The Performance Management *of* Education Services Staff *in* Scottish Local Authorities

An evaluation

Report to the Virtual Staff College Scotland

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Introduction

The study into performance management in the education services of Scottish local authorities was commissioned by the Virtual Staff College Scotland and undertaken by the Quality in Education Centre in the University of Strathclyde. The Professional Development Unit of the University facilitated the administration of the project.

The Research

The aim of the research was to investigate the extent to which local authority education services were implementing performance management practices in relation to staff. To set this in context the research investigated current issues which influence the performance of education services.

The research comprised a short self-evaluation questionnaire seeking responses to a range of factors which are components of performance management systems. This was sent to the Directors of Education of all 32 Scottish local authorities and 28 responses were received. They were completed by the Director or another appropriate education service manager. The survey was supplemented by four in-depth interviews with respondents to the survey or their representatives.

The research built on work undertaken by Professor Chris James and David Colebourne of the University of Glamorgan into the management of staff in Welsh Education Authorities.

James and Colebourne propose a model for performance management based on the key dimensions of accountability and development.

A Model of Performance Management of Staff in LEAs
(James and Colebourne 2003)
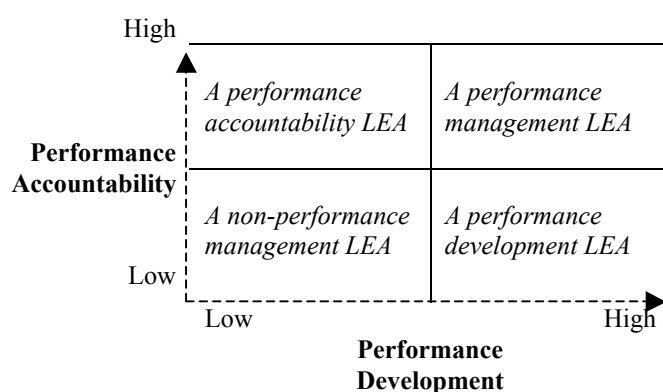
Accountability is about focusing individual performance to ensure organisational goals are achieved. Development is about developing capability, that is, qualities, skills and competences, to ensure performance improvement. A third dimension is having a strategic and integrated approach which is embedded within the other two dimensions.

Key findings

Education services are operating within statutory requirements which expect high degrees of public accountability, including managing the performance of their staff. It would therefore be expected that education services are developing performance management systems.

In relation to the current contextual issues, key findings which are constraints on education services and which emphasise the need for effective performance management systems and procedures are:

In some authorities, restructuring, which has led to integrating education with other services, has required changes to the roles of education services staff.

For all authorities, the requirements of joint policy-making and joint working with other services has impacted on all staff, from managers to frontline professionals.

The change in the role of education advisers and their redesignation as Quality Improvement Officers (QIOs), with greater emphasis on challenge to schools to improve, has had major implications for staff development and working practices for those in that role.

The salary differential which now exists between centrally employed education services staff and head teachers means that roles within the local authority are less attractive to head teachers. This may mean a lack of staff available to authorities for posts where the traditional pool for recruitment has been head teachers. If solutions are not identified this could have serious implications for the delivery of services by education departments.

Key findings in relation to performance management systems within Scottish local authority education services are:

In response to the self-evaluation questionnaire, 19 of the 28 respondents placed their service in the performance management organisation category, with the remainder on the boundaries of that category. Overall this presents a positive picture of education services in Scotland in relation to performance management of staff, though in many authorities the systems are in the process of development.

The strengths which were recognised across all respondents related to the existence of systems and processes for ensuring that staff were aware of the service's goals and that their performance was monitored in relationship to those goals. Likewise there was strong agreement that there were procedures in place to ensure that staff development needs were systematically recognised and met. Ownership by staff of these procedures and processes was reported. These were integrated into working practices through the process of improvement and service planning and annual staff review procedures.

However, having procedures and systems in place does not always guarantee that they will be systematically or effectively implemented. Procedures which monitor the effectiveness of the overall performance and development review processes are less likely to be in place.

The survey results indicated less agreement in relation to the use of quality systems and frameworks, coherent systems for managing performance across the local authority and evaluation of the performance management systems and procedures. Interviewees suggested that *Quality Management in Education (QMIE)* is becoming the standard quality framework within education services. There is potential for an education service to contribute effectively to the development of an authority's overall performance management system. This is important particularly in the light of increased joint policy-making and joint working in the delivery of services.

The survey results indicated more disagreement than agreement in relation to the use of competence frameworks. The negative response to competence frameworks does not reveal whether people think it is a good idea which they have not yet implemented, or whether they are opposed to the concept. Interviewees expressed reservations about the competence framework which had been presented at a VSCS seminar due to its complexity but also an interest in exploring its potential. Some expressed a preference for frameworks similar to the standards devised for teachers in Scotland.

Performance related pay (PRP) was the only item which received an overwhelmingly negative response; indeed, it was the only one where the majority 'strongly disagreed'. One authority had introduced an element of PRP for chief officers only. However, at the moment it is not a factor which contributes to the management of staff performance in local authorities.

In relation to these findings the Virtual Staff College Scotland may wish to consider the following actions:

Facilitation of sharing of information between education authorities in relation to performance and development review, for the purposes of developing ideas and procedures in the pursuit of continuous improvement.

Facilitation of sharing of approaches to developing quality management systems between education authorities, in particular, in relation to the use of QMIE. More generally VSCS could explore the possibilities of collaboration between education and other authority services in the light of the requirements of joint policy-making and joint working.

The provision of further opportunities to explore the issue of competence and other frameworks while remaining sensitive to the preferences and needs of education services.

Issues identified for further research

A number of issues were raised during the research but not investigated as part of this study. These were:

The extent of authority-wide performance management systems and the inter-relationship between such systems and those in place in education services.

The nature and use of profiles and portfolios for monitoring staff performance and for staff development.

The relationship between elected members and education services and the role of elected members in relation to the management of education services staff.

1. Introduction

The Evaluation of Performance Management of Staff in Scottish Local Authorities was commissioned by the Virtual Staff College Scotland (VSCS). The UK Virtual Staff College (VSC), launched in 1999, has as its mission "to promote the professional development and competence of all staff working in education management in local authorities and through this increase the capacity of LEAs to respond to change" (VSC website).

Research undertaken by the University of Glamorgan into performance management of local education authority staff in Wales was presented at a VSCS seminar on 1 May 2003. The VSC competence framework for educational managers was also presented at this seminar. The University of Glamorgan researchers agreed that a questionnaire they had devised as an outcome of their research could be used in Scotland for the purposes of identifying the position of local authority education departments on the model they are developing. Replicating this part of the University of Glamorgan's research will enable comparisons to be made between the two countries.

The Quality in Education Centre, University of Strathclyde, was commissioned to undertake the analysis of the questionnaires, conduct interviews and report on the findings. The Professional Development Unit of the University of Strathclyde, as a partner of VSCS, agreed to facilitate the research.

The aim of the research was to investigate the extent to which local authority education services were implementing performance management practices.

The key question for the research was:

> To what extent do key personnel within local authority education services perceive progress in their departments on accountability and development dimensions of performance management?

To set this question in context, the following issues were investigated:

> Changes in the past 5 years in education services and the implications for education services staff
> The implications of the agreement *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* (Scottish Executive 2001)
> Issues of recruitment and retention of staff for education services and implications for the delivery of a quality service.

The research was carried out during September and October 2003.

This report draws on the research undertaken by the University of Glamorgan, presents a brief review of performance management issues, sets the Scottish context for performance management within local authority education services, explains the research methodology and presents the findings of the study.

2.   Research by the University of Glamorgan

The University of Glamorgan is one of the partner universities of the Virtual Staff College, (the others being the Universities of Exeter, Surrey Roehampton, Manchester and Strathclyde).

The team from the University of Glamorgan has undertaken research in relation to improving the capacity of local education authorities (LEAs) by investigating the contexts and practices of professional development of LEA staff. The research was part of the LEA Professional Assessment and Development Initiative which was undertaken in collaboration with the Virtual Staff College and the Confederation of Education Service Managers in Wales. This was a two-year project funded by the Welsh Assembly Government from 2001 to 2003.

The study into performance management was carried out by interviewing relevant key personnel in 20 of the 22 Welsh local education authorities.   The analysis of this data in the light of key dimensions of performance management theory led to the proposal of a model of performance management in LEAs.

The key dimensions are, firstly, focusing individual performance to ensure organisational goals are achieved – which is concerned with **accountability**. The second dimension is developing capability, that is, qualities, skills and competences to ensure performance improvement – which is concerned with **development**. The key elements of the accountability and development dimensions have been used to construct an instrument for analysing an authority's position on these dimensions and these form the basis of the questionnaire used in the VSCS evaluation (See appendix 1) (James and Colebourne 2003).

James and Colebourne propose the following model for classifying the performance of education authority staff.

