

Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) Briefing

Background

The Audit Commission, Commission for Social Care Inspection, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, HM Inspectorate of Prisons, HM Inspectorate of Probation and Ofsted have published the first joint inspectorate consultation on the CAA.

This joint inspectorate consultation invites views on proposals for the overall shape and scope of CAA. The aim of the proposals is to provide a holistic, independent assessment of the prospects for local areas and the quality of life for people living within them. This should place the experience of citizens, people who use services and local tax payers at the centre of the new local assessment framework, with a particular focus on the needs of those whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

Key features of the proposals:

- The CAA framework is concerned with those outcomes delivered by councils working alone or in partnership. So in addition to council services, its scope includes services developed in partnership, for instance health and well-being, community safety and cohesion, sustainable communities, economic development, housing, children's and older people's services.
- The new framework will be a joint-inspectorate annual assessment of the prospects for the local area and the quality of life for local people (referred to in the Local Government White Paper Strong and Prosperous Communities as the area risk assessment). The improvement priorities in the Local Area Agreement (LAA) will be the key focus. The assessment will judge the likelihood of the targeted improvements being achieved and, where appropriate, will identify barriers to that improvement.
- CAA will draw on the new national indicator set and be influenced by the views of local people through a new Place Based Survey that will replace the Best Value General Survey, and other engagement methods. The assessment will not be restricted to the LAA priorities, and is likely to reflect the inspectorates' assessment of the quality of engagement with local communities and the risks to people in vulnerable circumstances in the area. It will be publicly reported, as a statement to be considered by the local strategic partnership collectively as well as other organisations.
- CAA will be introduced from April 2009. It will replace CPA, Children's Services joint area reviews, Annual Performance Assessments (APA) of services for children and young people, and social services star ratings for adult social care. There will still be a requirement to produce a joint-inspectorate direction of travel assessment (score for all councils) and a scored use of resources from the Audit Commission).

- The annual scored use of resources judgement (for councils, police authorities, primary care trusts and fire and rescue authorities) will continue the current approach but with an enhanced focus on value for money and strengthened financial management. The scope of assessment is broadened to including commissioning and procurement capabilities and sustainability.

What will it mean for us?

- The CAA could offer a real opportunity to reduce the burden of regulation and help councils and local partners to improve services and deliver better outcomes.
- Where sound arrangements are in place and improved outcomes are being achieved, inspection activity will be reduced, leading to reduced levels of self-assessment
- Greater access to areas of good practice and streamlined data collection and sharing, leading to an improved knowledge based information set about our area
- LAA will be a key focus for the assessment
- Reduced indicator set
- Reduce overlap in inspection contact, information gathering and reporting

Consultation

The joint inspectorate consultation invites views on proposals for the overall shape and scope of CAA. In particular on:

- The area risk assessment;
- How the different elements of CAA will fit together;
- The evidence that will be used, how we will gather it, and the link between current performance and risk assessment;
- Reporting to, and engaging with, the public and how CAA will maintain a clear focus on improving performance
- How CAA fits with Sustainable Communities Strategies, Local Area Agreements and the role of regional Government Offices.

Members might wish to consider specific questions around:

- Generally what are your feelings about the proposals?
- How should the Audit Commission ensure that performance information and reporting published is **relevant** and **accessible** to councils and their partners, local people and central government?
- Will the approach described be an effective and efficient way of working with councils and their partners to deliver CAA?

Please send your responses to James Winterbottom (PPI Team) on J.Winterbottom@wigan.gov.uk

The full consultation document can be viewed at <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/Products/NATIONAL-REPORT/127A6321-4FA8-40ba-BCE2-CF1023A3DDB9/CAAConsultation22Nov07REP.pdf>



Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)

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Comprehensive Area Assessment CAA



- What is it?
- What is its focus?
- Key differences from current arrangements
- What will it mean for us?
- Consultation Paper
- Timetable

CAA- What is it?

