



Environment and Neighbourhoods Regeneration



Main responsibilities:

Area Management and Area Regeneration Teams

- To provide an area management service which focuses on local priorities, improving services and involving communities, promoting community cohesion and co-ordinating local partnership working.
- To co-ordinate activities in regeneration priority areas and to guide the development of comprehensive longer-term regeneration programmes.

Regeneration Projects and Programmes

- To develop and implement major projects and programmes to improve the physical fabric and contribute to the economic well-being of the city and the longer term sustainability of neighbourhoods.

Regeneration Policy and Resources

- To identify, manage and target grant resources to needs identified by the Regeneration Service and our partner agencies in the Resources Partnership and the Leeds Local Area Agreement.
- To provide resources and support to the voluntary, community and faith sectors.
- To develop and review strategy and policy work to support delivery through the Regeneration Service, other Council services, the Narrowing the Gap Executive, and the Local Strategic Partnership (Leeds Initiative).

Budget highlights 2008/09:

Wellbeing

- The Area Committees have responsibility for revenue and capital Wellbeing monies of £1.8m and £1.0m respectively (£3.0m capital over 3 years) to support activity in local communities.

Community Centres

- The service currently manages a portfolio of community centres with a budget of £3.6m. Additional centres were absorbed from Learning and Leisure in 2007-8.

Neighbourhood Management

- The service will continue to deliver intensive neighbourhood management to improve the most disadvantaged communities supported by £1.2m of external grant funding.

Major Programmes

- Commencing delivery of the East and South East Regeneration Initiative (EASEL), securing an initial 5-year investment in housing of £70m and establishing a long term Joint Venture vehicle in partnership with Bellway PLC.
- Working to secure up to £189m of housing PFI schemes in Little London and in Beeston Hill and Holbeck.



Environment and Neighbourhoods Housing Services – General Fund



Main responsibilities:

To improve the quality and variety of the housing offer to the people of Leeds by:

- Increasing the supply of homes (all tenures) meeting the decency standard.
- Increasing the number of affordable homes.
- Increasing levels of reoccupation of long term empty homes.
- Expanding accreditation in the private rented sector.
- Reducing the number of homeless households.
- Redressing the mix of housing tenure as appropriate within neighbourhoods.
- Increasing opportunities to access housing options across all tenures.
- Ensuring the use of housing land and assets supports the wider regeneration of neighbourhoods.
- Creating pathways for neighbourhoods to influence decisions at neighbourhood level.
- Supporting integration and cohesion at a neighbourhood level.

Budget highlights 2008/2009:

- In August 2007, the Council was informed of the government's intention to address the backlog of unresolved asylum cases by July 2011. The implication of this target is that the Council will need to make available appropriate accommodation to meet the requirements of this proposal. This will reduce income by £210k within the Leeds Asylum Service.
- In October 2007, responsibility for management of the Hollies and Pennington hostels transferred to the private sector with relevant staff being subject to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations. Residual costs associated with these facilities are partially offset by the reconfiguration of the night worker service at these establishments (£248k).
- The contract for operating the Hillside Induction Centre, which was due to expire on 31 March 2008, has been adjusted by £68k to facilitate the bid for a new contract which has been successful. The contract has been awarded for a further 12 months.
- The Temporary and Emergency Accommodation Service and the Resettlement Service have been tendered.
- In respect of homelessness accommodation and the Sheltered Warden service, it is intended to review the process to increase the recovery level of eligible income (£150k).



Environment and Neighbourhoods Strategic Landlord



Main responsibilities:

- Providing housing services to over 59,000 tenancies through the Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs).
- Administering enquiries and applications by tenants under the Right to Buy legislation.
- Managing services to leaseholders.
- Consulting with and involving tenants in all aspects of departmental services.
- Overall management and strategy of council housing in the city, including research and development.

Budget highlights 2008/09:

The budget includes the allocation to the Arms Length Management Organisations, which took responsibility for managing the Council's stock of housing from February 2003. Apart from the disaggregation of £119k in budgets to the ALMOs, the overall management fee has been kept at the 2007/08 level.

Rents have increased by 5.8% on average, and equate to an average of £3.16 a week over a 48-week period. Individual rents will increase by varying amounts, which is due to the authority implementing the government's 15-year rent restructuring policy, of which 2008/09 is the seventh year. Under this policy individual tenants are protected from large increases in rent by the government's requirement that rents will not increase by more than 'inflation plus 0.5% plus £2' a week.