**Figure 1: A Model of Performance Management of Staff in LEAs
(James and Colebourne 2003)**
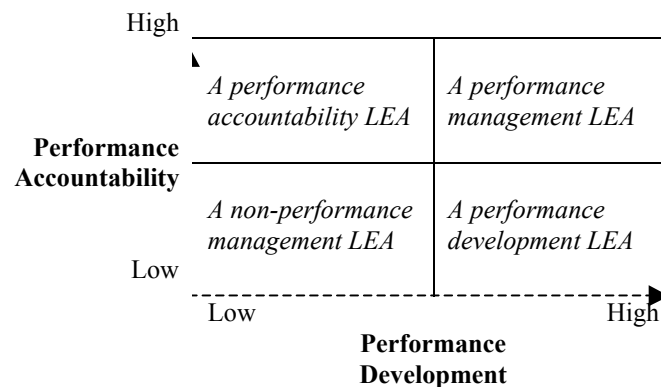
A third dimension in performance management is a strategic and integrated approach to performance management where there is ownership of the system both by the managers running it and all staff involved in the process.   This is seen as an essential component of the other two dimensions.

3.   Performance Management

James and Colebourne (2003) point out that systems to support the managing of performance of people in work organisations have had a long history, from merit rating in the 1950s, through management by objectives in the 1960s and 70s, to performance appraisal in the 1980s. Performance Management as it emerged in the 1990s focused on two main dimensions: focusing the individual on organisational goals and developing capability.

They cite the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM 1994) [Now the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development - CIPD] in outlining the key characteristics of a performance management system:
> the communication of the organisation's objectives to its employees
> the setting of individual and department performance targets that relate to organisational goals
> a formal review process that examines progress towards achieving targets as measurable outputs, responsibilities and development outcomes
> link between performance management and pay (James and Colebourne 2003 p5-6).

The underlying assumption is that if people know and understand the objectives of an organisation and are effectively managed and developed to deliver those objectives driven by appropriate rewards then this will lead to improvements in the effectiveness of the organisation. It is argued that the mechanistic application of these basics is unlikely to be successful, and that performance management needs to be integrated with other service management and human resource policies (Rogers 1999 p4).

Truss (2001), writing on the wider issues of human resource management, points out that in HRM the tendency has been to identify 'best practice' and to encourage others to follow those best practices. She argues that this is based on the assumption "that simply having the appropriate HRM policies inevitably means that they will be effectively implemented and will produce the intended results in terms of individual behaviour and, at one remove, firm performance" (Truss 2001 p1126). Policies and practices are always enacted within an organisational context and informal organisational structures will be as influential as formal structures. The principles need to be applied within the value systems of organisations and within ethical guidelines (Rogers 1999 p11). As James and Colebourne suggest, the procedures and practices need to be part of a strategic and integrated approach – owned by those participating in the system.

Therefore, while reviewing the extent to which local authorities have in place performance management systems, it is important to take account of both the formal and informal structures and the values which influence the effectiveness of these systems.

Rogers (1999) points out that, within local government, the term 'performance management' has been used in different ways: from a very broad, general descriptor not related to systems or processes; through systems which monitor only organisational performance and systems with a view to continuous improvement, and procedures which focus on individual performance concentrating on development and training needs; to those which integrate both organisational and individual performance (Rogers 1999 pp17-

18; 129). His view is that local authorities have tended to seek to integrate both organisational performance and individual performance.

This section considers a few key features of performance management systems.

The research for VSCS concentrates on managing the performance of individuals without, as indicated above, ignoring the wider context. The organisational system for people development and support may be set within a recognised performance or quality framework, for example Investors in People. Frameworks related to Best Value and quality indicators in education are discussed in Section 4.

Within a performance management system individuals should have a clear statement of their personal goals in terms of work objectives which are in keeping with their own service's/team's goals, and ultimately in keeping with the organisational goals. For the individual a key part of making effective contributions is the appraisal process, which reviews performance on a regular basis. This may be based on some statement of the purpose of their job. In this respect, Rogers highlights the risk of service or team goals taking precedence and these goals becoming the manager's goals at the expense of personal goals and targets (Rogers 1999 p134).

One of the ways of tackling this has been to move to competence frameworks, where roles are defined in terms of the skills and competences required to fulfil the role rather than a delineation of tasks or task outcomes. For example, for education managers, the Virtual Staff College has developed an "Educational Management Functional Map" following the functional analysis approach developed for vocational qualifications (NVQ/SVQ). This has been used to derive competence-based job descriptions for education managers at strategic and operational level (VSC 2003).

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES), in consultation with a wide variety of stakeholders, developed and published advisory standards for those whose role is quality improvement in schools. These are broadly based, outlining the core responsibilities and roles of improvement professionals, professional knowledge and understanding and skills and attributes

There has been extensive debate between the 'sceptics' and the 'advocates' of competence approaches to defining people's abilities.   The most obvious example of competence-based approaches is that used to underpin National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications with the prime use being the accreditation of competence in the workplace. It has been seen as most beneficial in training in occupational areas which traditionally were not supported with qualifications (Rogers 1999 p142). There has been greater scepticism about the relevance of competence-based approaches for wider educational purposes (Hyland 1997) and as a model for the development of senior managers and professionals (Hyland 1997 p495; Rogers 1999 p143).

One concern has been that, once defined, statements of competence become a limiting factor, particularly when roles and job expectations are changing in response to both internal and external factors (Rogers 1999 p43). For example, in local government there has been greater focus on community governance and leadership and for education advisers there has been an increasing requirement for 'challenge' as well as 'support' in

their roles. Competences need constantly to be redefined, and therefore a set of national competences is less likely to be acceptable than locally defined competence frameworks.

Other concerns expressed about competence approaches are that competence statements focus on the 'lowest common denominator' rather than excellence or improvement; they are 'atomistic' because of the need to endlessly define performance; people adopt a 'tick box' rather than reflective approach; and there is an 'obsession with evidence' (Hyland 1997 passim).

In contrast, those who support the use of competence frameworks argue that their benefit goes beyond accrediting what a person 'can do' or even 'has done' and they can be used flexibly to define job roles, support induction, identify achievements and development needs and manage poor performance (Lofthouse 2001). This should enable a more reflective approach rather than the more limited perceptions of the process identified above.

The outcomes of appraisal should be an identification of success or failure in reaching targets, strengths and weaknesses of the individual, suitable rewards or action including professional development or training, either to strengthen weaknesses or to further develop the career of the individual. However, these are all complex issues and can be dealt with both effectively or ineffectively depending on the commitment and sensitivity of those involved. A key issue for the commitment of individuals is the value placed on individual as well as organisational goals.

It was noted above that a characteristic of performance management systems is a link between performance and pay, though Rogers notes that this connection tends to be stronger in American than British sources (Rogers 1999 p116). Rewards related to appraisal can be in terms of decisions about promotion or the award of bonuses or in progression to the next point in the salary scale. Rogers highlights the 'fierce debate' that exists about the effects of performance related pay and its impact on motivation and performance improvement. He cites the Audit Commission's recommendations that appraisal interviews for performance and development assessment should be separate from those related to performance related pay settlements (Rogers 1999 p141). This may be a false distinction as the individuals involved are unlikely to separate the two. Once again, effectiveness depends on the conditions surrounding the scheme. Within local government nationally negotiated pay deals and limited funds available to offer incentives are likely to militate against effective performance related pay schemes.

Appraisal schemes that seek to be developmental need to be backed by the commitment of staff and resources to appropriate training and development; monitoring of the scheme's effectiveness, and other support systems such as peer review and mentoring and regular feedback rather than relying on an annual review.

4.   The Scottish Context

The research was carried out in the context of a number of issues.

Change both to local authority structures and organisation as part of the Modernising Government agenda

Change to career structures and job roles as part of the implementation of *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* (Scottish Executive 2001)

Concerns over recruitment and succession planning

Quality management frameworks for supporting and monitoring the management of the performance of services in local government including Best Value and, in particular in relation to education functions, the implementation of the improvement agenda of the *Standards in Scottish Schools etc Act [2000]* (Scottish Executive 2000a).

Restructuring of Local Authority Services

The Modernising Government agenda has included a restructuring of local authority departments and committees and this has led to changes in organisational contexts of education services. For example, one-time education departments with directors of education may now be amalgamated with other services such as 'culture' or 'leisure' or 'recreation' and have a 'corporate' or 'executive director' at the head, with a broader remit than education. The Welsh study identified change and variety in internal organisation structures within education services and in the political structures, all of which required a high degree of flexibility in the working practices of authority staff. As organisations change, continuous updating and development of staff to ensure effective performance is important.

McCrone Agreement: A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century

Significant developments have taken place in relation to the career and professional development of teachers as outlined in *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century: Agreement reached following recommendations made in the McCrone Report* (Scottish Executive 2001).   These have included the introduction of Chartered Teacher status and from August 2003 the contractual requirement for all teachers to undertake 35 hours of CPD per annum outwith the prescribed working week of 35 hours. This may comprise a variety of activities but should support personal, school and National Priorities. This development is supported and guided by a process of professional review and CPD planning with the teacher's immediate manager.

This has implications for education managers employed centrally in local authority services as it is their responsibility to ensure that appropriate review and development frameworks are in place to enable teachers to complete this requirement.

