

Scrutiny at Leeds City Council

Annual Report 2008/09



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Foreword from the Scrutiny Advisory Group



*Scrutiny Advisory Group – Left to Right
Top: Cllr Ralph Pryke, Cllr Barry Anderson, Cllr Mark Dobson
Bottom: Cllr Judith Chapman, Cllr Bill Hyde (chair), Cllr Sue Bentley
Cllr Pauleen Grahame (not pictured)*

Welcome to the annual report of the Council's Scrutiny Boards. As Chair of the Scrutiny Advisory Group (on which all Scrutiny Board Chairs sit) I am pleased to report details the work undertaken by the Council's seven Scrutiny Boards in 2008/09.

This has been an interesting year for scrutiny, one which has seen the introduction of a new Scrutiny Board - City & Regional Partnerships - reflecting the changing nature of the delivery of public services and the introduction by the Government of increased scrutiny powers and the widening of its role to include the scrutiny of partners.

We ourselves have also been subject to scrutiny with the publication of an external audit report, carried out by KPMG, on the strengths and weaknesses of the overview and scrutiny function in Leeds.

Whilst the report paints an overall positive picture of how scrutiny operates in Leeds, there are areas for improvement and it will be the job of officers and the Scrutiny Advisory Group to ensure that those improvements are made in order that scrutiny and its role in the governance of the city goes from strength to strength.

Cllr Bill Hyde – Scrutiny Advisory Group Chair

Work of the Boards

In 2008/09 there were 7 Scrutiny Boards:

- Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care)
- Scrutiny Board (Central and Corporate Functions)
- Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)
- Scrutiny Board (City and Regional Partnerships)
- Scrutiny Board (City Development)
- Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)
- Scrutiny Board (Health)

Each individual Board has reported its work in more detail in this report.

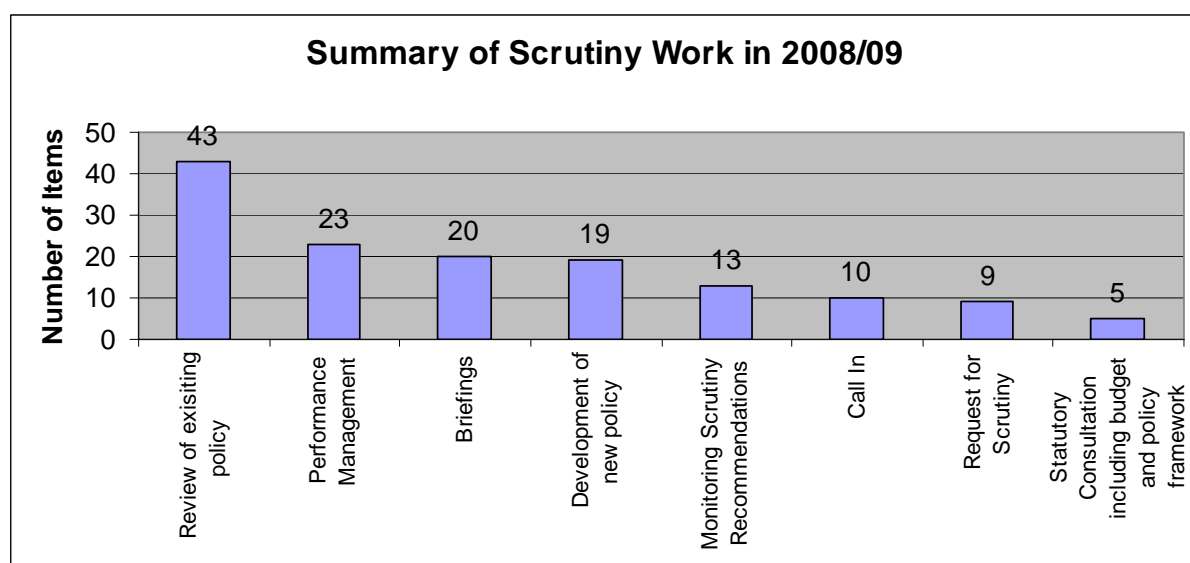
Call In

There have been nine Call Ins this year, the highest number in one year since the introduction of Overview and Scrutiny. These are detailed under the relevant Scrutiny Board.

Summary of Scrutiny Work in 2008/09

Each Scrutiny Board identifies the type of work it does. This allows scrutiny members to see at a glance the balance of the items on their work programme and support them in deciding what types of work they would like to focus on.

The bar chart below represents the types of work that the Scrutiny Boards have done this year.



Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care)



*Councillor Judith Chapman
Chair of Scrutiny Board
(Adult Social Care)*

Membership of the Board:

Councillor Judith Chapman (Chair)
Councillor Stuart Andrew
Councillor Suzi Armitage
Councillor Debra Coupar
Councillor Penny Ewens
Councillor Ruth Feldman
Councillor Clive Fox
Councillor Ted Hanley
Councillor Arif Hussain
Councillor Graham Kirkland – until 10th September 2008
Councillor Thomas Murray
Councillor Alan Taylor – from 10th September 2008
Councillor Eileen Taylor

Co-opted Members of the Board:

Joy Fisher – Alliance of Service Users and Carers

The Chair's summary

I am pleased to present the annual report of Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care) for 2008/9.

This year, in addition to our large scale Adaptations inquiry, we have looked at several other areas such as Commissioning in Adult Social Care; Homecare provision in the city; the consultation and engagement employed during the most recent Income Review; and Dignity in Care.

We have paid particular attention to performance management following the 2008 CSCI inspection and report. A working group was established to monitor the improvement of Adult Social Care services against the targets set out in their Independence Wellbeing and Choice Action Plan. In addition we have looked at two specific work areas with the aim of improving adult safeguarding arrangements within the city. These are Strengthening Strategic Partnerships and the Implementation of Quality Assurance Processes and Procedures.

An ongoing area of major change this year and for the foreseeable future is the transition towards personalised budgets, which will enable those who prefer to control their own funds the choice and flexibility to manage how they are supported and by whom. A further working group has been established to monitor and examine this ongoing process.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to all the members of the Board for completing our busy work programme with such enthusiasm and commitment.

