guidance annually as to national policy areas or other influences to which library services should respond.</p> <p>Local influences, which may be external to the library service, may precipitate a change of priorities or pressure to curtail services. The plan should identify the influences and summarise the library service's response to them.</p>
11 The Way Ahead 11.1 Action plan - current year and next	In the light of the rolling three-year medium term strategic direction stated in Chapter 8, the action plan should be updated to reflect present intentions and expectations. It should cover the current financial year (already half way through) and the next in depth. It should concentrate on specific actions, firm timescales, and specific targets and identified responsibilities. The 'broad outline costs' of the previous plan's action plan in relation to the two years being planned need to be firmed up to show reliable estimates of cost.

CHAPTER AND SECTION HEADINGS	INDICATIVE CONTENTS
11.2 Action plan - third year	An outline action plan for year 3 should be created to reflect the medium term strategic direction. This should state the major service initiatives and give broad outlines of costs. It will be firmed up in future Annual library plans.
11.3 Performance targets - update	For key performance measures, the intended effect of implementing the action plans-should be reflected in the performance targets for the period of the medium term strategic direction. Targets based on national standards should be identified.

TIMETABLE FOR ROLLING FORWARD THE OVERALL PLAN

This shows the timetable for submission of Parts “A” & “B”, or Part “B” only. The relevant years for supporting statistics and the medium term strategy, action plan and targets are also shown.

Plan parts required			Relevant years for elements of Part A and/or Part B	
Submission Date (By)	Part		Section or Element of the Plan	Years Covered
September 2000	B		Performance Appraisal Action Plan Performance Targets	1999/00 2000/01-2001/02 2000/01-2002/03
September 2001	A		Performance Measures - Local Performance (trend) - Group/Sector Comparisons Medium Term Strategy	1996/97-2000/01 1996/97-1999/00 2001/02-2003/04
September 2001	B		Performance Appraisal Action Plan Performance Targets	2000/01 2001/02-2002/03 2001/02-2003/04