However, the McCrone Agreement indicated that there should also be a review of the job description and the pay scale for Advisers. This was undertaken by the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) and issued as SNCT 12 in April 2002. It took account of the changing role of Advisers in the light of the requirement on authorities to secure improvement in the quality of school education as laid out in *the Standards in*

Scotland's Schools etc Act [2000].   It redesignated 'Advisers' as 'Quality Improvement Officers' with effect from August 2002, and, in line with teacher conditions, introduced a contractual 35 hours of CPD per annum and an annual CPD plan and record. As with teachers, this was to be effective from August 2003.

Recruitment and Succession Planning

The 1998 School Census identified that between 70% and 75% of teachers in Scotland were over 40 years old, and clearly in the intervening years this age group has moved nearer retirement. This necessitates a drive to recruit many new younger teachers to ensure there are sufficient teachers to replace the older group as they retire (Scottish Executive 2000b).

Given that education services recruit from the senior posts in schools for many educational manager and former adviser posts, they face a similar age profile. It is recognised that there is a need to ensure that new managers/leaders can be recruited and developed to take the service forward.

Quality Management Frameworks

High levels of accountability are expected from public services. Local authorities are required to work within Best Value frameworks and *The Local Government Scotland Act [2003]* (Scottish Executive 2003a) now lays out local government's statutory duties to secure Best Value. Additionally, education services operate within the improvement planning framework laid out in the *Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act [2000]*.

Best Value

Best Value is a performance framework within which local authorities, and other public bodies, seek to secure continuous improvement. Scottish local authorities have been developing Best Value principles since 1997, supported by the Best Value Task Force. As indicated above these duties are now statutory. They are:

> "the duty of Best Value, being to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in performance (while maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost); and in making those arrangements and securing that balance, to have regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness, the equal opportunities requirements and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development)
> the duty to achieve break-even in trading accounts subject to mandatory disclosure
> the duty to observe proper accounting practices
> the duty to make arrangements for the reporting to the public of the outcome of the performance of functions" (Scottish Executive 2003b p1).

The Best Value Task Force laid out the characteristics of authorities seeking to achieve Best Value in 1999 (Scottish Executive 1999); these form the basis of guidance in meeting the new statutory requirements.

The attributes were identified as:

> "Commitment to Best Value and acceptance of the key principles of accountability, ownership, continuous improvement and transparency
> Leadership at elected member and senior officer level
> An effective performance management and planning framework
> A programme of reviews
> A framework for public performance reporting
> Commitment to equality issues".

In relation to Best Value, *The Local Government Scotland Act [2003]* builds on the work of the Best Value Task Force but places greater emphasis on continuous improvement. Audit Scotland is responsible for developing pilot 'Best Value Audits', which will eventually take place on a three-year cycle. The Accounts Commission and Audit Scotland, who have a statutory responsibility for auditing local authorities in Scotland, are consulting on this new audit of Best Value in the light of the new legislation (www.audit-scotland.gov.uk).

In the guidance for *The Local Government Scotland Act [2003]*, performance management is under the heading 'Sound Governance and the Management of Resources'. As noted above, performance management relates to all aspects of performance of an organisation, but within that context, local authorities wishing to secure Best Value, will demonstrate:

> "that employees are treated as a key strategic resource and that the authority ensures that it has the organisational capacity to implement its plans to make full use of its staff. Staffing requirements are explicitly related to strategic and operations objectives in terms of numbers, skills, knowledge, deployment, structure etc.
> that the authority ensures that all employees are managed effectively and efficiently, that they know what is expected of them, their performance is regularly assessed, and they are assisted in improving
> that management monitors the morale and motivation of staff and takes action to address problems. Staff feel that they are valued and that their skills and knowledge are used effectively and to the full" (Scottish Executive 2003b p9).

The Accounts Commission/Audit Scotland developed an audit to help councils determine how they were progressing in the implementation of performance management and planning (PMP) frameworks. In 1999 the Accounts Commission undertook a review of how councils were progressing across a selection of three services of their own choice. The PMP arrangements are required to provide answers to four key questions against ten criteria, as outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The PMP Framework (Accounts Commission 2000 p2)

Q1: How do we know we are doing the right things?
1. We understand the needs, expectations and priorities of all our stakeholders
2. We have decided on the best ways to meet these needs, expectations and priorities
3. We have detailed plans for achieving our goals
4. Our plans are clearly based on the resources we have available

Q2: How do we know we're doing things right?
5. We make best use of our available resources
6. We make best use of our people
7. We monitor and control our overall performance
8. We have sound financial control and reporting

Q3: How do we plan to improve?
9. We actively support continuous improvement

Q4: How do we account for our performance?
10. We provide our stakeholders with the information they need about our services and performance and listen to their feedback.

The outcomes in relation to criterion 6 'We make best use of our people' are relevant to this study because of the focus on the performance management of staff. The findings of the review were that:

"Most services were doing well in people management. Auditors found that:
   95% of services held accurate and up-to-date information on staff numbers, turnover, absence levels and overtime
   70% of services had identified the key measures needed to assess staff performance
   the use of staff development and appraisal process and training plans was widespread
   two-thirds of services could point to improvements in people performance"
(Accounts Commission 2000 p6).

This presents a positive picture, though it relates to council selected services and does not identify individual services.

The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act [2000]

The Act (Scottish Executive 2000a) provides a framework for improvement planning which requires local authorities to set out and report on improvement objectives in relation to the National Priorities for Education (Scottish Executive 2000c) and other related targets. Local authority education departments are responsible for ensuring the quality of educational provision in their areas and enabling schools to continuously improve and implement the National Priorities. The Act also makes provision for the HM Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) to carry out external evaluations of the effectiveness of local authorities in relation to their quality assurance of educational provision and support to schools.

These inspections are carried out in partnership with Audit Scotland. To support this process, HMIE and the Accounts Commission for Scotland, working in consultation with Directors of Education, developed a framework of quality indicators to be used both for

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self-evaluation and external evaluation, incorporating the principles of Best Value - *Quality Management in Education* (Scottish Executive 2000d). This document provides the framework required for the Performance Review and Public Performance Reporting elements of Best Value.

As with the PMP audit referred to above, *Quality Management in Education* is based on broad questions and indicators:

How are we doing?
How do we know?
What are we going to do now?
Now for the next steps …

Within the QMIE framework the issue of performance management of staff occurs in relation to two quality indicators. With respect to 'effectiveness of leadership and management' important issues are relationships with people and developing staff. For example, evidence of using staff development and review to contribute to a positive ethos, recognition of achievements of individuals and teams, and procedures for managing the performance of individuals and teams are all indicators of quality leadership (pp31-33).

More explicitly, within QMIE a key element is the 'deployment and effectiveness of centrally employed staff' (key area 3.2) (p24). The document suggests clear indicators and illustrations of practices in relation to the performance management of staff within authorities' education services (pp55-58). For example, under staff effectiveness in achieving strategic aims and planned priorities, expected features include:

"an effective system of appraisal/job review and retained accurate and up-to-date evidence of effective performance in the job
staff knowing how their performance is assessed, by whom, and when
staff assisted in improving their performance" (p58).

In response to a question about officers having up-to-date knowledge and skills, the following features might be identified during the process of evaluation:

"staff capabilities sustained and developed by identification, classification and matching of staff competencies and their needs
effective management of recruitment and career development
a review of the effectiveness of training
a training and development needs analysis
a clear indication of how training needs will be met at corporate or service level" (p58).

Inspection reports for local authority education services that have been inspected since 2001 were studied to discover what evaluation HMIE had made on the quality of education departments' management of their staff. Observations drawn from these reports obviously represent the status at the time of the report and not any developments since.

Taking into account the comments made in relation to the two relevant quality indicators, namely, effective leadership and effectiveness of centrally employed staff, all 20 of the reports considered had some reference to staff appraisal/review or staff development but less than half had comments under both indicators. In summary, at the time of inspection, three authorities appeared to have no system of review and staff development in place and three were reported as having comprehensive systems for all staff in place. In a further

three, senior staff had been included in council-wide review processes, but this process had not yet been implemented for other staff in education services. In three cases, the senior staff were involved in a review process and while a system was in place for other staff, not all had taken part. Five were at various stages of development, including moving from a departmental approach to a council-wide system. Other comments in reports referred to training and development being needed or being given, especially in the light of changing structures and roles, but with no reference to this being embedded within a wider performance management process. This presents a somewhat patchy picture of developments in relation to the performance management of local authority education staff.

The overview presented in this section of the context in which education services operate indicates strongly that local authority education services are operating within statutory frameworks which imply that they should have in place many of the features of a performance management system. The research project aimed to investigate the extent to which local authority education services were implementing performance management practices.

5. Research Methods and Questions for the Scottish Study

Research Methods

The research was carried out by a questionnaire survey of all 32 local authority education services. The questionnaire was the instrument devised by the University of Glamorgan. This is included as Appendix 1 (with the responses inserted). Responses were received from 28 authorities.

The survey was supported by qualitative data collected by interview. Representatives of four education departments were interviewed either by telephone or face to face. Authorities were chosen to include urban and rural, large and small and to represent both east and west of Scotland.

Research Questions

The key question for the research was:

> To what extent do key senior personnel within local authority education services perceive progress in their departments on the accountability and development dimensions of performance management?

This was addressed by the questionnaire survey.