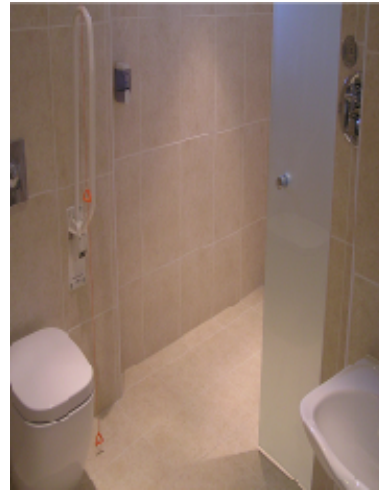
Cllr Judith Chapman, Chair of Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care)

Inquiry into Adaptations

We identified Adaptations as a potential area for a more detailed scrutiny inquiry in June 2008. We were advised that a previous scrutiny inquiry on adaptations had been undertaken a number of years ago and a report was published in October 2002. We acknowledge that progress had been made since the previous inquiry in 2002: However we were keen to identify if the Council was providing good customer service when assessing and delivering adaptations.

We also wanted to explore whether value for money was being achieved, and determine if the wellbeing of the individual was a general consideration when providing adaptations and that equality across all housing tenures was being achieved.

We considered the best approach to this inquiry was to establish a working group who would have the capacity to undertake the inquiry in greater detail.



The purpose of the inquiry was to make an assessment of the overall adaptations process for disabled adults in both public and private sector dwellings (cross-tenure) and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:

- The overall time to complete the adaptations process from the initial point of contact with the Council to practical completion of the adaptation, with particular reference to high risk cases and families with complex needs.
- Specific and identifiable stages within the overall adaptations process.
- The determination of risk within the adaptations process and how low level needs are addressed.
- Delivery of consistently high levels of customer service throughout the process, including the availability of customer advice/guidance and the collection/use of customer feedback.
- Current safeguards in place to ensure the Council receives 'value for money' in the delivery of adaptations, including the re-use of aids and equipment.

The presentation of evidence has now concluded and it is intended that the Board will present its recommendations at the beginning of the next municipal year. It is recommended that the forthcoming Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board continue to monitor the implementation of these recommendations throughout 2009/10 and beyond.

Dignity in Care

In June 2008, we identified 'Dignity in Care' as the subject of a potential scrutiny inquiry and an area that we wanted to examine in more detail. We requested a report that outlined Leeds' approach to help ensure the preservation of individuals' dignity across various care settings. In addition we were keen to learn about how the Council had used the £1,040,000 capital grant money awarded by the government during 2007/08 to support the work in Leeds.

We were advised that overall, the process for deciding how the grant was to be allocated was not prescribed by the Government – although some allocation criteria was laid down. This included:

- Improvements should directly benefit residents – improvements of areas that are exclusively used by staff would therefore be inappropriate.
- Improvements should not be of such magnitude as to prompt a demand for increased fees.
- Care home providers should be given a degree of discretion and flexibility in making the intended improvements. However, they should maintain a clear audit trail of their decision-making processes, which can be made available if requested.
- The grants are not intended to enable large-scale or expensive redevelopments which benefit only a small number of care homes.
- The grant should not unreasonably favour homes owned by the local authority itself.

As part of the grant allocation process, we heard that dignity and quality of care were adopted as the basis for all the decisions about the distribution of the grant. All care homes were informed that grant funding should support improvements that would make the greatest difference to the quality of life of residents.

We were very pleased to hear that in total 71 improvement schemes had been completed, with grants of up to £41,000 being awarded. We were advised that, for a variety of reasons, the bids from 23 organisations were unsuccessful. Works included the improvement to buildings and refurbishment of accommodation, landscaping of external areas and the provision of equipment.



We consider that the approach and commitment employed to improving the dignity and respect experienced by citizens has resulted in proven successful outcomes. We consider the organisation and practices employed for the Dignity in Care Campaign to be an example of good practice for other major projects and initiatives. We do recommend however that the forthcoming Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board commissions a report in the next municipal year to identify where grant allocation has not yet been provided to the various successful organisations.

Personalisation

8 October 2008 saw the Executive Board receive an update on the work undertaken in Leeds to prepare for the personalisation agenda, since the publication of the concordat 'Putting People First' in December 2007. The Executive Board subsequently requested that the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board monitor the progress of the personalisation agenda. For the purpose of this inquiry we decided to establish a working group to ensure sufficient attention was paid to what is anticipated to be a major development in policy and working practice over the next three years.



Since December 2008 we have received regular monthly presentations on the 'Independence, Wellbeing and Choice' Action Plan which incorporates the personalisation objectives and targets to be achieved by the Adult Social Services Department.

The Personalisation Working Group has been advised of the vision to transform the whole of Adult Social Care into a system of self-directed support. This will enable eligible people needing social care and associated services to design, choose and control that support. It is our intention to monitor these objectives and ensure that individuals are given choice and control over the delivery of their care package.

We have been informed of the Early Implementer project and its purpose to pilot the use of the Self Directed Support (SDS) model by transferring those service users who wish to take part. This will test new processes and procedures developed by the project team, including the new system in operation for allocating financial resources.

Due to the scale and importance of the policy and operational development in the area of personalisation we recommend that this inquiry continues during the next municipal year and that a personalisation Working Group is re-established to scrutinise the remaining criteria defined in the terms of reference, these being:

- The Common Assessment Framework, Single Assessment Questionnaire, and associated areas,
- The process of assessment and review
- Partnership working - so people 'only need to tell their story once'.
- Provision of urgent social care support, particularly outside normal working hours.
- Advocacy services

Income Review for Care Services

On 23 July 2008 we were advised about the detailed consultation plan for the Income Review. The consultation process ended on 31 October and the broad outcome of that process was presented to us at our meeting on 24 November 2008.

We were advised that a charging regime had been in place since the establishment of the Social Services department in the 1970s. We also heard about the current serious funding pressures in Adult Social Services – both nationally and locally. The national average for generating income through charges for non-residential community care services was around 13%, currently Leeds generates around 6%.

We sought assurance that the consultation had adequately included the wider population of Leeds and not solely current service users. We were advised that in addition to direct user consultation a Citizens Panel had formed part of the consultation process. 11,250 consultation survey forms were distributed, 10 media adverts and press releases were issued and 20 consultation events and briefings were held.



