

Quest 2016 – Purpose 8

Continuous Improvement

Guidance Notes

Issue 1 – July 2016



Outcomes

- The organisation has a business strategy/plan with a clear purpose, vision, values and business objectives that provides a clear direction for staff and partners/stakeholders.
- The organisation can demonstrate strategic leadership and a culture of continuous improvement which has been developed through staff and partners/stakeholder engagement.
- The organisation can demonstrate improvement across a well-balanced range of financial, quality, people and partner measures and delivery of service outputs and outcomes that are aligned to its purpose, vision, values and business objectives.

Challenge:	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Plan					
Does the organisation have a business strategy/plan that gives clear direction to its staff and partners/stakeholders?	There is little or no clarity on purpose, vision, values and business objectives and little/no measurement of what is most important to success.	There is an incomplete or out of date business strategy/plan. There is a limited, top down and short term planning process in place which sets out business objectives and some measures of success.	There is a well-informed business strategy/plan in place which has a high level of ownership and understanding within the staff team. Success measures and targets are clearly set out.	There is a business strategy/plan with clear purpose, vision and business objectives, which is owned by trustees and staff and is well communicated to stakeholders and partners. Planning is clearly led by local priorities/needs and has involved and engaged staff and key stakeholders. Measures and targets are in place with a clear focus on market development	There is a three to five year business strategy/plan in place which has been developed with stakeholders and is well communicated/ understood. This sets out a clear purpose, vision, values and business objectives with success measures and targets. It is underpinned by a culture of continuous improvement/high performance. There is an unrelenting

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				which is supported by robust review processes and improvement planning.	focus on the stated end goal and why the organisation does what it does with specific reference to addressing inequalities and improving life chances.
Do					
Does the organisation have strong leadership and governance arrangements that are capable of delivering its business strategy/plan?	<p>Trustees and the senior management team are unable to describe the purpose, vision, values and high level business goals.</p> <p>Governance arrangements of the organisation are not clearly set out and understood by trustees, staff and partners/stakeholders.</p>	<p>There is evidence that trustees and staff understand the organisation's purpose, vision, values and business goals.</p> <p>Staff satisfaction surveys (or lack of them) suggest that the organisation is not a good/great place to work at this point in time.</p> <p>Governance arrangements are set out but there is little evidence of them being effective.</p>	<p>Trustees, senior managers and delivery staff are able to articulate a shared purpose, vision, values and current business goals. The organisation has a good reputation locally which can be evidenced.</p> <p>Feedback on performance is encouraged and staff/partner satisfaction surveys suggest the organisation is a good place to work and is valued by partners.</p> <p>There is evidence that governance arrangements are effective with identified improvements to leadership</p>	<p>Trustees, senior managers and delivery staff are able to articulate the purpose, vision, values and current business goals. There are examples of the values being embedded into the organisation's culture.</p> <p>Feedback on performance is encouraged and staff/partner satisfaction surveys suggest the organisation is a great place to work and is valued by partners.</p> <p>There is evidence that governance arrangements are making a positive contribution to the</p>	<p>Trustees, senior managers and delivery staff actively champion the organisation's purpose, vision, values and current business goals. There is evidence that the values are embedded into the organisation's culture.</p> <p>The organisation has a good reputation locally and/or nationally.</p> <p>Coaching and mentoring are used to develop leadership capabilities and there is evidence of succession planning.</p> <p>Staff/partner surveys show the organisation is an</p>

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Challenge:	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			and governance arrangements taking place.	organisation's success.	outstanding place to work in or with. Governance arrangements are clearly fit for purpose.
Are the operations of the organisation driven by the business strategy/plan and underpinned by effective financial processes and systems?	<p>The organisation's operations are not underpinned by a clear planning process and financial systems are inadequate for effective management of the business.</p> <p>The organisation has a tendency to 'survive'.</p>	<p>Business planning processes are minimal and financial systems are basic and are just about adequate for management of business operations.</p> <p>The organisation has a tendency to be responsive to change rather than proactive.</p>	<p>The organisation's operations relate back to the business strategy/plan and are underpinned by the financial management systems, policies and procedures.</p> <p>There is a commitment to improve management and financial information and to make improvements to service operations.</p> <p>The organisation demonstrates a balance of being proactive as well as responsive in pursuit of its business objectives.</p>	<p>The organisation's operations are driven by the business strategy/plan and are underpinned by effective and efficient financial management systems, policies and procedures.</p> <p>There is substantial evidence of improved management and financial information and of improvements to service operations.</p> <p>The organisation is predominantly proactive in pursuit of its business objectives. There is evidence of an enterprise culture.</p>	<p>There is good evidence that the business strategy/plan is a live document and is underpinned by excellent financial management systems, policies and procedures. This is driving performance, enterprise/innovation in support of long term sustainable success.</p> <p>The organisation has a reputation amongst partners and funders for innovation and enterprise and for being 'ahead of the curve'.</p>
Does the organisation	There are no/very few	Measurement is one	Measurement is in place in	Key Performance	There is a balanced