To set this key question within the contexts outlined in the preceding chapters the following questions were explored during interview:

> What changes have occurred in the past 5 years in relation to the structure of the education service and what have been the implications for education services staff?

> What have been the implications of the 'McCrone' settlement for education services staff in terms of changing job roles and professional development?

> What is the position with respect to recruitment and retention of staff for education services and are there implications for the delivery of a quality service?

To provide further insight into the questionnaire responses the interviewees were also asked:

> What systems and practices are in place for the performance management of staff?

This encompassed:
> the use of quality frameworks – the interrelationship between different frameworks, their benefits and limitations
> procedures for staff appraisal/review
> the process of individual target setting in line with service goals
> identifying and meeting of staff development needs
> competence frameworks
> performance related pay

the extent to which people feel ownership of the performance management process (including improvement and development plans and the appraisal/review process).

It is recognised that with such a small number of interviews the responses must be seen primarily as illustrative rather than representative of the wider Scottish picture.

6.   Findings

Introduction

Firstly, this section presents the views expressed during the interviews in relation to the discussion of the wider contextual issues, namely, recent changes to structures and professional roles, and recruitment and retention of staff. Although, chronologically, the interviews took place after the survey, some of the topics explored during the interviews form an important part of understanding the context in which performance management occurs. Therefore, logically, they precede the findings of the survey.

The results of the questionnaire survey are then presented. The discussion of these findings draws further on interview data in relation to performance management practices for illustrative purposes.

Changes to education services

It was noted above (p9) that a feature of local government re-organisation had been the mergers of different services and in some authorities education services had merged with, for example, 'culture' or 'leisure' services. However, only one of the authorities selected for interview for this study had been integrated with another service. One had had part of the service move to another department; a third had restructured internally. The fourth remained largely unchanged in terms of structure in the context of the council 'streamlining' other services.

However, all emphasised the importance of changes which were taking place in relation to different services working together. The representative of the authority which had experienced changes to its structure believed that the changes had facilitated more effective joint working. The other three interviewees emphasised that groups came together from different services to work together even though they were not integrated into the same department. All spoke of joint policy-making and joint working to promote integrated children's services, bringing together managers and frontline staff from education, health, social work, police and voluntary organisations. One spoke of joint working on sports development. The New Community Schools initiative provided an example of where joint working was essential.

For all four authorities this had major implications for staff development and two spoke in particular of seeking opportunities for joint training. Key issues are understanding each other's roles, the constraints within which each one works, acknowledgement of each other's strengths, and valuing the role the other person has. Services could learn from each other. All acknowledged that they were in early stages of joint working but that, as 'old attitudes' changed, there was great potential for improved delivery of services.

Education service managers have a key role in promoting and managing the process of joint working and their development needs should be recognised and supported.

The fact that education services across the country were located differently in relation to other council services was not considered as having any implications for the quality of education provision. It was, however, considered beneficial that they were aware of how

other authorities were working and that there was opportunity to share the benefits and drawbacks of different ways of working.

The view was expressed that the creation of 32 authorities, instead of the previous 12, had a bigger impact on how the service runs than education departments being structured differently. It was recognised by both a large and a smaller authority that smaller authorities are required to work differently from larger authorities. Often one person had multiple roles and responsibilities while in a large authority there may be more than one person for one aspect of education delivery. The smallness of some authorities was seen to be a disadvantage in that there was potentially greater pressure on individuals. As one respondent commented, "staff development is arguably the most important thing you do, but because you don't do it every day it can slip down the agenda". Or, indeed, personal development is something which can "slip off the edge of the desk".

'McCrone Agreement' and the role of advisers

Although SJNC 12 (April 2002) had announced that advisers were to become known as Quality Improvement Officers, two of the authorities interviewed had retained the title 'adviser'. Two had adopted the title 'quality improvement officer (QIO)' to give a clear signal that the role had changed. All four spoke of the need for the development of advisers to focus more on improvement and challenge in schools, rather than support in terms of staff and curriculum development. One authority indicated that they had already been developing a stronger quality assurance role for advisers and so the change was less demanding. It was noted that some advisers had been in the traditional advisory role for many years and the change required a careful review of their work and what they wanted to do. An area of concern for some was the change from delivering teacher staff development, mainly because some advisers did not want to give this up but also because time was no longer available for them to do this.

SJNC 12 also introduced the idea of a contractual 35 hours of CPD per annum for Quality Improvement Officers, supported by review and a CPD plan and record. In one of the authorities advisers were appointed on teachers' conditions of service (though with reduced holidays); therefore, this requirement had been incorporated as a consequence of the teachers' settlement. It was not a requirement for other education managers appointed on different conditions of service. One of the other authorities suggested that there was not the same external pressure to provide a framework for CPD for central services staff as there was for teachers. The view was also expressed that there were so many demands in the new role that it would be some time before a framework for CPD for QIOs would be developed. Another authority was working on producing a development framework and CPD portfolio for centrally employed education staff, including QIOs, using a similar approach to that developed for teachers.

The four authorities were at different stages in taking forward the requirements of SJNC 12 and this is no doubt reflected across the country.

Recruitment and retention of staff

A major implication of the McCrone settlement for teachers was raised by all interviewees. Authorities traditionally recruit from head teachers for managers' and advisers' posts. The pay rises for head teachers could not be matched in local authorities

and therefore this would produce a recruitment problem. Two of the authorities were trying to recruit advisers at the time of the interview and the interviewees spoke of difficulties in attracting suitable applicants. One, who had not tried to recruit recently, commented, "You have to wonder who will come in the future. It is a big imponderable." One described it as "a big issue for the education service" and another "a nightmare". While all indicated that the role of those working centrally in the education service was substantially different from working in schools, it required people who knew and understood schools and who had experience of management at senior levels. This was important, in particular for the credibility of advisers/Quality Improvement Officers who would go into schools and challenge head teachers on improving aspects of their school, or who were required to manage new educational initiatives.

One authority, however, held the view that principal teachers could be recruited as Quality Improvement Officers. The new pay scale for QIOs was attractive to principal teachers and a suitable CPD programme would ensure they had the skills, knowledge and confidence to do the job. Other managerial posts which required the experience of head teachers could be filled on a secondment basis, thus allowing head teachers to return to school at the end of secondment to pursue their career within school. This had budgetary implications in that the salary for secondment had to be attractive.

While the approach adopted by the last authority appears to have found a way round some of the problems, it is important to note this is a larger urban authority where there are larger scale operations and a bigger pool of staff resources. Smaller authorities may not have time or resources to invest in the type of staff development considered necessary to equip principal teachers to undertake roles which would previously have recruited from the head teacher pool.

There was little concern about retention of education services staff, though it was acknowledged by one authority that good staff often moved on to promoted posts in other authorities.

It is recognised that this represents the view from only four authorities but comments from the interviewees suggest that these concerns might be found across the country. There is a real concern as to how authorities can attract suitable staff to maintain an effective service. While not a focus of the survey element of this study, which concentrates on the performance and development of those in already in post, recruitment is a major element of performance management – without enough, suitably qualified and experienced staff an organisation cannot perform.

The four accounts of the context in which education services operate suggest that they face the challenge of regular change in ways of working, changes to roles of key staff and, for some, difficulties in recruitment and succession planning. Clarity of goals, understanding of what the service has to deliver, a clear understanding of one's own and other people's roles, recognition of new knowledge and skills required and opportunities to develop them are all essential to effective working. All are key components of effective systems for managing the performance of staff.
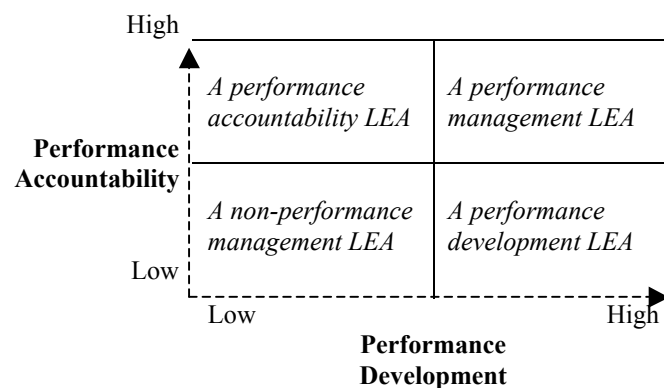
Questionnaire Survey

Responses were received from 28 authorities. The questionnaires were completed by people in a variety of roles. Ten came from individuals who held the position of director of education, or education combined with another service. Fourteen came from individuals who reported to the equivalent of the director of education and four who reported to a head of service or manager.

The questionnaire asked respondents to give their own views, and it is possible that the rank of the respondents affected the type of response that they made, but without further investigation within each authority, it is not possible to substantiate this view. One authority did arrange for more than one person to respond - a person who had a strategic perspective and three who had operational perspectives. (Only the strategic perspective has been included in the analysis which follows as that was the focus of the study and each authority had only one respondent). Two of the operational respondents tended to disagree with the statements more than their colleagues, thereby suggesting a more negative perception of the performance management processes. This indicates that it might be interesting for education services to seek out the perceptions of people at different levels within the organisational structure.

Individuals respond differently to the opportunity to agree or strongly agree with a statement and this further limitation of the instrument should be recognised. The data gives a representation of where respondents believe their services lie on the proposed model.