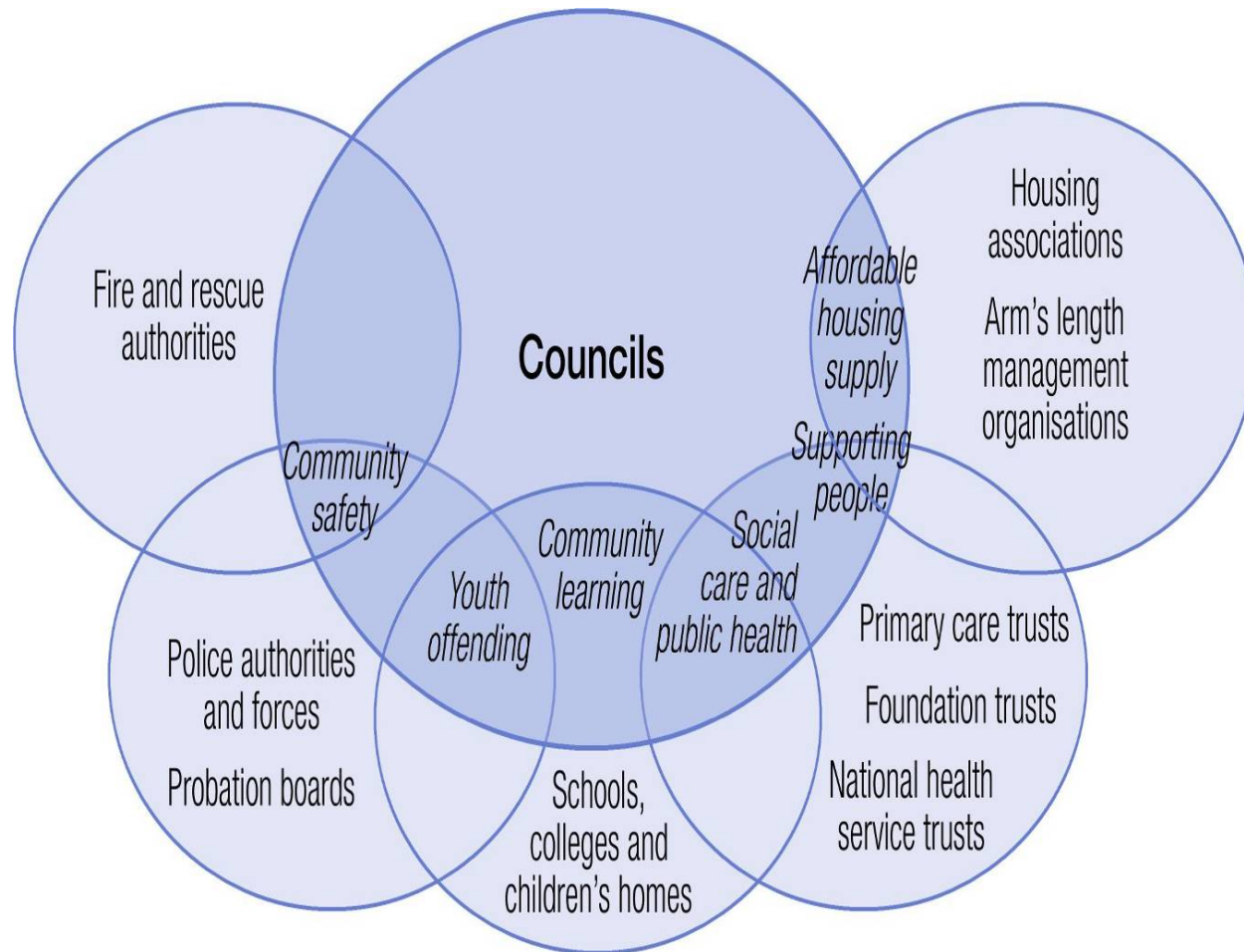
- The new joint assessment framework for local services from 2009
- Replacing
 - CPA Comprehensive Performance Assessment
 - Children's Services Joint Area Reviews JAR'S and Annual Performance Assessments APA's
 - Social Services Star Ratings for Adults

CAA- What is it?



- A vehicle for improving the quality of life for citizens, the experience of people who use services and value for money for tax payers
- A source of independent information and assurance about local services
- A mechanism for coordinating and rationalising inspection, improvement support and intervention and targeting them where needed.