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<p>have a balanced range of performance measures that reflects the service goals and outcomes of its business strategy/plan?</p>	<p>relevant measures in place to assess performance levels.</p>	<p>dimensional/input based or not always aligned to the core purpose, vision and business objectives.</p>	<p>key areas and across projects/programmes concentrating on the critical success factors for the organisation in the short to medium term.</p> <p>Work to drive improvements and set realistic targets over the longer term is progressing.</p>	<p>Indicators are in place across all of the vital areas of the business with evidence of service outputs, effective target setting and improvements being achieved across the organisation.</p> <p>Measures and target setting are focused on the medium to long term around key areas.</p>	<p>scorecard of Key Performance Indicators /measures in place across finance, quality, people and customers/stakeholders which are outcome based and clearly show improvement and alignment with the core purpose, vision and business objectives.</p> <p>The organisation can show trends and evidence performance/achievement and direction.</p>
<p>Does the organisation share its learning of what works and what does not across the organisation and with partners/stakeholders?</p>	<p>There is no system or culture for capturing learning about the health of the organisation and its service delivery.</p>	<p>There is a system for capturing learning but no evidence that it is used to improve the health of the organisation or its service delivery.</p>	<p>There is a system for capturing learning and some examples of it being used to improve the health of the organisation and its service delivery.</p>	<p>There is a system for capturing learning and there are a good range of examples of check and challenge processes being used to take actions that improve the organisation's health and service delivery.</p>	<p>The organisation can demonstrate there is a culture of capturing and sharing learning to deliver change that strengthens the organisation's health and results in service improvement for the benefit of customers/end users and partners/stakeholders.</p>

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<p>Does the organisation evidence and communicate its progress, achievements and impact?</p>	<p>The organisation has no performance baseline or clear strategy for engagement or improvement.</p>	<p>The organisation has a baseline for some of its performance measures but has no clear strategy or approach for external communication, advocacy or engagement with stakeholders. It does communicate well around projects and programmes of work.</p> <p>It is hard to see improvement, innovation and change from an organisational and a service delivery perspective.</p>	<p>Evidence indicates that external communication and advocacy is improving.</p> <p>Improvement is being managed proactively and communicated internally.</p> <p>The organisation has a reporting process in place including an impact report but there is limited evidence of the difference it is making or the influence the service is generating with partners, stakeholders, funders or commissioners etc.</p>	<p>There is good evidence that the organisation communicates with a wide range of partners/ stakeholders and that this has enhanced its reputation and influence.</p> <p>Services are highly regarded for their quality, precision and worth.</p> <p>Improvement, innovation and change are communicated internally and externally.</p>	<p>There is good evidence that the track record of the organisation, the changes and improvements that have been made as well as the communication of its value and benefit has resulted in sustained core funding and/or new work/funding being secured.</p> <p>This organisation has an excellent reputation for the quality, value and impact of its work and is helping to inform and shape local/strategic priorities and local/strategic assessments of need.</p>

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PLAN

GUIDANCE

- A purpose, vision and values statement has been produced and communicated internally and externally that is clear, concise and able to identify what the service or organisation is trying to achieve - “the main thing”.
- PESTLE/SWOT exercises are undertaken alongside self-assessments to help guide direction and identify priorities.
- A three to five year business strategy/plan is in place. There is evidence of a robust forward planning process and longer term development of the business over one to five years. There are examples of innovation/scaling up and co-production that will support the growth and sustainability of the organisation and its work.
- A culture of continuous improvement with staff and stakeholder involvement is evident that makes positive change happen.
- The development of the business objectives has been influenced by external strategies, such as the local authority cultural strategy, local commissioning priorities, health improvement plans, community safety strategy, regeneration plans as well as National Government/Sport England/Public Health England policy/strategy.
- Business objectives have target dates for their review and completion and work across finance, people, clients or customers, quality and impact dimensions.
- There a process of self-assessment and external benchmarking which feeds into an improvement planning.
- Procedures and policies are clearly developed and defined to help demonstrate efficiency, equality/inclusion, value for money and effectiveness as well as documented to inform continuous improvement.
- There is a culture of innovation and enterprise generating new opportunities for business improvement, development and growth.

Do

GUIDANCE

- Leadership is transformational, providing a clear sense of purpose, a motivational vision and a culture and working environment based on positive performance management, developmental support to individuals as part of team structures, clear goal setting, reporting and analysis together with personal development opportunities.
- Governance arrangements are fit for purpose providing external transparency and help staff to ‘raise their game’. Operating standards are understood and embedded into working practices. There are appropriate reporting and review processes in place and leaders/trustees are visible, accessible and accountable to staff, stakeholders and funders.
- Staff are engaged in planning and review processes.
- Partners are engaged in planning and review processes.
- Trustees/board members and/or senior managers are fully involved in check and challenge processes designed to drive improvement and recognise high performance and achievement.
- Internal and external communication keeps front line staff, the wider workforce of coaches and volunteers and those involved in different networks, informed and engaged.