The Mapping of education authorities on the Performance Management model

The model proposed by James and Colebourne was presented as figure 1 on page 2 and is replicated here.

High

A performance accountability LEA	*A performance management LEA*
A non-performance management LEA	*A performance development LEA*

Performance Accountability

Low

Low   High

Performance Development

Organisations which are placed in the top right quadrant of the model are those which have in place processes for both staff accountability and development. Both are deemed necessary to promote improvement.

The mean scores across each of the factors was calculated for each authority and mapped on to this model. The results are shown in Figure 3. It should be noted that the factor related to performance related pay was omitted from the calculation as the overwhelming response to this issue was negative (see Table 1 and Figures 4 and 5).

Figure 3: Mapping of education services by education officials on accountability and development dimensions of Performance Management Model[1]

High
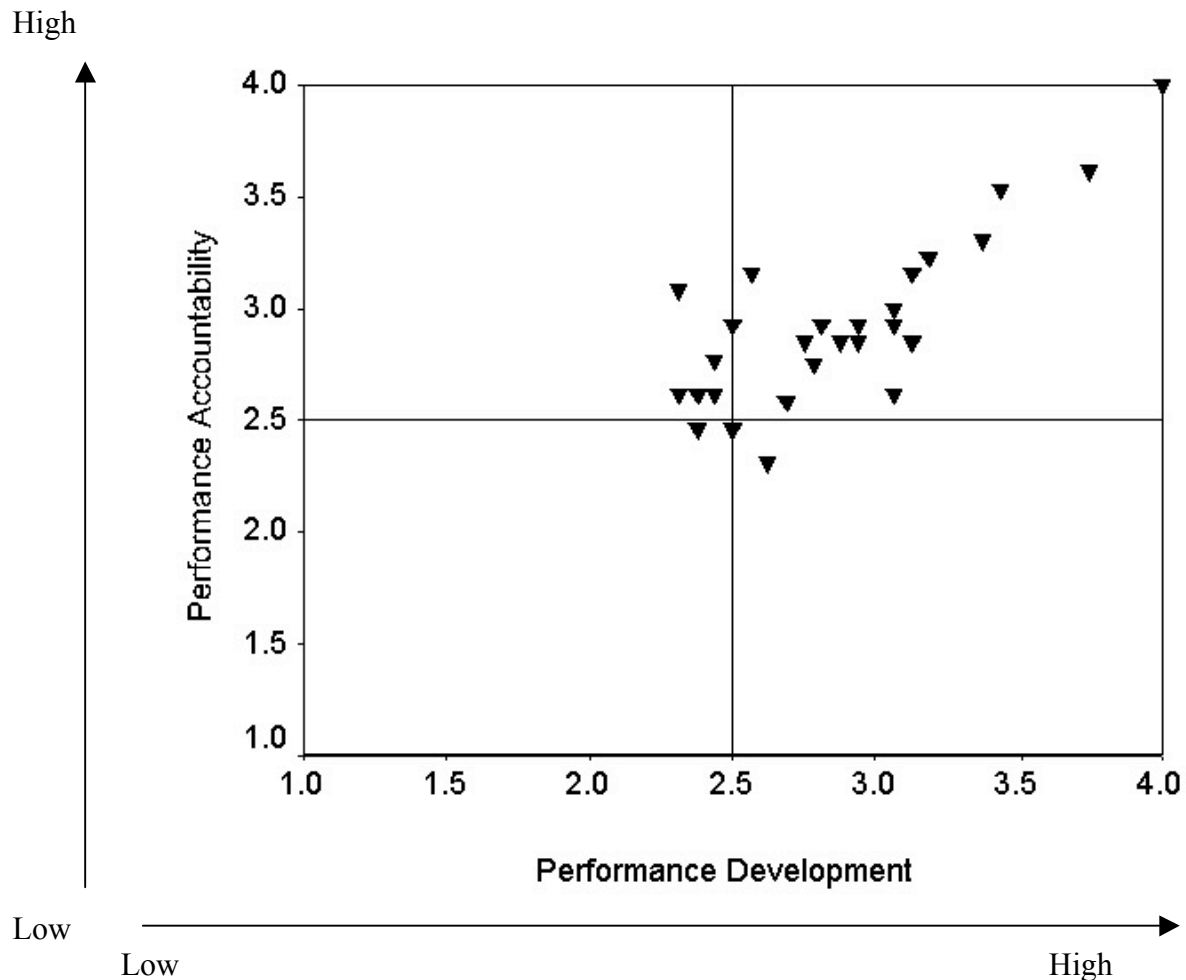
Note 1: maximum possible score on each dimension is 4 and minimum is 1.

Note 2: two authorities scored the same mean scores on both accountability (3.063) and development (2.615) measures and are represented by one symbol.

This presents a picture of the majority of authorities moving towards established procedures for managing the performance of staff. Those within the top left quadrant are indicating that they perceived themselves as still developing the systems for identifying and providing opportunities for staff development and training needs, but are slightly stronger, for example, on monitoring targets and performance. Those in the bottom two quadrants are suggesting that they perceive themselves as lower on procedures for monitoring the performance of staff.

Overall this presents a positive picture of education services in Scotland in relation to performance management of staff, though in many authorities systems are still being developed.

The individual factors

Tables 1 and 2 and Figures 4 to 6 present the responses to each factor in the questionnaire. This helps clarify the different positions on the map and shows those areas which are less

developed. The responses have been conflated into agree and disagree. While the introduction to the questionnaire explained that the focus was education services, it is recognised that the use of LA in some of the factors may have led to responses which attempted to give a wider view than the education service and this is commented on where appropriate.

Table 1 : Agreement/disagreement on performance accountability measures

	ACCOUNTABILITY	Agree	Disagree
1	There is an integrated approach to ensuring that individual performance is directed towards achieving the LA's goals.	26	2
2	The LA's goals are communicated to its employees.	28	0
3	Individual performance targets relate to the LA's goals.	27	1
4	Competence frameworks are used in setting the performance targets of the individual.	11	17
5	Individual targets are expressed in terms of measurable outputs and responsibilities.	23	5
6	Individual members of staff use profiles/portfolios to record progress in achieving their performance targets.	15	13
7	There is a procedure for monitoring an individual's progress towards achieving their performance targets.	27	1
8	There is a link between performance requirements and pay.	1	26
9	Individuals take responsibility for how their performance affects the whole LA.	22	6
10	There is a coherent and unified system for the performance accountability of individuals in operation across the whole LA.	14	14
11	Quality systems e.g. IIP, are used by the LA in supporting the performance accountability of individuals in the LA.	21	7
12	Individuals have a sense of ownership of LA's performance accountability procedures.	23	4
13	Elected members fully understand the procedures for the performance accountability of staff in the LA.	11	16
14	Performance accountability procedures for individuals are regularly evaluated.	17	9

Note: Items 8, 11, 12, 13 and 14 had missing responses

Figure 4: Agreement/disagreement on Accountability Measures
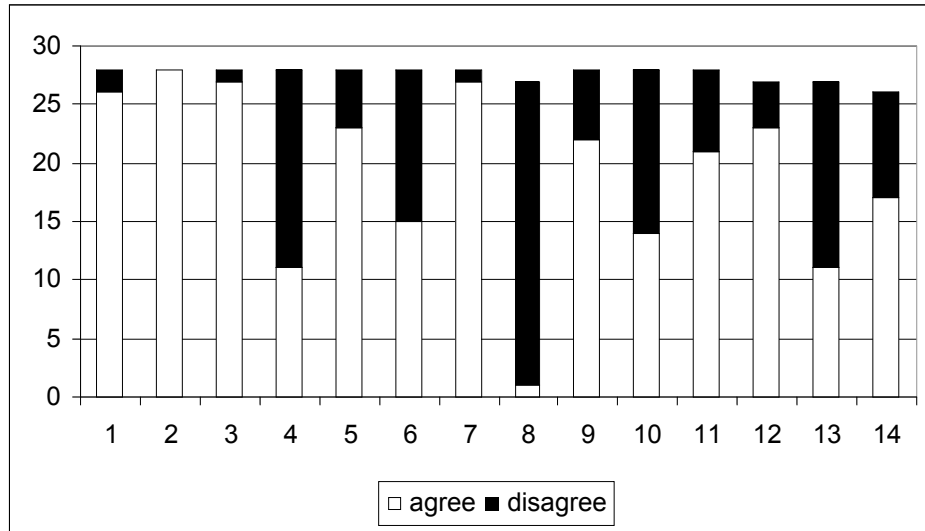

