

HOUSING LIN POLICY BRIEFING

Briefing on Comprehensive Area Assessments

ABOUT THIS BRIEFING

This briefing document offers an overview of the process with a discussion of implications for the work of the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (LIN).

The Audit Commission issued a consultation document on Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA) on 19 November 2007. The end of the consultation period was 15 February 2008. The CAA will replace the existing Comprehensive Performance Assessments (CPA) for local councils. The CAA Consultation document can be found at on the Audit Commission website at www.audit-commission.gov.uk

SUMMARY

The new assessment framework is for local councils and their partners. It will offer the first holistic assessment of the prospects for local areas and the quality of life for people living there. It will put the experience of people living in each area at the focus of the assessment, and examine the effectiveness of local partnerships in operation in each area. In particular, CAAs will:

- Look across councils, health bodies, police, fire and other agencies responsible for local services in any area, and will be developed jointly by the existing inspectorates.
- Build on demonstrable improvements, and will reduce the overall number of inspections.
- Draw on national performance targets.
- Continue to share good practice.
- Minimise the number of inspections, but make more challenging judgements.
- Be a catalyst for better outcomes for local people.

CAAs will also be:

- relevant to the quality of life of local people, and include more local targets,
- area and outcome focussed,
- constructive and forward-looking,
- joint and participative, drawing on views of local people.

REFERENCES TO HOUSING

The only direct references to housing in the consultation paper were within the section on 'Scope and Key Components of CAAs. This outlined the following:

- They will draw on the new national performance indicator set (see Appendix A)
- Priorities may include "increasing availability of affordable housing in the area".
- There will be new arrangements for the regulation of (social) housing developed by the Housing Corporation and the Audit Commission, and eventually by the new Office for Tenants and Social Landlords.

TIMETABLE

The timetable for the introduction of the CAAs will be:

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| April 2008 | New national indicators used for first time (see Appendix A) |
| June 2008 | New style LAAs signed |
| Summer 2008 | Second joint consultation document on CAAs |
| Early 2009 | Final CAA methodology published (after last round of CPAs) |
| October 2009 | First set of CAA results |

The new performance assessment framework is being produced to provide a clearer focus on the quality of life for local people. It will pay attention to "how well people whose circumstances make them vulnerable are engaged with local services".

The scoring will follow the current 1-4 system, but with both PERFORMING & IMPROVING being scored in terms of:

- Strongly
- Well
- Adequately
- Inadequately

IMPLICATIONS FOR HOUSING LIN

There is virtually no direct reference to housing, or the measurement of housing-related performance anywhere in the consultation document. However, this document is about the general approach, with relatively little discussion of any major service area.

The development of housing with care and support currently fall within three inspection regimes:

- Housing
- Social Care
- Health

In the light of the above, there could be a risk that cross-cutting programmes such as housing with care for older people and vulnerable adults will be at the margins of all three areas, rather than being recognised as a key component for improving the quality of life for many millions of people. To address this, the Housing LIN has published a useful guide for commissioners and providers of housing with care, *Connecting housing with the health and social care agenda: a person-centred approach*. Download a copy at www.icn.csip.org.uk/housing or order a hard copy at housing@csip.org.uk.

The CAA also makes reference to inspections of ‘partnership activities’ but does not illustrate examples of practice. For example, the potential link to local Joint Improvement Partnership on the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership. However, the Housing LIN, in partnership with CLG and the Audit Commission, will be releasing a report shortly containing further examples of practice in partnership working across housing and housing related care and support. The report will focus on joint commissioning, with a special emphasis on effective partnerships at a local level.

On other aspects relating to housing, it is surprising that there is no reference at all within the consultation document to the needs of owner-occupiers or shared ownership. In relation to housing, the CAA therefore appears to be currently confined to the social housing sector.

Furthermore, while there is mention of ‘affordable housing’, there is no specific reference to housing for frail older people, or people with long-term conditions. Information on the latter is included in the government’s recently published National Strategy on Housing for an Ageing Society, *Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods*, which post dates this consultation.

Lastly, for those local authorities looking to develop indicative local targets on the proportion of accommodation with care in their area compared to the over 75’s population, the Housing LIN has produced a helpful toolkit, *More Choice, Greater Voice* which provides an excellent starting point for development of your local strategy.

OTHER RELEVANT HOUSING LIN INFORMATION

All documents are available from the Housing LIN website at www.icn.csip.org.uk/housing

- *Local Area Agreements: Maximising the Potential for Housing for Older People (August 2007)*
- *Connecting Housing to the health and social care agenda: a person-centred approach (September 2007)*
- *More Choice, Greater Voice (2008) – a toolkit for local authorities for producing accommodation with care strategies*

If you would like to receive further briefings from the Housing LIN, or our enews *Housing with Care Matters* and/or information on our national/regional events and associated learning tools and resources, please email us at housing@csip.org.uk or write to Housing LIN, CSIP Networks, Room 3, Wellington House, 133-155 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UG or visit www.icn.csip.org.uk/housing.

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Appendix A – National Indicators especially relevant to housing related services

Safer communities

- *NI 39 Alcohol-harm related hospital admission rates PSA 25*
- *NI 40 Drug users in effective treatment PSA 25*
- *NI 18 Adult re-offending rates for those under probation supervision PSA 23*

Adult health and well-being

- *NI 119 Self-reported measure of people's overall health and wellbeing DH DSO*
- *NI 124 People with a long-term condition supported to be independent and in control of their condition DH DSO*
- *NI 125 Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation/intermediate care PSA 18*
- *NI 131 Delayed transfers of care from hospitals DH DSO*
- *NI 132 Timeliness of social care assessment DH DSO*
- *NI 133 Timeliness of social care packages DH DSO*
- *NI 134 The number of emergency bed days per head of weighted population DH DSO*
- *NI 136 People supported to live independently through social services (all ages) DH DSO*
- *NI 137 Healthy life expectancy at age 65 PSA 17*
- *NI 138 Satisfaction of people over 65 with both home and neighbourhood PSA 17*
- *NI 139 People over 65 who say that they receive the information, assistance and support needed to exercise choice and control to live independently PSA 17*

Tackling exclusion and promoting equality

- *NI 145 Adults with learning disabilities in settled accommodation PSA 16*
- *NI 146 Adults with learning disabilities in employment PSA 16*
- *NI 149 Adults in contact with secondary mental health services in settled accommodation PSA 16*
- *NI 150 Adults in contact with secondary mental health services in employment PSA 16*
- *NI 141 Number of vulnerable people achieving independent living CLG DSO*
- *NI 142 Number of vulnerable people supported to maintain independent living PSA17*

Stronger communities

- *NI 2 % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood PSA 21*

Local economy

- *NI 156 Number of households living in Temporary Accommodation PSA 20*
- *NI 158 % decent council homes CLG DSO*

Environmental sustainability

- *NI 187 Tackling fuel poverty – people receiving income based benefits living in homes with a low energy efficiency Defra, DSO*