We were also keen to determine at our April meeting the integrity of the consultation process and identify if any lessons had been learnt. We were advised that there was a level of confusion with the form used. Some of the individuals who received it commented that it was complicated and not simple enough. Others thought the form did not apply to them so did not complete it. We are reassured by the plan to use panels as reading groups, to look at future consultation and policy document examples intended to go into the service user and public domain. They will provide guidance on the style and content used to suit the needs of the recipient. We were also advised that face to face consultation would have resulted in a greater level of feedback. This should be a consideration when undertaking future consultation with sufficient time allocated to carry out this consultation method. We were pleased to note that the voluntary, community and faith sectors have stipulated their willingness to assist in the future.

In order to assess the actual impact of the income review on service users and assess the response generated by increased charges we recommend that a report is brought before the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board in the next municipal year providing a full evaluation.

Safeguarding, and Independence, Wellbeing and Choice



**Leeds Safeguarding
Adults Partnership**

On 3 December 2008 the Executive Board received the 'Independence, Wellbeing and Choice' inspection report from the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI).

As a result the Executive Board asked that the matter be referred to the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board for us to monitor performance against the agreed targets, aimed at improving the quality and consistency of services currently provided.

In order to be rigorous in our inquiries we agreed that it was necessary for our colleagues on the Health Scrutiny Board to be integrated and involved in the overview of performance against the action plan. We also agreed that more rigorous investigation was required in the area of safeguarding.

We decided that the Proposals Working Group would meet on a monthly basis to monitor overall progress of Adult Social Services performance against the objectives set out in the action plan and report its views directly to the Scrutiny Board. In addition we have undertaken two safeguarding inquiries looking specifically at strengthening strategic partnerships and the implementation of quality assurance processes and procedures.

We have heard that progress has been made in the formulation of the Leeds Safeguarding Adult Partnership Board and its sub groups. Partnership organisations have nominated representatives for the Safeguarding Board. The first meeting of the revised Safeguarding Board took place on 18 February 2009.

We have been assured that ten additional senior practitioners are being recruited to reinforce front line service delivery and ensure quality checks are in place. To support this we have been advised of the significant amount of safeguarding training to be delivered to staff and the voluntary sector.

Dr Margaret Flynn, Principal Research Fellow at Sheffield Hallam University and Chair of Lancashire County Council's Safeguarding Board kindly agreed to answer our questions regarding the safeguarding case file audit conducted by her team in November 2008. She highlighted the concerns raised in her report and encouragingly explained to us that the potential for improvement within Adult Social Care is promising.

We recognise the endeavours that have been made to significantly improve the service provided by Adult Social Services since the CSCI inspection and recommend that performance monitoring continues throughout the next municipal year until the time of the next inspection. We also recommend that the requirement for further monitoring be evaluated following the next inspection.

The Board's full work programme 2008-9

Review of existing policy

- Inquiry into adaptations

Development of new policy

- Income generation for Community Care services
- Personalised support for adults
- Health and Wellbeing Plan
- Sustainable Communities Act

Performance management and monitoring

- Commissioning in Adult Social Care
- Performance management - quarterly reports
- Homecare provision
- Adult Social Services- annual review report (2007/08)
- Independence, Well-being and Choice inspection report
- Safeguarding – Strengthening strategic partnerships
- Safeguarding - Implementation of quality assurance processes and procedures
- Income review - consultation and engagement review

Briefings

- Dignity in Care
- Income generation for Community Care services
- Update on Leeds Local Involvement Network (LINK)
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
- The Mental Capacity Act

Scrutiny Board (Central and Corporate Functions)



*Cllr Mark Dobson
Chair of Scrutiny Board
(Central and Corporate Functions)*

Membership of the Board:

Cllr Mark Dobson (Chair)
Cllr Bernard Atha
Cllr John Bale
Cllr Sue Bentley
Cllr Ben Chastney
Cllr Patrick Davey
Cllr Jane Dowson
Cllr Penny Ewens
Cllr Martin Hamilton
Cllr Valerie Kendall
Cllr Alison Lowe
Cllr Brian Selby
Cllr Paul Wadsworth

The Chair's summary

When I took the Chair of this Scrutiny Board it was with the intention of adding real value to the work of the council, to offer the executive recommendations that would improve the services we provide and perhaps prove along the way the worth of scrutiny. I hope we have gone some way to achieving this.

I am very grateful for the personal support my fellow Board members have given me over the past year. On my part I would like to thank members for the manner in which our meetings have been conducted. All members of the Board have worked hard; attendance has been high and a number of working groups have supplemented the work of the main Board.

Our decision at the beginning of the year to focus on one item per meeting has paid massive dividends. Whilst never meant to be an easy ride, our witnesses have commented on how coming to Scrutiny has been a positive experience and have expressed gratitude for being given the time and space in the meeting to have challenging discussions with Members on important issues.

I am pleased with the inquiries we have tackled this year, especially attendance management, procurement, cover pricing and equality and diversity. I am satisfied

that the recommendations will make a difference and was very pleased that the Executive Board agreed with our recommendations.

I am also particularly pleased with our choice of witnesses. The Board made a conscious decision this year to seek the views of people outside of the Civic Hall. We were delighted therefore to meet with Professor Dame Carol Black - National Director for Health and Work, Chairman of the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges and Chairman of the Nuffield Trust. We were also pleased to receive the views and opinions of Trade Union colleagues, Health Service professionals, the private sector and national policy advisors. The Board would like to extend its thanks to all our contributors.

There have been issues that the Board has not been able to address this year. We have agreed terms of reference for an inquiry into the use of external consultants; we have also flagged up the need to explore the relationship between the call centre and directorates. These will be recommended to our successor Board.

Our successor Board will also be asked to further embed the principle of scrutinising the budget in conjunction with the Council's performance framework, an activity started this year.

Cllr Mark Dobson
Chair of Scrutiny Board (Central and Corporate Functions)

Inquiry on Attendance Management

The business case for sound attendance management procedures and processes is clear. It is estimated that sickness absence cost the authority approximately £26 million in 2007/08. This to our mind is not acceptable.

The economic argument was not our only concern. There is also a human cost to these figures. The good health of our employees will provide better life chances for their families and go a long way towards our aim of 'narrowing the gap.'

The aim of this inquiry was to seek solutions to the challenges of sickness absence management within the authority. All our recommendations were agreed by Executive Board.



Dame Carol Black, who participated in the inquiry

“Employers have significant scope to facilitate an employee’s early return from sickness absence. Early, regular and sensitive contact with employees during sickness absence can be a key factor in enabling an early return. Yet as many as 40% of organisations have no sickness absence management policy at all.”