Figure 5: Agreement/disagreement on Accountability Measures in descending order of agreement
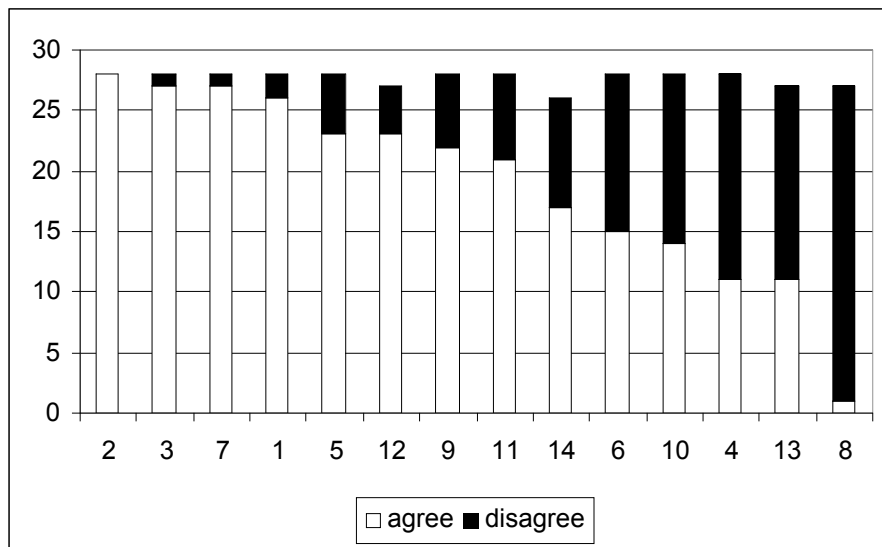
Table 2: Agreement/disagreement on performance development measures

	DEVELOPMENT	Agree	Disagree
1	There is an integrated approach to the professional development of individuals that is directed to achieving the LA's goals.	27	1
2	There is a formal review process that identifies training and development targets of the individual.	28	0
3	Development targets for individual members of staff are clearly expressed.	25	3
4	Competence frameworks are used in identifying development needs.	8	20
5	Profiles/Portfolios are used to record the professional development of individual members of staff.	18	10
6	There is a formal review procedure that regularly examines an individual's progress towards meeting development targets.	27	1
7	There is a procedure for evaluating professional development activities.	21	7
8	There is a procedure for communicating the outcomes of development activities within the LA.	17	11
9	Induction is both job-related and LA-related.	27	1
10	There is a mentoring system in place that supports professional development.	14	14
11	Within the LA there is a coherent and unified system for collating and prioritising the development needs of staff.	13	13
12	Within the LA there is a coherent and unified system for ensuring that the development needs of staff are met.	17	11
13	LA-wide quality systems e.g. IIP, support the development of individuals.	16	12
14	There is a sense of ownership by the staff of the professional development procedures and processes in the LA.	21	7
15	Elected members fully understand the process for the professional development of staff in the LA.	12	15
16	There is a formal review procedure that regularly evaluates the whole process within the LA.	15	13

Note: Items 11 and 15 had missing responses.

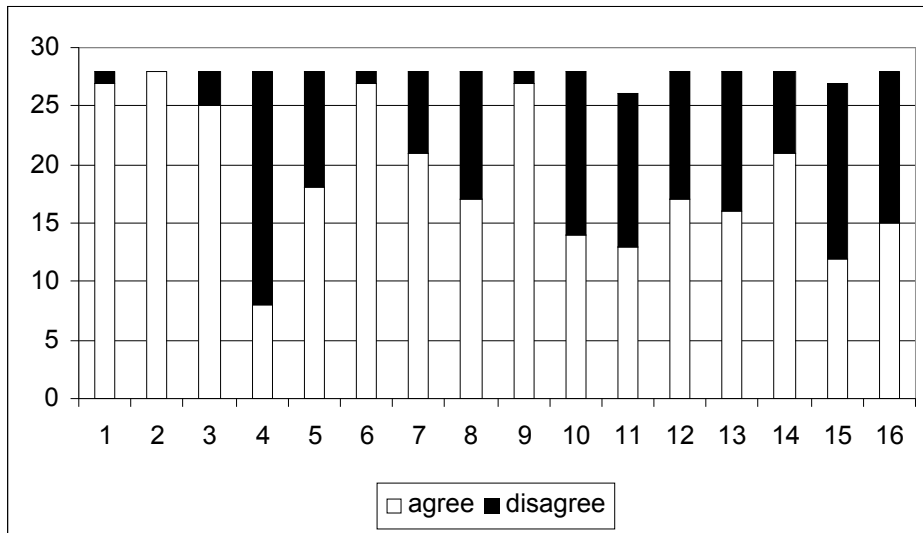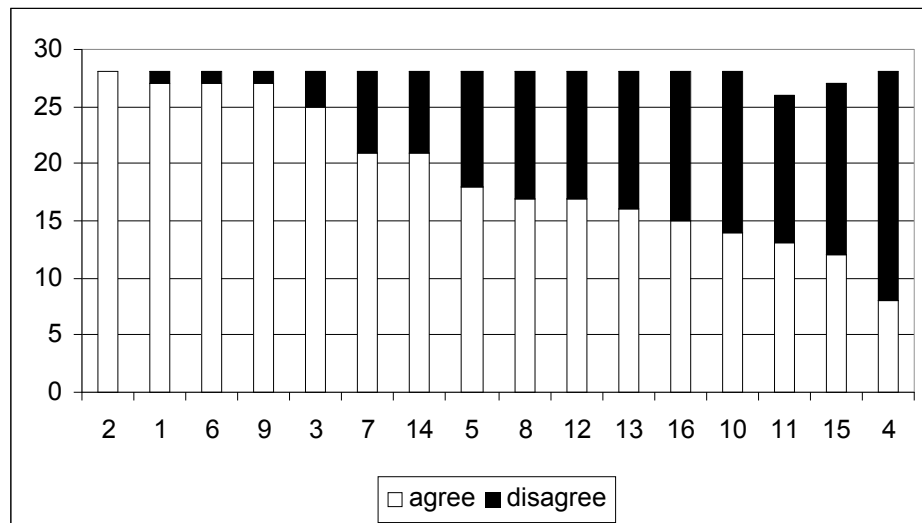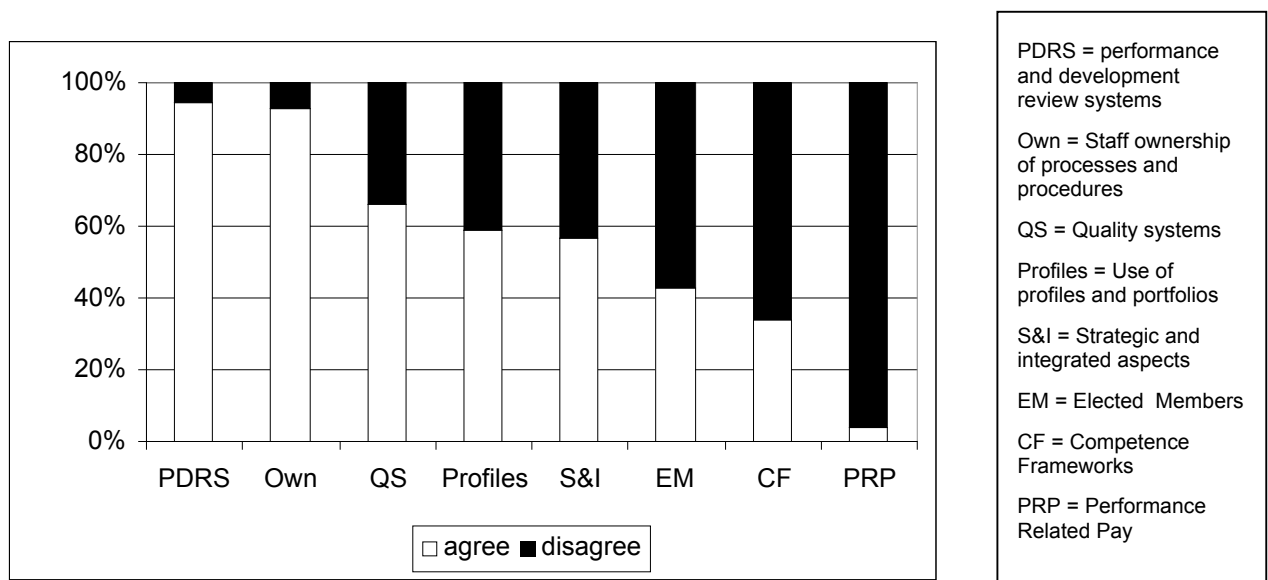**Figure 6: Agreement/disagreement on performance development measures**

Figure 7: Agreement/disagreement on performance development measures in descending order of agreement

The commentary discusses the issues starting from those which broadly elicited greater agreement from the respondents through to those with which there was more likely to be disagreement. The issues disagreed with are the points which move location on the performance management 'map' away from the top right hand corner of the matrix. Accountability and developmental dimensions are considered together.

The areas of agreement and disagreement tended to cluster around themes, though some factors sat on their own. The percentage of responses agreeing or disagreeing out of the total possible responses has been calculated across clusters of items. This is presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Percentage responses in agreement or disagreement on clusters of items in the performance management model.

