

Halton Strategic Partnership

Project development and management exercises

Outputs and outcomes

In small groups, choose one of the projects you are working on and discuss what outputs and/or outcomes you might set to measure the success of the project.

From your discussion, come up with five key outputs and/or outcomes the project would use to measure its success.

Using the guidance below on target setting, work out what you would actually measure to assess your progress in achieving these outputs and/or outcomes.

Good performance targets should be SMART:

- **specific** – clear, unambiguous and easy to understand by those who are required to achieve them
- **measurable** – there is no point setting a target for which success cannot be gauged by referring to a specific measure or measures
- **achievable** – expressing specific aims that staff feel can realistically be achieved, with some effort: 'out of reach, but not out of sight'
- **realistic** – be able to achieve them over the duration of the target
- **timed** – there should be a set timescale for achieving a target; open-ended targets may not encourage focused effort on improving performance

Good performance measures should be:

- **relevant** to what the project is trying to achieve
- able to **avoid perverse incentives**, i.e. not encourage unwanted or wasteful behaviour, e.g. preventing access to a park or open space would reduce the amount of litter, but would be counter-productive as it would prevent the public from using the space
- **attributable**, i.e. the activity measured must be capable of being influenced by actions which can be attributed to the project and it should be clear where accountability lies
- **well defined** with a clear, unambiguous definition so that data will be collected consistently and the measure is easy to understand and use
- **timely**, producing data regularly enough to track progress and quickly enough for the data to still be useful
- **reliable**, i.e. accurate enough for its intended use and responsive to change
- **comparable** with either past periods or similar programmes elsewhere
- **verifiable** with clear documentation behind it so that processes which produce the measure can be validated

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Budget monitoring

In small groups, discuss how you currently monitor the budgets you are responsible for.

Talk about what systems your organisation has in place, what you have developed yourself, and who helps you with the process.

When you have done this, discuss what problems you have with meeting the monitoring requirements you need to meet and how you might be able to improve the processes you use to overcome them.