The inter relationship between services

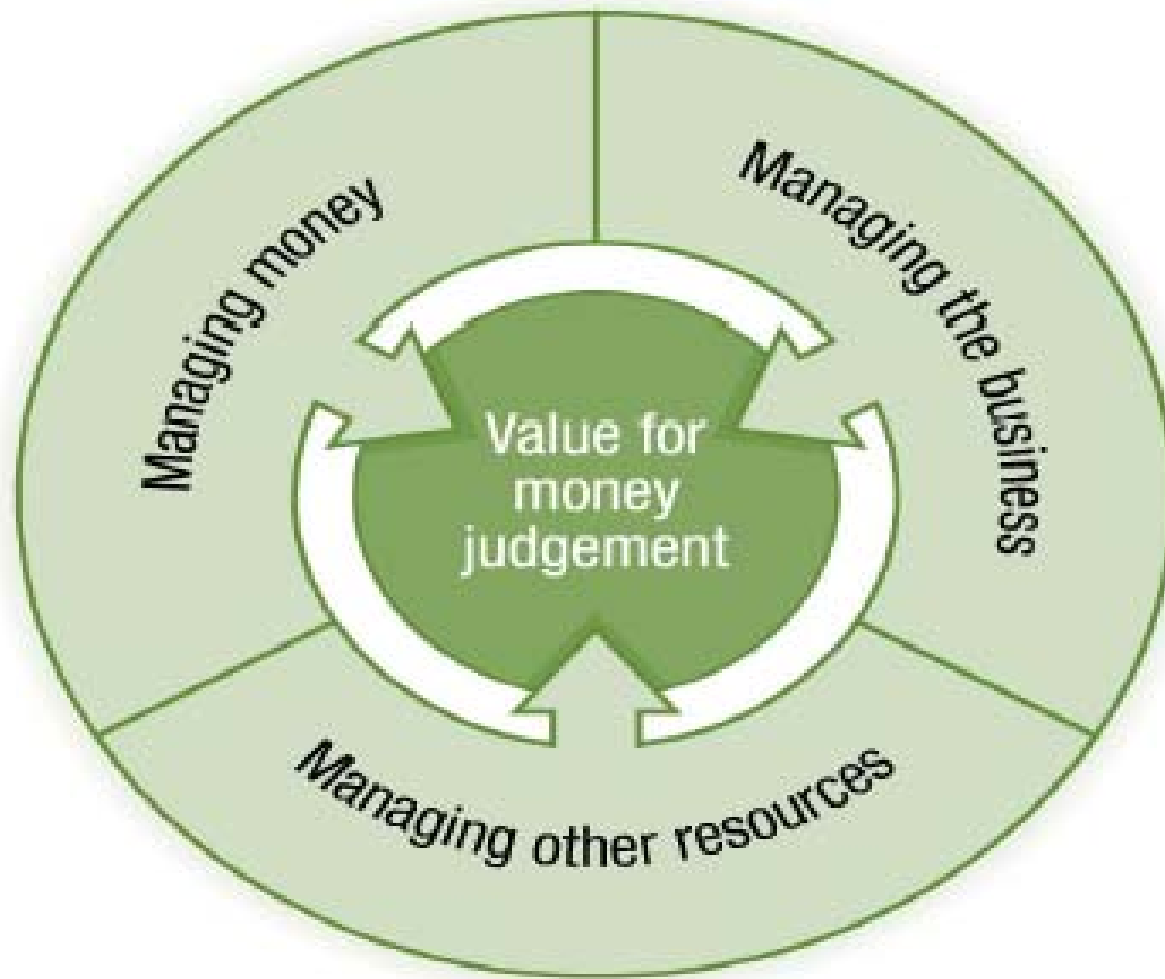


What will it cover?



- An annual joint inspectorate risk assessment for each area
- Outcomes of any inspection triggered by the risk assessment
- Local performance against the national indicator set
- An annual direction of travel judgement (councils and fire and rescue authorities)
- Use of resources judgement

Proposed framework



Place-based Survey

- Single survey to replace Best Value General Survey
- About 'place' rather than specific services or agencies
- Obtaining citizens personal perspective
- 1st one proposed in Autumn 2008
- Results to be used in CAA 2009

Reporting and Scoring



- Intention is to report on a joint basis
- Aiming for easy access to information on councils, to enable accountability
- Unlike CPA an overall star rating will not be provided
- The new indicator set will not be scored but will be reported in a consistent way
- Use of Resources still scored 1-4
- Direction of Travel – same, but labels may change
- Risk assessment – unsure how this will be scored.

Key differences from current arrangements



- Outcome focused
- Area focused, not institutional, with key focus on LAA
- Greater attention to local priorities
- Joint working by inspectorates, but other sectors will continue to have their own performance frameworks.
- Improved co-ordination and use of results.
- An opportunity to reduce the burden of regulation
- Involvement of local citizens

Timetable



- Oct 2007 CSR and new national indicator set published
- Oct 2007 LGPIH Act received Royal Assent
- Nov 2007 Joint inspectorate consultation paper published
- Nov 2007 Action learning for CAA methodologies begins
- Feb 2008 CPA results for 2007 published
- Apr 2008 AC CAA Leads appointed
- Jun 2008 New-style LAAs agreed
- Summer 2008 Further joint consultation on CAA published
- Dec 2008 CA, JAR and APA ends
- Jan/Feb 2009 Final set of CPA results
- Oct/Nov 2009 First round of CAA reporting

Key points in November consultation paper



- The area risk assessment
- How the different elements of CAA will fit together
- The evidence that will be used, how it will gather it, and the link between current performance and risk assessment
- Reporting to, and engaging with, the public and how CAA will maintain a clear focus on improving performance
- How CAA fits with Sustainable Communities Strategies and Local Area Agreements

CAA Consultation



- Generally what are your feelings about the proposals?
- How should the Audit Commission ensure that performance information and reporting published is **relevant** and **accessible** to councils and their partners, local people and central government?
- Will the approach described be an effective and efficient way of working with councils and their partners to deliver CAA?

Achieving through a 'One Borough' approach



- Working more efficiently,
- Engaging locally, regionally and nationally
- Identifying need and putting resources in the right place





Thank you
Diane Taylor