Management Board

Publication of performance and risk data in other public bodies

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Purpose
1. At its meeting on 28 April, the Board considered whether to publish the Performance and Risk Reports a year after the meeting to which they relate, subject to a review of whether any particular information should be withheld. The Board asked for more information about the publication arrangements for corporate performance and risk information in other Parliaments, Assemblies and Government Departments, to inform further discussion on this point. This paper provides summary information on a sample of public bodies.

Action for the Board
2. The Board is invited to take note of the information about other public bodies presented in paragraphs 4 to 11.

Consultation
3. The websites of the following organisations have been reviewed:
    - Scottish Parliament
    - National Assembly for Wales
    - Northern Ireland Assembly
    - Number 10 Downing Street
    - Environment Agency
    - Kent County Council

    In the time available, no officials have been contacted to check publication arrangements.

Conclusions
4. It is clear from the websites reviewed that the approach to publishing corporate performance and risk data varies considerably. Some organisations, such as the Scottish Parliament and Environment Agency, have a very open approach and publish detailed performance and risk data. Others publish no risk information at all and restrict their performance and financial data to that contained in annual reports and accounts. More detailed results are shown in paragraphs 5 to 11 below.

Detailed results

5. In the <u>Scottish Parliament</u> the Leadership Group[1] (LG) considers financial and organisational performance (and risk). These papers are not published as LG papers in the first instance but are published as part of the Chief Executive's Report to the Scottish Parliament Corporate Body. The February 2011 report[2] includes the following:

   - Updates on programmes and projects
   - Key performance indicators (linked to strategy/business plan)
   - Financial report (expenditure compared to budget; forecasts; invoice payment performance, and a commentary from the Director of Financial Resources)
   - Strategic risk register (including risk scores and mitigations in place).

6. Practice at the <u>National Assembly for Wales</u> is different. There is a regular "Management Board Update to the Commission", but this consists of a written narrative rather than numerical performance measures. The "Management Board Governance Discussion"[3] provides a commentary on performance and risk, although it does not include tables of figures.

7. The <u>Northern Ireland Assembly</u> appears not to publish any regular information on corporate performance and risk on the internet. The minutes of its Secretariat Management Group (broadly equivalent to the Commons Management Board) are available in hard copy on request, as are financial statements for projects and events. The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee *are* published online and these include some discussion about risk scores and the recommendations from audit reports.

8. <u>Central government departments</u> are part-way through a major change in the range of performance information published, as part of the Government's broader "transparency" agenda. At the present time Whitehall departments publish their "Structural Reform Plan Monthly Implementation Update" on Number 10's transparency portal.[4] These progress reports show:

   - The status of actions due to be completed in the month concerned
   - The status of actions due to be started in the month concerned
   - An explanation of deadlines missed in the month concerned
   - The status of missed deadlines from previous reports, with explanations

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[1] The Leadership Group replaced the Strategic Leadership Team and Operational Management Group in January 2011 and is broadly equivalent to the Commons Management Board

[2] http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/corporate/spcb/minutes/papers-11/ChiefExecutive-February.pdf

[3] http://www.assemblywales.org/abthome/abt-nafw/abt-commission/abt-commission-directorates/abt-commission-management-board.htm?act=dis&id=213281&ds=4/2011

[4] http://transparency.number10.gov.uk/ (still under development)

9. Another section of the portal explains how every department has its own information strategy outlining how it will share information and data and promote transparency. Input indicators list the ways they will measure the efficiency of policies and expenditure, and impact indicators set out the yardsticks by which people can judge if policies are actually working. Having reviewed several departments' pages it would appear that (a) much of the data being referred to is compiled on an annual basis only and (b) a good proportion is still under development.

10. The Environment Agency publishes its quarterly Corporate Performance Report on its website. This is described as an "open paper" and "not protectively marked". It contains details of key performance indicators, including their RAG status with explanations for indicators which are red or amber. A more detailed corporate scorecard is also published.[5] This has a one-page dashboard which summarises indicators along with another 20+ pages of supporting data. It is focused on both operational objectives and targets (e.g. reducing pollution) and internal measures (e.g. financial management). Crucially, this is published on the website *before* the relevant Board meeting.

11. Kent County Council publishes quarterly "Core Monitoring Reports" on its website.[6] These contain KPIs for each directorate of the council showing performance against local targets and national benchmarks, and also a RAG status. There would appear to be a lag in the publication of these documents (whether deliberate or not is unclear) since the latest report is for the quarter ended September 2010. Risk management information is not included in this report.

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[5] http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Business/Board_12May11_AgendaPapers.pdf
[6] https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/council-and-democracy/Transparency%20project/KCC%20Core%20Monitor%20Cabinet%20NOV10%20FINAL.pdf