Dame Carol Black’s review of the health of Britain’s working age population

Our main recommendations

That the Council’s most senior officers instil a culture where team leaders are expected, and are equipped with the skills, to take responsibility for the attendance management of their staff.

That all staff recognise their responsibility to foster a culture where good attendance is expected and where unjustified absence will not be tolerated.

That the Council pilots a ‘shift swap’ scheme within Environment and Neighbourhoods.

That the Council in the first instance develops formal links with Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust to share best practice in the area of attendance management and that consideration is given to Leeds City Council leading on the development of a wider ‘best practice’ network.

That the Council actively pursues becoming a *Fit for Work* pilot area.

That the introduction of fit notes is endorsed and implemented as soon as is possible.

Our other recommendations were:

That the Council explores practical ways in which jobs may be adjusted in order to respond to fit notes and therefore encourage return to work.

That the Council continues with its proactive approach to health and well-being under the Happy, Healthy and Here programme. In particular, it would encourage careful evaluation of pilots such as Vielife and rehabilitation and return to work, to see if there is merit in rolling them out across the Council.

It is also important that the Council is aware of its role and influence as an exemplar employer across the city and we would encourage the Council to work with the Healthy Leeds Partnership to coordinate existing and develop new health and well-being initiatives across the city. The new Workplace Health Improvement Specialist should be supported in their role in making this happen.

Inquiry on Procurement, Outsourcing and Commissioning

Procurement is an activity that is shared across all directorates. It ranges from small-scale, routine purchases to large and/or high-risk projects. Our starting point was to better understand the business case for the proposed development of a One Council Commissioning Framework and particularly to understand how this framework would address the elected Members' perennial concerns over contract management. All our recommendations were agreed by Executive Board.

Our main recommendations

That further work is undertaken to ascertain whether the One Council Commissioning Framework can be embedded within existing arrangements. This could involve a formalised role for scrutiny.

That the Chief Procurement Officer is given responsibility for the successful development of the Category Management approach.

That Category Management plans for key spend areas are developed. These plans should cover up to a 3 year period and detail what the Council plans to commission in those areas, what resource will be required to commission and manage the arrangements and how efficiencies will be made in those spend areas.

That a Category Manager is identified for each category who will be responsible for that category and will engage with the relevant part of the council who spend in that category area.

Our other recommendations were

That a 'certificate of competency' is developed and introduced for officers involved in procurement.

That contract management is incorporated in the pre-contract phase of a project. This to include the development of a contract management plan, identifying resources to be assigned to contract management and any training requirements.

That a regional approach is taken to addressing capacity and capability problems around contract management, using Yorkshire and Humber's Regional Improvement and Efficiency Plan (RIEP) funding to facilitate improvements.

That further discussion and agreement takes place on the most appropriate way forward to influence contractors' employment practices, which promotes our legal equality duties and helps achieve our Equality and Diversity Scheme.

Inquiry on Member Development

The Council was awarded the Improvement and Development Agency's 'Charter for Member Development' in 2007. Their report made a number of suggestions, including the recommendation to undertake a scrutiny review of Member Development.

We agreed to focus our inquiry on making an assessment of and, where appropriate, making recommendations on the following areas:

- Extent to which Member Development is Member-led
- Provision of resources and budget to support the function.
- Effectiveness of the Member Development Strategy and existing training provision for Members
- Our ability to gain CharterPlus

Our main recommendations

That the Member Development Officer discusses with Directors how the presentation skills of those officers providing training may be improved.

That the Member Development Officer work with the whips and group offices in a more proactive way in preparing the necessary Personal Development Plan (PDP) documents based on existing knowledge in order to increase the number of completed PDPs.

That the Member Development Officer as a matter of routine shares feedback with course presenters and publishes course information on the intranet.

That for role specific training, officer/member groups are established to evaluate the effectiveness of training modules.

That the Council makes a commitment to achieve Charterplus in February 2010. We would support this with the caveat that the final decision is made after the external pre-assessment in autumn 2009.

Inquiry on Cover Pricing

Our decision to undertake this piece of work was based on the concern that the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) investigations into cover pricing practices indicated that the authority was susceptible when inviting tenders for projects. We were particularly interested in whether there was any evidence that cover pricing was resulting in inflated tenders being submitted and therefore causing a direct cost to public money. We have noted that there appears to be little evidence that this is occurring.

We are pleased to say from the outset that the Chief Procurement Officer and the Senior Audit Manager have been clear, efficient and proactive in responding to the concerns raised. Following discussions we were satisfied that as an authority we are equipped with the knowledge and systems to combat any unethical practices within the tendering process. Efforts made by the authority are good and reflect largely what we suggest should be put in place.

Inquiry on Embedding Equality, Diversity and Cohesion and Integration

On 16th April 2008 Executive Board approved the Equality and Diversity Strategy and resolved the following;

“That the Equality and Diversity Scheme be referred to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration, with Overview and Scrutiny Committee being requested to monitor progress of the scheme against the action plan”.

Our main recommendations

That the Scrutiny Advisory Group consider the incorporation of equality, diversity and cohesion and integration issues within the scrutiny process and request the drafting of an appropriate Scrutiny Guidance Note for inclusion within the Council’s Constitution.

That the Head of Equalities develops a realistic and deliverable approach to incorporating impact assessments into the council’s decision making process and report back to this Scrutiny Board in April 2009.

Leeds City Council has signed up with the Fair Play Partnership who will work with elected Members to develop their knowledge, understanding and future role in driving forward the equality and diversity agenda.

Our inquiry also recommended the following:

That members of Scrutiny Board (Central and Corporate Functions) commit to undertaking the equality and diversity assessment and training provided by the Fair Play Partnership.

This was agreed and a subsequent meeting between the Fair Play Partnership and members of the Board agreed to recommend to the responsible Executive Board Member that an action plan is drawn up.

Call Ins

Call In - Capital programme update 2008

The Executive Board's decision to agree adjustments to the capital programme was called in.

The decision was released for implementation.

Call In – Marketing Leeds grant

The officer delegated decision to grant funding to Marketing Leeds was called in. The Board agreed to release the decision for implementation but to recommend amendments to the agreement. This was agreed by the Chief Executive. It was further recommended that Scrutiny Board (City and Regional Partnerships) undertake a broader inquiry into the work and positive achievements of Marketing Leeds. This was also agreed.

Call In – Budget action plan - staffing

The officer delegated decision to introduce revised working arrangements was referred back for reconsideration.

