

SDC Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP) assessment

Organisation: Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)

SDAP Publication date: May 2008

Title of SDAP: Brighter Futures – Greener Lives: Sustainable Development Action Plan 2008-2010

SDC Assessment date: September 2008

This assessment covers the SDAP and its associated delivery plans

- DCSF delivery plan for sustainable schools
- Children and families delivery plan (version: updated April 2008)
- Young people delivery plan
- Sustainable operations, procurement, people (CSR, communications & HR) delivery plan
- 'Delivery plans process' diagram.

Please see "SDAP assessment methodology paper" for background to the assessment process, and for full details of how the Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) has assessed, scored and rated this SDAP at the following webpage: <http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/sdap-tracker.html>.

SUMMARY

	Score	Rating
Coverage	2/2	
Strategic planning	11/12	
Actions	6/12	
Ownership, engagement and delivery	5/6	
Monitoring, review and reporting	5/6	
OVERALL	29/38	

ISSUES AND RISKS

The SDAP demonstrates clear strategic direction for embedding sustainable development into the work of DCSF, and includes an ambitious array of targets for policy delivery. It is clear that DCSF is taking sustainable development very seriously, and making excellent progress in this area. However there is a concern that many of the the actions contained within the delivery plans, which underpin the SDAP, are not SMART or outcome-focussed. While, the SDC understands that these actions are continually updated it is still important to ensure that appropriate and meaningful actions are outlined in the plans, even if they are only at the development stage.

DCSF'S RESPONSE

DCSF provided a response to our assessment on their website which is available to download from the 'SDAP update letter' link on the following webpage: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/aboutus/sd/actionplan.shtml>

COVERAGE				
	<i>Score</i>	0	1	2
1.	Does the SDAP state clearly the period of time that it covers?			X
2.	Is it clear how the SDAP relates to the wider departmental family, and is SDAP coverage of the departmental family adequate?		N/A	

STRATEGIC PLANNING				
	<i>Score</i>	0	1	2
3.	Does the SDAP set out the organisation's strategy for contributing to the aims, objectives and commitments of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy?			X
4.	Does the SDAP articulate the relevance of the five sustainable development principles to its core business, and set out how they are/will be mainstreamed and inform work?		X	
5.	Is it clear how the SDAP will contribute to the organisation's high-level strategic objectives, including any Public Service Agreements (PSAs) and Departmental Strategic Objectives (DSOs)?			X
6.	Does the SDAP have clear objectives, and does it articulate clearly how these objectives were selected and provide a rationale for any gaps e.g. in the coverage of core business areas?			X
7.	Does the SDAP link to other corporate plans or strategies?			X
8.	Does the SDAP include any commitment to work with other organisations or government bodies to deliver joint commitments, actions or initiatives?			X

ACTIONS				
	<i>Score</i>	0	1	2
9.	Does the SDAP articulate how the sustainable development principles and priorities are/will be integrated into its policy and decision making, set out specific actions to achieve this, and explain how these actions have been selected?			X
10.	Does the SDAP include explicit actions to improve the sustainability of the organisation's procurement activity (linking to SPAP commitments where relevant), and explain how they have been selected?		X	
11.	Does the SDAP contain specific actions which demonstrate how the organisation will drive forward the sustainability of its operations (linking to SOGE commitments where relevant), and explain how they have been selected?		X	

12. Does the SDAP contain actions relating to people, such as actions to engage staff in sustainable development, develop their skills and capability to support delivery of the SDAP, and to improve their general well-being in the work place?			X
13. Are the actions outcome-focused?	X		
14. Are the actions SMART?	X		

OWNERSHIP, ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

	<i>Score</i>		
	0	1	2
15. Is it clear how the SDAP will be communicated to staff and stakeholders, and how the organisation will ensure they have the capability to put the SDAP's key messages to work?		X	
16. Are the governance arrangements for supporting delivery of the SDAP clearly identified (e.g. boards, working groups), and is it clear who has overall responsibility for its delivery?			X
17. Has the SDAP been signed off by a Minister, Permanent Secretary or Chief Executive, and has s/he provided a foreword?			X

MONITORING, REVIEW AND REPORTING

	<i>Score</i>		
	0	1	2
18. Does the SDAP present links to the previous SDAP (where relevant) or to the historical context of sustainable development in the organisation (if this is the first SDAP that the organisation has produced)?			X
19. Are the methods and structures for monitoring and reviewing the SDAP clearly identified (e.g. boards, working groups, stakeholder engagement), and is it clear who the findings will be reported to?			X
20. Is it clear how the outcomes of internal SDAP monitoring/review will feed back into the SDAP process, including a commitment to update the SDAP within its period of coverage, where required?		X	