PDRS = performance and development review systems

Own = Staff ownership of processes and procedures

QS = Quality systems

Profiles = Use of profiles and portfolios

S&I = Strategic and integrated aspects

EM = Elected Members

CF = Competence Frameworks

PRP = Performance Related Pay

Performance and development review systems

There is a broad cluster of agreement in relation to the existence of processes for identifying and monitoring performance and development needs of individuals. In relation to accountability measures there is agreement on systems being in place to ensure that people are aware of the service's goals and that individual performance targets relate to those goals. Targets are expressed in measurable outputs and responsibilities and individual performance is monitored (acc factors 2, 3, 7, 1 and 5). In parallel, in relation to development measures, there is agreement that there are formal processes which identify individual training and development needs in line with the service's goals in a systematic way, that individuals know what their development needs are and their progress towards meeting them is monitored (dev factors 2, 1, 6 and 3). In terms of support and development the indicators are that induction is both job and authority related and part of normal practice (dev factor 9). Staff development activities are evaluated in the majority

of cases (dev factor 7). Mentoring as part of the support is to be found in half of the authorities (dev factor 10).

In the four authorities included in the interview phase of the study there were formal review procedures in place based on self-evaluation and an annual review meeting with the line manager. The term 'appraisal' was not generally used, though in one authority there was a tendency to use it for administrative and more junior staff. This was because 'appraisal' was considered to have threatening overtones; it conveyed a sense of 'checking up on you'. The term 'review' was considered to be more supportive and encouraged greater involvement of people in the process. In all cases the purpose of the annual interview was to discuss achievement during the previous year and to identify new targets for the coming year, to develop a personal action plan or CPD plan agreed between the manager and the person being reviewed. For the purposes of self-evaluation for managers and advisers, one authority used the framework in place for senior managers in schools; another authority was devising a framework based on QMIE, but using personal rather than structural language. For all it was important that while there was an annual review meeting, the review process was not only an annual event. Work progress was regularly reviewed with the appropriate line manager and any issues of performance which needed to be addressed should emerge through this process.

The service planning process is a key element in setting performance targets. As one interviewee said "the service plan drives it". Division/section/group plans and team plans are derived from the service plan with individuals named at group and team level. These would then be incorporated into personal plans. Therefore individuals should be clear on what their work targets are. All four authority representatives indicated that there was a consultative process and that individuals could contribute to the service plan.

There were, however, factors which limited effectiveness. These included the view that not all staff were equally committed to the process and that in relation to the review process it could be a "tick the form, that's it done" exercise. Identifying with service targets was easier for some staff than others, for example, senior managers, advisers/quality improvement officers. Other staff such as finance managers and more junior staff could find it more difficult to see where they fitted in and contributed to the wider service. One interviewee suggested that finding something new and fresh every year and identifying development needs was difficult for staff who had been in the service for many years. As mentioned earlier, when time was at a premium, review and staff development were sometimes neglected and targets for carrying out staff review were not always met.

Generally those interviewed were positive about the opportunities that were available for staff development but the linking of this to the review process could be limited by the failure of the reviewer to pass on information or confirm what had been agreed. Three of the interviewees indicated that they were looking at ways of improving the evaluation of staff development activities.

Having procedures and systems in place does not always guarantee that they will be systematically or effectively implemented. Procedures which monitor the effectiveness of the overall performance and development review processes are less likely to be in place (acc factor 14 and dev factor 16).

Ownership of processes and procedures

The development of a performance management culture is evidenced by all staff having a sense of ownership and some influence on the system, rather than having it 'done to them'. In a performance management culture monitoring of performance and developing the capability of staff would be seen as normal practice. There is a sense of people taking responsibility for the outcomes. According to the respondents to the questionnaire survey there is, in a majority of the education authorities, a sense of ownership of both accountability and development procedures (acc factors 12 and 9 and dev factor 14).

Examples of 'ownership' given during the interviews included the fact that people find discussing their job valuable, they readily make their development needs known, they take advantage of development opportunities and they contribute to the development of others. If people view the process as being supportive and largely developmental they are more likely to own it, although an effective system fulfils both accountability and development purposes.

Indicators of lack of ownership are similar to the limitations identified above in respect of performance and development review systems.

Quality systems

Quality systems are more likely to be used for accountability than development purposes (acc factor 11, dev factor 13). Two points should be noted in relation to these questions. Firstly the statement mentions IIP which may have influenced respondents to think specifically about IIP. Secondly, in the development measures question the phrase 'LA-wide quality systems' is used and consequently respondents may have been thinking about systems beyond those used in the education service. Feedback from one respondent specifically highlighted this point. Some statements had been 'agreed' because of the authority-wide perspective, whereas if it had been the education service in and of itself, the 'strongly agreed' option would have been chosen.

During interview it was explained that an education department would not necessarily know what quality framework another council service was using, although all should, in principle, meet the requirements of Best Value. In one authority all services had begun using 'the balanced scorecard' as a performance management tool and this would have led to the same approach across all council services. However, the education service had adopted QMIE when it was introduced.

One of the education departments had achieved IIP and another was working towards it, but while it may be a principle recommended for the whole authority, it was the choice of different departments, or even sections within departments, to pursue IIP accreditation.

All four authorities used *Quality Management in Education* as the key quality framework for the education service. For aspects of the service not covered by QMIE, Best Value audits may be carried out. One education department had established its own internal programme of reviews, accepted by the Council as meeting the requirements of Best Value.

Profiles and portfolios

Half of the respondents to the survey agreed that profiles/portfolios were used to record progress towards performance targets and about two-thirds to support professional development (acc factor 6 and dev factor 5). Only one of the authorities involved in the interview stage of the study was developing a portfolio approach and this had a specific focus on development. It was a CPD portfolio. This is an aspect which would benefit from further study to identify the nature and precise use of the profiles and portfolios.

Strategic and integrative aspects

This heading takes together statements which refer to 'coherent and unified systems' and evaluating the overall performance and development review procedures (acc factors 10 and 14, dev factors 11, 12 and 16). Interpretation of these responses needs to take account of the point raised above under 'Quality systems'. The questions put the focus on the whole local authority as opposed to the education service and respondents may have given different interpretations to these statements. The responses suggest that in about half of the authorities there is a council-wide approach to performance management and staff development. One of the interviewees indicated that in that authority there was an authority-wide employee development service, while an interviewee from another authority suggested that the education service had in place a more thorough staff review and development process than other council services. Further research is required to clarify the extent of council-wide approaches to the management of performance and development of staff and the relationship of the education services to such council-wide approaches.

Elected members' awareness of management of staff performance and development

Less than 50% of responses indicate that elected members would be aware of these issues (acc 13 and dev 15). This suggests that there may be a need for education services staff and elected members to work more closely together. However, the relationship between elected members and officers and their role in the management of staff was not explored as part of this study and this issue requires further research.

Competence frameworks

In the survey, less than 40% of respondents indicated that competence frameworks were used in relation to staff performance or development. None of the authorities from which staff were interviewed used competence frameworks, though one had considered the management competences developed for National and Scottish Vocational Qualifications (N/SVQ). While the decision was taken not to adopt these competences they informed the development of the services' own approach to development review.

It is not possible to determine from the negative response whether respondents disagreed because they disapproved of using competence frameworks, or they approved of them but had not yet implemented them. Some further enquiries to respondents who had agreed that competence frameworks were in use suggested that different interpretations might be given to the term 'competence framework'. It was likely that people who indicated they used competence frameworks were referring to locally devised statements as opposed to any nationally recognised set of competences. The standards frameworks for teachers

were identified by some as competence frameworks, though they clearly do not fit the very detailed specification of outcomes and performance criteria which typify some competence approaches. The view was expressed that it would be helpful to have 'standards', similar to the teachers' standards, developed for education services managers and QIOs. It was not possible to contact all who indicated they used competence frameworks and so the above explanation is not fully substantiated.

Views on competence frameworks were elicited during interview. All those interviewed had attended the VSCS seminar on educational management competences in May 2003. All expressed the view that it was interesting and thought-provoking. Three in particular considered that they could see potential, particularly in relation to identifying development needs, or indeed possible causes of under-performance. This particular framework might help people identify areas not previously considered and therefore be a source of new ideas.

The reservations expressed were that it seemed 'very complex and difficult'; it appeared to be 'too detailed' which could become a limiting factor as too much time could be spent addressing the detail. Developing job descriptions based on the competences was seen as very time consuming. The view was expressed that it was important to have 'something manageable so that people don't feel swamped'.

One authority was investigating the standards for quality improvement professionals published by the Department for Education and Skills.

There is clearly potential for development and clarification of what constitutes a competence framework and how it might be used.

Performance Related Pay

This was the only item in the survey which attracted 'strongly disagree' responses. Nineteen strongly disagreed and 7 disagreed. Only one respondent indicated agreement, and that was for 'chief officers only'. It was for this reason that this item was not included in the analysis which led to the mapping of education authorities on the performance management model. To include it implies that it is an essential component and this is clearly not the view of representatives of Scottish local authorities.

Those interviewed indicated that as far as they were aware there are no plans to introduce Performance Related Pay within local authorities, though one stated that 'some people might like to be able to reward people through pay'. Recognition of good performance would be through the annual review or the 'celebration of success' or 'celebrating achievement' ethos. This could be through public recognition or a private 'thank-you'.

7   Conclusions

The research investigated the current context in which the performance management of staff in local authority education services in Scotland occurs and the extent to which senior representatives of education services perceive that performance management systems are in place in their department. The research was carried out by a survey of all education services and by in-depth interviews with representatives from four authorities.

Context

Education services are operating within statutory requirements that expect high degrees of public accountability. This includes managing the performance of their staff. It would therefore be expected that education services are developing performance management systems.