There were two associated issues with this decision. Firstly the issue of whether the decision had been implemented prior to the call in period expiring and secondly the fact that we were advised after the event that the decision should not have been available for call in.

The first issue is of great concern to Members and representation has been made to the Chief Executive.

Call In – Procurement of a corporate Interactive Voice Recognition package

The officer delegated decision to introduce this package was referred back for reconsideration.

This matter will now be discussed by the Executive Board.

Scrutiny Board Working Groups

The Board established four working groups this year.

ALMOs – capital finance

The Board's interest in this was initially sparked off in July when members discussed the Council's financial performance for the year ending 31st March 2008. Of particular interest to the Board was the reported position of the ALMOs.

Board members were interested in understanding further the reasons for this financial position and to gain a better understanding of the legal relationship between the Council and the ALMOs which might in turn influence the management of capital reserves.

It was members' view that given the commencement of an options appraisal to determine the long term vision for Council housing in Leeds and an assessment of the financial and organisational options to deliver the vision, no further work on this matter would be undertaken by Scrutiny Board (Central & Corporate Functions). A referral was however made to Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) with a recommendation that it takes a proactive role in following the development of any future options for housing in Leeds.

Inquiry on ALMO inspections – meeting the Equality Standard and preparing for inspection

The driver for this working group was concern from members of the Board that the ALMOs may fall down in their forthcoming inspections on the grounds of Equality and Diversity.

We were pleased to conclude that any fears we may have initially had about the ALMOs readiness to meet the key lines of inquiry in this area were greatly reduced.

Human resources

A working group was established to undertake preliminary research into workforce planning issues, particularly the Council's role in offering job offer guarantee schemes and apprenticeships for young people. No further scrutiny has been undertaken.

Electoral Services – Form As

A working group was established in order to brief members on the processes adopted to manage Form As (voter registration cards).

The Board's full work programme 2008/09

Review of existing policy

- Inquiry on attendance management
- Inquiry on cover pricing
- Inquiry on Member Development
- Inquiry on ALMO inspections – meeting the Equality Standard and preparing for inspection – Working Group

Development of new policy

- Inquiry on procurement, outsourcing and commissioning
- Inquiry on Embedding Equality, Diversity and Cohesion and Integration
- Fair Play Partnership Diversity Champion project
- Sustainable Communities Act

Performance management

- Council Business Plan performance reports
- Financial health and budget setting reports

Briefings

- Income collection
- ALMO – capital finance – Working Group
- Human Resources – Working Group – use of agency staff
- Electoral Services – Form A – Working Group

Call In

- Capital programme update.
- Marketing Leeds grant
- Budget action plan – staffing
- Procurement of a corporate Interactive Voice Recognition package

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)



*Cllr Bill Hyde
Chair of Scrutiny Board
(Children's Services)*

Membership of the Board

Councillor Bill Hyde (Chair)	Mr Tony Britten
Councillor Brian Cleasby	Mr Ian Falkingham
Councillor Geoff Driver	Ms Celia Foote
Councillor Judith Elliott	Prof Peter Gosden
Councillor Ronnie Feldman	Mr Robert Greaves (part)
Councillor Brenda Lancaster	Mr Tim Hales (part)
Councillor Jim McKenna	Mrs Sandra Hutchinson
Councillor Vonnie Morgan	Ms Claire Johnson (part)
Councillor Karen Renshaw	Ms Taira Kayani
Councillor Eileen Taylor	Mrs Sue Knights
Councillor Chris Townsley	Ms Jeannette Morris-Boam
	Mr Ben Wanyonyi (part)

The Chair's summary

I am, as always, proud and pleased to be able to introduce the annual report of the Children's Services Scrutiny Board. As usual my colleagues on the Board have worked hard to ensure that our input makes a difference to the children and young people of our city, working alongside the ever-widening range of partners engaged in providing services in this arena.

This year has, once again, seen our work programme closely mirror the priority areas in the Children and Young People's Plan, and key performance indicators from the Local Area Agreement. We have carried out a major inquiry into education standards for young children entering the education system, focusing on transition between early years provision and the first years of formal schooling. We have also contributed to the ongoing development of 14-19 education provision in the city.

We have continued a strong focus on performance monitoring, and holding the Executive Members and senior officers to account for delivery of the key priorities. This year in particular we have become much more assertive in our tracking of action in response to scrutiny recommendations, to ensure that promised improvements in services are delivered.

As a Board, we continue to face (and from time to time to debate) the challenge for one Scrutiny Board in maintaining an overview across such a broad spectrum, as well as being effective in the detailed work that we choose to undertake. For us the answer continues to be a determined prioritisation of subjects for inquiry, and an ongoing reliance on the unfailing willingness of many Board members to take on additional work through working groups, which adds a vital dimension to our capacity.

Once again, we are delighted that young people in Leeds have been involved in scrutiny, through the Young People's Scrutiny Forum, which has produced an excellent report on 'Protecting our Environment'. We are proud to support their recommendations and look forward to working with the young people to track progress in the future.

We are also delighted that the young people's scrutiny work has received national recognition, being highly commended in the community engagement category of the inaugural *Good Scrutiny Awards* presented by the Centre for Public Scrutiny in June 2008.

As always, we have also tried to make room in our work programme for issues that arise during the year. The most significant of these is of course the safeguarding of our children and young people, echoing events on the national stage. We have added two inquiries about safeguarding into our work programme, and these will continue into the new year. The Board will continue to play its part in ensuring that the children of our city are safe.

The next few pages highlight some of the main features of our work over the past year, and I would like to thank all those who have contributed as witnesses to the success of our programme.

Cllr Bill Hyde
Chair of Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Co-opted Members

This year the Board has said goodbye to two of its co-opted members: Robert Greaves, our secondary parent governor representative; and Tim Hales, one of our teacher representatives. We particularly pay tribute to Tim's contribution to scrutiny, as he has been with the Board since its very first year, and has been a strong player in many of our working groups and visits over the years. In their places, we are pleased to welcome Ben Wanyonyi and Claire Johnson, who are both already beginning to make their own contributions to the Board's work.



David Young Community Academy, which Board members visited in September 2008

Safeguarding

Safeguarding of our children and young people has been at the forefront of everybody's mind since the national reports of the Baby P tragedy in late 2008. In January 2009, the Scrutiny Board considered a general report on safeguarding activity here in Leeds, and decided to undertake some more in-depth work on the arrangements in place.

