

Appendix 1.

Key questions for elected members

The report identifies a range of issues for councils to consider. The following table lists possible questions for elected members to ask in their councils to help identify how their council is dealing with these issues and where more action may be required.

Longer-term planning		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are we planning for services beyond 2010/11, taking full account of financial projections and other intelligence? • How robust are plans to achieve the savings required to meet our priorities? • To what extent do we have a clear plan for achieving the most appropriate size of workforce and skills needed to deliver our goals? • To what extent do we have a clear plan for ensuring that expenditure and investment in our asset base achieves value for money and most appropriately supports the delivery of our goals?
Decision-making and prioritisation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How clear are we about the priorities of local people? • How good is our information on performance and the costs of providing different levels and quality of services to assist us in setting priorities and taking decisions? • What action are we taking to prioritise spending? • How aware are we of the relative risks and rewards associated with our decisions, and how well placed are we to manage identified risks?
Outcomes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are we considering the impact of the recession on our service outcomes and our commitments in our Single Outcome Agreement? • How are we comparing our service outcomes with others, for example by benchmarking? • What evidence do we have that our service outcomes represent best value?
Keeping informed		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well are we kept informed of the impact of the recession on our finances and service performance? • How effectively are we monitoring and planning for changes in demand for services? • Are our training and development needs fully addressed?
Working with others		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well are we working with our partners and/or neighbours to deal with pressures caused by the recession? • Are we exploring all possible options for the delivery of local services? • What quantifiable efficiencies or improvements are resulting from working with others?