



Local Government Outcomes Framework

Report Author

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Purpose of Report

To inform Cabinet on the government's draft Local Government Outcomes Framework (LGOF) and Council's proposed response to the consultation.

Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to approve the LGOF consultation response for submission to MHCLG.

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision?	Yes
Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication?	No
What are the relevant corporate priorities?	Effective Council
Which wards are impacted?	All Wards

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report apart from the officer time required to monitor and report on the metrics contained within the final version of Local Government Outcomes Framework.

Completed by: David Scott – Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy S151 officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 Whilst the Council is not compelled to respond to the consultation, it is good to be a part of the process in shaping the Framework at this early stage.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 On 3 July 2025, the Deputy Prime Minister launched the Local Government Outcomes Framework (LGOF). Described as a '*new approach to outcome-based accountability*', the LGOF sets fifteen outcomes that government expects to work with local authorities on to deliver key national priorities for local people and communities. These will be underpinned by outcome metrics drawing from existing data sources to show how progress will be measured.
- 2.2 A suite of eighty-six draft metrics across fifteen policy areas were published for sector feedback (Appendix A). The Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) have delivered a series of engagement webinars on each policy area over July-September. Consultation will close on 12 September 2025. The proposed South Kesteven DC response is in Appendix B.
- 2.3 Sector feedback will be reviewed and the final LGOF will be published alongside the provisional Local Government Funding Settlement in December 2025. An online data product showing the LGOF priority outcomes and metrics (likely similar to the dashboards produced by the defunct Office for Local Government [OFLOG]) will be published in early 2026. The LGOF will go 'live' in April 2026.
- 2.4 MHCLG state that the LGOF is part of the reform package set out in the English Devolution White Paper to rewire the relationship between the centre and

localities. The broader reform package includes simplifying funding streams, streamlining reporting requirements and ministerial consents and reviewing statutory duties to reduce unnecessary burdens. The overall objective is to empower local leaders with greater flexibility to place shape and move away from top-down micro-management in favour of a new partnership between central and local government.

- 2.5. However, MHCLG recognise that greater local powers and capacity can offer potential for greater variance in priorities, service delivery and outcomes. Meta-governance mechanisms¹ are needed to ensure that all actors in a system of multi-level governance² row in the same direction to deliver national standards and priorities. The LGOF is intended to be such a mechanism.
- 2.6. The LGOF delivers this through two interlinked components: steering and monitoring.
- 2.7. In practice, the LGOF articulates a shared set of outcomes for central and local government to work together to achieve through problem focused interactions. In essence, to take the Homelessness & Rough Sleeping policy area as an example, the metrics would indicate the challenge in a given locality. The local authority, strategic authority, relevant government departments, non-departmental bodies, other public sector partners, civil society organisations could then rally themselves using the LGOF as a powerful signal to coordinate and develop a joined up policy response.
- 2.8. This is same conceptual approach as the role of the Ambitions and 2034 Outcomes in the Corporate Plan 2024-27. Consideration will be given on how best to incorporate the LGOF into Council's service planning and performance reporting.
- 2.9. Progress will then be monitored using the LGOF. MHCLG stress that the LGOF will not set targets or impose new data reporting requirements on local authorities. LGOF performance will feed into existing assurance and inspection regimes, including the Best Value Duty. The approach to accountability and support for localities with concerning LGOF data has not been detailed.
- 2.10. The LGOF does not assess local authority performance like previous performance management regimes (OFLOG/ the Audit Commission), but the performance of an area. A significant proportion of the LGOF metrics are not within direct local authority control, complicating and effectively limiting the LGOF's use as a disciplinary mechanism.

¹ Meta-governance being 'the governance of governance'. Local authorities are self-governing bodies. Meta-governance are the techniques and mechanisms by which the centre coordinates and manages the localities to ensure desired behaviours and policy objectives. Example mechanisms include the Best Value and Devolution frameworks, the LGR criteria and funding design and formulae.

² Multi-level governance being the understanding that the process through which policy is formulated and implemented not only involves different levels of government but also public, private, and civic actors.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The LGOF is a new outcomes-based approach to local authority accountability. MHCLG have undertaken engagement with the sector over the summer.
- 3.2. The final metric suite will be published with the provisional Local Government Funding Settlement. The LGOF will go live in April 2026.
- 3.3. The LGOF's primary purpose is to steer central, local and hyperlocal activity, stimulating a joined-up policy response to shared challenges.
- 3.4. The LGOF augments existing assurance and inspection regimes, including the Best Value Duty. The approach to accountability and support for localities with concerning LGOF data has not been detailed.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The Council are not required to respond to the LGOF consultation. However, in not doing so, the Council would miss an opportunity to influence the development of a key MHCLG workstream.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. The LGOF is a key part of MHCLG's programme to rewire the relationship between central and local government. The consultation is an opportunity for the Council to influence the development of this workstream.

6. Background Papers

- MHCLG, [Local Government Outcomes Framework feedback document: July – September 2025](#)

7. Appendices

- Appendix A – MHCLG Local Government Outcomes Framework (LGOF) - Priority outcomes and draft metrics
- Appendix B - South Kesteven DC LGOF Consultation Response