As a result the Board has set up two working groups, one focusing on core child protection resources, the other on the general preventative duty applying across the whole range of children's services. Following an initial scoping exercise by each group, the Board agreed a detailed remit for further work by both groups which will extend into the new municipal year. This will include investigations with local staff as well as learning from the significant pieces of work being carried out at a national level.

Education Standards

The Board has carried out two inquiries on this topic during the current year. Our inquiry on the 14-19 education review is ongoing, as indeed the review itself is ongoing. However our work so far has included a meeting with senior representatives of providers across all sectors, and a visit to Sheffield, which last year was awarded Beacon status for its innovative work with this age group.

The second of our inquiries focused on the other end of the education system, on children entering formal education for the first time, often but not always from some form of childcare setting. In this case we have been particularly concerned to look at the transition from informal to formal education, and how information is shared between the various professionals working with children to enable them to start out on the best possible footing.

The Board saw much that was positive during the course of their inquiry, but also identified a number of areas for improvement, including:

- Parity of esteem between different settings
- Links between children's centres and the whole of their local community
- Use of the Early Years Foundation Stage to identify and track those in need of support
- Joined-up working
- Support for BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) children and those with special educational needs
- Coordination of governance arrangements

The inquiry combined the presentation of written evidence to formal Board meetings, with a number of visits to early years providers including schools, private nurseries, children's centres and childminders.

Young People's Scrutiny Forum

'Protecting our Environment' is the third inquiry carried out by the Young People's Scrutiny Forum and, as always, we have been impressed at the quality of the recommendations and report that the young people have produced.

The Forum decided to concentrate on three aspects of the environment:

- Recycling
- Sustainability
- Education

They focused their work on ways that they could influence change and make a difference in Leeds.

The young people canvassed the views of their peers through a questionnaire, as well as collating written evidence from council departments, before holding a question and answer delegate event with a range of officers from across the council.

They have come up with a challenging set of recommendations which have now been formally endorsed by the Children's Services and Environment and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Boards. We have also agreed to work with the newly formed Scrutiny Panel of Leeds Youth Council to monitor implementation of the recommendations. This is part of a stronger relationship that we are working to develop between the Youth Council Scrutiny Panel and the Scrutiny Boards on an ongoing basis.



Members of the Young People's Scrutiny Forum debating their ideas with officers at the delegate event

Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST)

Our work on this topic arose from a request for scrutiny by a local ward councillor, concerned that a unilateral decision by one part of the council to reduce its funding contribution to a multi-agency project was going to lead to the project's closure, without proper consultation or consideration of the wider implications of that decision.

The project in question is the Multi-Agency Support Team, known as the MAST team, operating in East Leeds. Whilst everyone we heard from agreed that there was a need to review future operation, it was also very clear to us that the project was held in very high regard both locally and more broadly across the city.

Working with the local ward councillor who made the original referral, the Scrutiny Board has successfully negotiated a commitment to retain the project and its staff until September 2009 whilst a planned broader review of services is carried out, and also a commitment to ensure that the staff involved are kept regularly briefed on progress.

In addition the Board has obtained a commitment from the Director of Children's Services that appropriate arrangements will be put in place to ensure that such unilateral action does not jeopardise future joint projects, without the opportunity for the wider children's services partnership to consider the potential impact on the overall priorities for delivering children's services in Leeds.

Recommendation Tracking

Last year the Scrutiny Boards introduced a more formal system of tracking progress against previous recommendations, to ensure that they are put into effect. This is particularly important as some of our recommendations may take longer to achieve in full than others, and it would be all too easy to lose sight of them as the Board's work programme moves on to new inquiries.

We believe that our efforts are beginning to bear fruit. There have been at least three instances over the course of the year where we have found that progress in implementing our recommendations has been subject to unsatisfactory delays. As a consequence we have gone back to the service concerned to demand explanations and action. We trust that this has also sent a clear message to others to take Scrutiny Board recommendations seriously.

Call In - Award of contract for the delivery of Connexions Services in Leeds: Information Advice and Guidance

This officer decision was called in by members concerned about the scoring criteria used to assess the bids; the robustness of the decision-making process; and how the winning bid was deemed to offer the best value for money, particularly concern that a new provider would disrupt service provision.

Officers explained that the tender evaluation panel was established in accordance with council procedures; the panel's decision was unanimous; and it had been supported and endorsed by both the Children's Services Leadership Team and the Joint Preventative Commissioning Panel.

Having considered the evidence provided, the board agreed unanimously that the decision should be released for implementation.

The Board's full work programme 2008/09

Requests for scrutiny

- Multi-Agency Support Team
- Meadowfield Primary School

Review of existing policy

- Children and Young People's Plan review
- Leadership Challenge
- Safeguarding - preventative duty
- Safeguarding - resources
- Education Standards - entering early education
- Attendance

Development of new policy

- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Children and Young People's Plan
- 14-19 review of education
- Sustainable Communities Act
- Involving young people in scrutiny

Monitoring scrutiny recommendations

- Quarterly recommendation tracking
- Inclusion response
- Services for 8-13 year olds response
- Breeze Youth Promise
- Inclusion consultation
- Adoption recruitment
- Youth Service surveys
- Leeds Inclusive Learning Strategy
- Multi-Agency Support Team response

Performance management

- Quarterly performance reports
- Quarterly overview of Children's Services and Children and Young People's Plan priorities
- Ofsted Annual Performance Assessment of Children's Services
- Ofsted inspection and education standards biannual reports

Briefing

- Commissioning
- Visit to David Young Academy

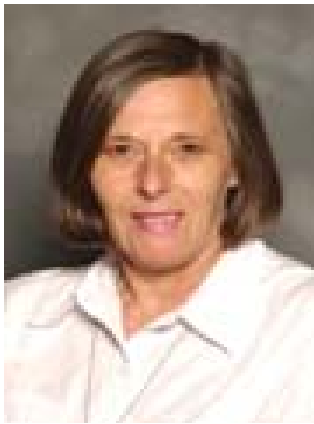
Young People's Scrutiny Forum

- Protecting our Environment Inquiry

Call In

- Award of delivery of Connexions services in Leeds

Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships)



*Cllr Sue Bentley
Chair of Scrutiny Board
(City & Regional
Partnerships)*

Membership of the Board:

Cllr Sue Bentley (Chair)
Cllr Bernard Atha
Cllr Colin Campbell
Cllr Geoff Driver
Cllr Jack Dunn*
Cllr Clive Fox
Cllr Roger Harington
Cllr Valerie Kendall
Cllr James Lewis
Cllr Tom Murray
Cllr Ralph Pryke
Cllr Alec Shelbrooke

* Cllr Lucinda Yeadon was a member of the Board until 25th February 2009

The Chair's summary

The Council in 2008 recognised the importance of reviewing how our partners are contributing to the outcomes, targets and priorities within the Leeds Strategic Plan by establishing this Scrutiny Board.