Key findings in relation to the current contextual issues which are constraints on education services and which emphasise the need for effective performance management systems and procedures are:

> For some authorities, restructuring, which has led to combining education with other services, has required changes to the roles of education services staff.

> For all authorities the requirements of joint policy-making and joint working with other services has impacted on all staff from managers to frontline professionals.

> The change in the role of education advisers and their redesignation as Quality Improvement Officers (QIOs) with greater emphasis on challenge to schools to improve has had major implications for staff development and working practices for those in that role.

> The salary differential which has resulted from the pay settlement for teachers and, in particular, head teachers has meant that roles in education services are less attractive to head teachers. This may mean a lack of staff available to authorities for posts where the traditional pool for recruitment has been head teachers. If solutions are not identified this could have serious implications for the delivery of services by education departments.

Performance Management Systems

The main element of this part of the research was an exercise based on self-evaluation, completed by one representative from the education service of a local authority. The results of the self-evaluation indicated where the respondent believed his/her service was situated in relation to 4 types of organisation: a performance management organisation, a performance accountability organisation, a performance development organisation, or a non-performance management organisation.

> Nineteen of the 28 respondents placed their education service in the performance management organisation category with the remainder on the boundaries of that category.

Overall this presents a positive picture of education services in Scotland in relation to performance management of staff, though in many authorities the systems are in the process of development.

The results from the survey were classified into those aspects which were identified as strengths across the majority of respondents, areas where some authorities identified less progress and aspects not developed on a wide scale. The different aspects were discussed during interview.

Strengths across the majority of respondents

Processes for monitoring staff performance and review of development needs were reported as being well established. The emphasis was on helping staff develop their skills and capabilities to assist in doing their jobs more effectively or to help progress their careers. This was seen as more effective in gaining staff commitment to the processes as opposed to emphasising the accountability aspects. This was reflected in the preference to use the term 'review' rather than 'appraisal', which was considered more threatening. Thus, ownership of the review and development processes was perceived as being high.

Accountability requirements were also met through the systems which were in place. Communication of goals and targets was reported as being well established, achieved through the systematic approaches of service and improvement planning. Service objectives were focused through group, team and individual plans.

During interview it was evident that some authorities had more embedded systems than others but all agreed they were aiming to improve the systems and to ensure that people participate and perceive performance review as worthwhile.

> **There is potential for VSCS to facilitate the sharing of information between education authorities in relation to the performance and development review, for the purposes of developing ideas and procedures in the pursuit of continuous improvement.**

Areas where some authorities identified less progress

The adoption of quality systems and strategic and integrative elements of performance management were reported by fewer authorities as being established.

However, the results are dependent on how respondents interpreted the statements in the questionnaire. They may have been interpreted as progress towards **authority-wide** performance management system as opposed to **education services** systems. The extent of authority-wide systems and the inter-relationship of such systems and those in place in education services requires further research. However, there is potential for an education service to contribute effectively to the development of an authority's overall performance management system. This is important particularly in the light of increased joint policy-

making and joint working between services (for example education, health and social work) highlighted during the interviews.

Quality Management in Education (QMIE) is becoming the main quality framework within education services.

One third of authority respondents indicated that performance accountability procedures were not regularly evaluated and a half indicated that the development review process was not regularly evaluated. This is an area for development in some authorities.

Just under two-thirds of respondents indicated that profiles and portfolios were in use. The nature and use of these needs further investigation.

> **There is potential for VSCS to facilitate sharing of approaches to developing quality management systems between education authorities, in particular, in relation to the use of QMIE. More generally, VSCS could explore the possibilities of collaboration between education and other authority services in the light of the requirements of joint policy-making and joint working.**

Areas not developed on a wide scale

Three areas in particular attracted less than 50% agreement from respondents.

The *relationship with and role of elected members* was an area which was not well developed. This topic requires further research.

The issue of the acceptability of *competence frameworks* is less clear. The negative response to the questionnaire does not reveal whether people think it is a good idea which they have not yet implemented, or whether they are opposed to the concept. Interviewees expressed reservations over the competence framework presented at the VSCS seminar but also an interest in exploring its potential.

The inclusion of 'competence framework' in the questionnaire as a component of a performance management system makes the assumption that the adoption of a competence framework is a necessary part of performance management. Some authority representatives might argue that point, with a preference for frameworks similar to the standards devised for teachers in Scotland. What is important is that there is a recognised framework to assist individuals in recognising their strengths and weaknesses and potential areas for development.

> **It is important for VSCS to provide further opportunities to explore the issue of competence and other frameworks while remaining sensitive to the preferences and needs of education services.**

Performance related pay was not accepted as a relevant element of performance management systems.

Summary of issues identified for further research

The extent of authority-wide systems and the inter-relationship of such systems and those in place in education services

The nature and use of profiles and portfolios for monitoring staff performance and for staff development

The relationship between elected members and education services and the role of elected members in relation to the management of education services staff.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire

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The Scottish Local Authority
Professional Assessment and Development Initiative

The Performance Management of Staff in LAs in Scotland

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This questionnaire is designed to collect information about your views of the Performance Management of staff in your LA Education Services. We recognise that 'performance management' can take a number of forms and be described in various ways. For the purposes on this questionnaire, we are using the term 'performance management' to cover any 'review' or 'appraisal' procedures that are in operation in your LA. So please answer the questions on that basis. We are aware that there have been substantial developments in relation to teachers because of the agreement on *The Teaching Profession for the 21st Century*. However, in this survey we are interested in the performance management of centrally employed staff not those in schools.

There are three sections to this questionnaire.

Section 1 - asks you to provide some information about your role in the LA.

Section 2 - relates to the **accountability** side of performance management in your LA. This aspect of performance management is concerned with the setting of targets for individual members of staff against which improvement can be subsequently measured. Please give your own views when you respond to the questions.

Section 3 - focuses on the **development** side of performance management in your LA. This dimension is concerned with the development of the qualities, skills and competences to support performance improvement. Please give your own views when you respond to the questions.

Section 1

Your role in the LA

What is your job title? _____

How many colleagues report directly to you? _____

What is the job title of your line manager? _____

How long have you been in your present post? _____

Please give details of other posts you have held in this or other LAs starting with the most recent first.

_____

_____

_____

If you are willing to be interviewed by telephone as part of this study please provide details:

Name: _____ Phone no: _____

Section 2

Accountability

	ACCOUNTABILITY	Please tick as appropriate			
		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	There is an integrated approach to ensuring that individual performance is directed towards achieving the LA's goals.	11	15	2	0
2	The LA's goals are communicated to its employees.	15	13	0	0
3	Individual performance targets relate to the LA's goals.	11	16	1	0
4	Competence frameworks are used in setting the performance targets of the individual.	1	10	16	1
5	Individual targets are expressed in terms of measurable outputs and responsibilities.	4	19	5	0
6	Individual members of staff use profiles/portfolios to record progress in achieving their performance targets.	3	12	13	0
7	There is a procedure for monitoring an individual's progress towards achieving their performance targets.	4	23	1	0
8	There is a link between performance requirements and pay.	0	1	7	19
9	Individuals take responsibility for how their performance affects the whole LA.	3	19	5	1
10	There is a coherent and unified system for the performance accountability of individuals in operation across the whole LA.	1	13	14	0
11	Quality systems e.g. IIP, are used by the LA in supporting the performance accountability of individuals in the LA.	5	16	5	2
12	Individuals have a sense of ownership of LA's performance accountability procedures.	5	18	4	0
13	Elected members fully understand the procedures for the performance accountability of staff in the LA.	2	9	14	2
14	Performance accountability procedures for individuals are regularly evaluated.	3	14	9	0

Any other comments related to accountability

Section 3

Development

	DEVELOPMENT	Please tick as appropriate			
		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	There is an integrated approach to the professional development of individuals that is directed to achieving the LA's goals.	8	19	1	0
2	There is a formal review process that identifies training and development targets of the individual.	16	12	0	0
3	Development targets for individual members of staff are clearly expressed.	11	14	3	0
4	Competence frameworks are used in identifying development needs.	1	7	18	2
5	Profiles/Portfolios are used to record the professional development of individual members of staff.	5	13	10	0
6	There is a formal review procedure that regularly examines an individual's progress towards meeting development targets.	7	20	1	0
7	There is a procedure for evaluating professional development activities.	4	17	7	0
8	There is a procedure for communicating the outcomes of development activities within the LA.	3	14	11	0
9	Induction is both job-related and LA-related.	6	21	1	0
10	There is a mentoring system in place that supports professional development.	3	11	13	1
11	Within the LA there is a coherent and unified system for collating and prioritising the development needs of staff.	6	8	13	0
12	Within the LA there is a coherent and unified system for ensuring that the development needs of staff are met.	5	12	11	0
13	LA-wide quality systems e.g. IIP, support the development of individuals.	4	12	11	1
14	There is a sense of ownership by the staff of the professional development procedures and processes in the LA.	5	16	7	0
15	Elected members fully understand the process for the professional development of staff in the LA.	2	10	13	2
16	There is a formal review procedure that regularly evaluates the whole process within the LA.	3	12	12	1

> Any other comments related to development