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- A high premium is placed on leadership and management development as part of a commitment to team working and teambuilding in pursuit of business objectives.
- High performance characteristics and performance levels for the business/service and the team/individuals involved are clearly laid out.
- There is a strong focus on purpose, vision, values and business objectives, and the change required to the organisation and its services to develop its markets and reach new/target audiences.
- Staff surveys and other forms of feedback are regularly undertaken and demonstrate high levels of satisfaction and morale.

GUIDANCE

- Business planning is underpinned by a robust annual budget setting process, effective project/programme/service management, good control of costs and financial systems/reporting which feed directly into project and programme delivery plans.
- Management and staff are closely involved in setting of objectives and targets for projects, programmes and the business/service as a whole.
- There is shared accountability and responsibility for budgets and project results. Strong financial reporting and information systems operate and support effective decision making and change management.
- The business plan is broken down into monthly targets for all areas of income and expenditure and cascaded down to staff who have access to monthly financial performance information.
- Staff know how well the service is performing at all times.
- Training is provided for all relevant staff in the financial planning process and the development of wider commercial skills is provided to help long term sustainability. Staff involved in the development and monitoring of the finance plan are trained in financial awareness and performance management.
- Business cases are used to develop services/projects and staff are trained to use this approach.
- Staff are able to understand and assess the return of investment including the SROI and other social value measurement tools.
- There is evidence of strong governance and audit arrangements to help maintain control and accountability for finances and external funding.
- Overall the organisation takes the initiative, is self-determining and there is a sense amongst trustees/board members and staff that it is in control of its own destiny. Partners/stakeholders and commissioners/funders perceive it is a good organisation to invest in and work with.

MEASURE

GUIDANCE

- There is a clear performance management process in place, which enables management to measure and track progress towards the achievement of the business plan objectives on an on-going basis.
- A balanced scorecard (or equivalent) in place and operating to manage and measure performance across key result areas (both financial and non-financial).
- Transparent and relevant Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are used to establish measures and set realistic and achievable targets for the service as a whole and cascaded down to teams/individuals to provide a clear line of sight and strong, supportive process for staff around culture, behaviours, CPD and results.
- There is a performance management process which works across finance, people, quality and clients/customers/partners and used in support of the purpose/vision of the service.

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- Measurable outputs are produced with clear links to longer term outcomes and are aligned with business objectives and individual staff work programmes in order to achieve results.
- Improved performance is being tracked and the benefits of change/improvement/innovation is being evidenced and communicated.
- There is evidence that the improvement planning is being used proactively to demonstrate value for money, control costs, generate income, tangibly enhance the user service, improve service quality and productivity and increase the engagement and morale of the team.
- There is a performance management process that is used to plan and improve efficiency and effectiveness.

REVIEW

GUIDANCE

- Management regularly review and change aspects of the business plan or project/programme/service plans to ensure that it/they remains 'live' and 'real'.
- There is a formal review process involving staff and partners that focuses on learning, development and growth of the business/service.
- Staff know what works best and apply best practice across the organisation.
- The organisation searches out best practice externally and is serious about benchmarking.
- There is a process that ensures objectives remains on course to meet the desired outcome.
- Trend data is published and used - helping to set improvement priorities and targets.
- There is evidence that the improvement plan is revised and updated as a result of the achievements to date and/or if additional resources are required in order to implement various initiatives.
- Results and findings from partner satisfaction surveys, user surveys and audit reviews are used to ascertain year on year improvement.
- Reviews are used to promote and deliver change proactively.
- Service improvement groups operate to promote innovation and provide a check and challenge process.
- Good governance arrangements involve a regular programme of review and/or audits across themes or key areas of the business/service.

IMPACT

Guidance

- It is clear that planning processes have had a positive impact on the service, resulting in increased participation/activity and improved retention levels and benefits for its users, as well as improved levels of partnership engagement and staff satisfaction.
- Outcome led planning is in place and there is a clear link between operational results and the delivery of intermediate and longer term outcomes.
- There is evidence that the improved performance can in part, be attributed to the implementation of the business and improvement planning processes.
- Business goals are achieved with the benefit of staff/stakeholder involvement and these are clearly communicated to all concerned.
- Business results are continuously improving and being surpassed.
- Strong links are established between staff engagement and user/partner engagement and satisfaction levels.
- The service has a reputation for high quality delivery and for achieving results.
- Further investment and external funding opportunities are being secured.

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- The influence and impact of reviews, change management, external assessments and audit findings can be evidenced in service delivery and productivity.
- There is evidence that 'what the service is doing' is making a tangible difference to improvements to sport and physical activity opportunities accessible by the targeted population groups and communities.
- Improvements made through sport and physical activity can demonstrate their impact on social outcomes for targeted population groups and communities.
- Resources and time are spent on recognising success, communicating achievement, influencing agendas and communicating to funders/commissioners.
- Impact is clearly communicated and articulated within and outside the organisation. High performance is recognised and celebrated.