Whilst acknowledging the enormity of the task ahead we were able to concentrate our efforts for the first time on the effectiveness of our partnership arrangements. We have undertaken this work with vigour and enthusiasm.

I am grateful to all members of the Board for their support, understanding and encouragement throughout the year. I know that the work we have undertaken thus far has added real value to our understanding of the complexity of this issue and contributed to the effectiveness of the areas we have considered.

A number of members have served on several working groups and or visits and have given freely of their time which has been particularly helpful.

We have tried throughout the year in accordance with good scrutiny practice to maintain single item agendas for our Board meetings. In the main this has been achieved and has proved to be a valuable tool that allows detailed scrutiny of the matter under review. It has also enabled witnesses to present their evidence and respond to our questions in a more relaxed and less pressured environment.

We undertook a detailed inquiry into the role of the voluntary, community and faith sector (VCFS) in Council-led community engagement. This was extremely worthwhile and if our recommendations are accepted by the Executive Board will contribute to our Strategic Plan. Our witnesses included a number from the voluntary and health sectors who informed me how pleased they were at being asked to give evidence to the Board on this matter.

We held several sessions on our inquiry into skills and heard from a wide range of witnesses including the Learning and Skills Council, Heads of FE Colleges, the National Director and Regional Director National Skills Academy Financial Services. This was an extremely complex and difficult inquiry but positive in outcome.

We considered the Council's contract with Marketing Leeds and reviewed its Business Plan for 2009 to 2012.

We also had a number of meetings with representatives of the University Student Unions and Pro-Vice Chancellors of Leeds University and Leeds Metropolitan University on university fees following a request for scrutiny. Our discussions were very beneficial in understanding the issues involved.

There were a number of issues that the Board was unable to pursue because of a lack of time including the development of scrutiny at a regional and sub regional level. I hope at least some of these might be considered in the new municipal year.

I hope that the practice of the Board in making external visits to our partner organisations can continue next year. They were always well received and supported and provided us with a real opportunity to hear from individuals and organisations operating on the front line. It also provided an alternative outlet for them to raise issues and concerns.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who contributed to the work of the Board including witnesses, officers and scrutiny support staff.

Cllr Sue Bentley
Chair of Scrutiny Board (City & Regional Partnerships)

Inquiry into the Role of the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) in Council Led Community Engagement

We considered the published empowerment white paper, 'Communities in Control: Real People, Real Power' which sets out new expectations and opportunities for local government. We agreed that it was timely to undertake an inquiry into the role of the VCFS in Council-led community engagement.

Our main recommendation

That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods co-ordinates work across the Council to undertake a Compact for Leeds awareness and compliance self assessment. This will enable the Board to assess the extent to which Council services engage with and recognise the value of VCFS in developing and improving their plans and policies in order to deliver a customer based service.

Our other recommendations were:

That through the VCFS Partnership Group the Director of Resources and the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods:

- a) review the period of funding attached to grant awards to VCFS organisations with a view to phasing in 3 - 5 year awards from April 2010 for appropriate schemes.
- b) identify and provide appropriate support to enable VCFS organisations to develop planned exit strategies to better manage expiry of funding awards
- c) strengthen leadership and collaborative arrangements within the Council and in the VCFS to minimise the potential for the duplication of commissioned activity in order to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of the services being provided by April 2010.



Voluntary Action Leeds

"The VCF Sector has been extremely successful in engaging with communities at grass roots level in areas such as South Leeds and Gipton but this dynamism, flexibility, vision and energy may be lost as a consequence of commissioning and procurement.

Cllr Geoff Driver
Member of the Scrutiny Board



Members of the Board and Leeds Voice meeting representatives of the organisation Hope of Africa

Our other recommendations (continued) were:

That through the VCFS Partnership Group the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods identifies

- a) what further improvements could be made to simplify the current procedures and processes (including funding) and how the Council in conjunction with the VCF sector could better provide quality support including training and advice to local voluntary organisations.
- b) the impacts of current commissioning strategies on smaller organisations and identifies what safeguards could be developed to prevent losing the valuable services of these smaller organisations that provide a valuable service to the local community.
- c) the opportunities to develop federated or collaborative working across VCFS infrastructure organisations to extend support to a wider range of organisations within the sector and benefit both their organisation and their service users and maximise the impact of public and other resources.
- d) the opportunities to develop targeted information and support to community organisations to support their development and enable them to address local issues.

"The work done across the city by VCF Sector organisations is invaluable, over 3,000 of which are affiliated to Leeds Voice."

Cllr Sue Bentley (Chair)

That the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development arranges a seminar in 2009/2010 for members on the aims, benefits and use of Talking Point.

That the Chief Officer, Executive Support considers how best to promote this service amongst officers and the wider community.

That through the VCFS Partnership Group the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods

- a) encourages all signatory partner organisations to undertake a self assessment to monitor awareness and compliance with the "Compact" Codes of Conduct and that this be monitored by the Council from January 2010.
- b) reviews the effectiveness of the "Compact" Codes of Practice in 2009/2010 in the light of changes in the environment and infrastructure, and that the outcome be reported to this Scrutiny Board.



That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods identifies opportunities and initiatives that will further improve and enhance links with local VCFS organisations to support the delivery of the Area Committees' work in localities and that they be reported to this Scrutiny Board.

"It is becoming increasingly difficult for the VCF Sector to find sources of funding to maintain existing projects."

Ms Louise Megson, Chief Executive, St Luke's Cares

That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods develops a time-tabled action plan to implement any changes identified in 2009/10 and submits this to Scrutiny Board for consideration.

Inquiry into University Fees

In July we considered a request for scrutiny from the University of Leeds Student Union concerning their university fees campaign and the impact students have on the Leeds economy. We established a working group which met with the pro-Vice-Chancellors for the University of Leeds and Leeds Metropolitan University, the City Development department and representatives from the Student Unions. We issued a Statement with the following recommendations:

That local MPs be asked to give their support to the view that there should be adequate funding of Higher Education without removing the cap on fees.

To complement the above recommendation MPs and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds should be asked to support the introduction of a single national bursary system that is easy to understand and access through consistent and transparent processes.

That the Director of Children's Services and the Chief Executive of Education Leeds be asked to report back to this Board in April 2009 on what initiatives they are developing to promote greater coordination and cooperation and flexibility between Universities and the Council to help improve the information, advice and guidance provided to our young people, particularly in relation to university application processes and applications for financial support.



Student protest about university fees

Inquiry into Skills 19 years Plus

The guidance for the new Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) indicates inspectors will explore and expect to see “how well councils engage with, involve and empower local people to improve their skill levels”.

We considered it appropriate that we assess our partnership arrangements in this context and how successfully the drivers introduced by the Multi Area Agreement (MAA), Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the review of Further Education (FE) in Leeds would contribute now and in the future to improving skills across the city at all skill levels. In particular we wanted to identify what effect, if any, these new arrangements would have on improving hard to reach young people who have Level 1 skills or less.

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) is undertaking an inquiry on 14 -19 year olds and we have restricted our inquiry to 19 years plus but inevitably there has been an overlap between the two.

Our recommendations were:

That in view of the Learning and Skills Council funding deficit the Chief Executive seeks assurances from our partners and Skills Secretary, John Denham, that the new Leeds City College will proceed as planned including proposals for an enhanced estate and that a report be presented to this Board or its successor on the outcome.

That the Director of Children's Services work with the new Leeds City College to identify how it can consult at area and neighbourhood level to inform the development of a curriculum that is adequately responsive to the needs of Leeds.

That the Directors of Children's Services and City Development consider and propose how this Scrutiny Board or its successor can scrutinise the outcome of the FE College merger to assess if the benefits outlined in paragraph 16 of this report are achieved over the next 3 years with regard to 19 year olds and above.

That the Principal of the Leeds City College ensures, and provides assurances to this Scrutiny Board or its successor, that the location for the delivery of the new curriculum for 2010/2011 has regard to transport costs and accessibility.

That the Director of Children's Services works with our partners and neighbouring local authorities to ensure wherever possible that there are no artificial barriers that would prevent young people accessing the full curriculum at the most convenient place geographically regardless as to where local authority boundaries lie.

That the Directors of City Development and Children's Services with the Council's partners monitor the transition from the LSC to the YPLA and the SFA to identify any areas of concern including changes in operating costs and report back to this Scrutiny Board or its successor.



That the Director of Children's Services inform members of Council of the arrangements being made to take responsibility for FE in 2010 and give assurances that the proposals will not impact on the improvements being made at GCSE level.

That the Director of Children's Services asks the Learning and Skills Council to explain the new funding formula that is preventing Futurepathways from recruiting NEET young people and how this can be resolved in both the short and longer-term, with the outcome being reported back to this Scrutiny Board or its successor.

That the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement)

- a) considers the development of suitable performance data and management information systems for the MAA delivery plan.
- b) ensures that there are clear roles and responsibilities for performance management.

That the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement) considers:

- a) the MAA delivery plan and reviews the current partnership reporting arrangements with a view to ensuring that Members are better informed and involved in the initiatives and work being undertaken to improve skill levels through the MAA and reports back to this Board or its successor on the outcome.
- b) how Members can input at an early stage to the policy making process in developing agreements like the MAA /LAA and subsequent implementation.

That the Director of City Development

- a) considers with our partners the accuracy of the reported skill levels for Leeds based on the Government's annual population survey and whether there needs to be more accurate data in order to determine whether or not we are achieving our targets.
- b) monitors the effects of the economic downturn on the level of skills investment if there is a fall as predicted and reports on the action taken with the Council's partners to try and address this situation.

That the Assistant Chief Executive (Planning, Policy and Improvement) initiates a review involving the Chief Executive of Education Leeds, the Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods and the Director of City Development to consider responsibilities for the skills agenda.

That the Directors of Children's Services, City Development and Environment and Neighbourhoods work with the Council's partners to ensure that:

- a) there are alternative suitable courses available to young people across the city who are not accepted for entry into the Leeds College of Building.
- b) there are sufficient courses available across the city, aimed at Skills Level 1 and below.

That the Director of City Development inform members of this Board or its successor of the impact the Government's announcement has had on extending the Train to Gain to agency workers and be provided with the Train To Gain figures for 2008/09 when they become available.



That the Director of Resources provide further details to this Board or its successor on:

- a) how the Council is developing its own approach to Train to Gain funding learning opportunities and corporate apprenticeships.
- b) the outcome of the Council's own skills survey which is currently being undertaken.



That the Director of Children's Services seeks support for additional funding of the e2e scheme and that it become much less classroom based.

That the Director of City Development advise all members of Council of the initiatives being undertaken by the Council and our partners to reach SMEs to encourage and promote training for when the economy starts to recover and what success we have had in this regard.

Presentations and reports

We received during the course of the year a wide range of reports and presentations as part of our monitoring and review role. These included:

Regional governance arrangements

We considered information on current regional governance arrangements and details of the proposals and process leading to a Single Integrated Regional Strategy for the region. We were concerned about the democratic deficit of the new arrangements.

The proposals will mean that the Regional Assemblies will cease to exist in their present form and responsibility for producing the new strategy will pass to a revised regional development agency working in conjunction with local authorities and city region and sub regional partnerships as appropriate.



Marketing Leeds

We considered and reviewed the proposed Marketing Leeds grant agreement with the Council for 2009/2010.

We also received and commented upon the draft Marketing Leeds Business Plan and Work Plan 2009/2012 which included an activity and events summary proposed to be undertaken by Marketing Leeds in 2009/2010.

Leeds Initiative Narrowing the Gap Executive

We were given an excellent presentation by Steve Williamson, Chair of the Leeds Initiative Narrowing the Gap Executive.

We had a detailed discussion on the challenges and priorities of the Narrowing the Gap Board. We looked at previous achievements and the work programme for 2009/2010.



The Board's full work programme 2008/09

Review of existing policy

- Regional governance arrangements providing an overview of the
 - Current regional bodies
 - Future arrangements
 - Single Integrated Regional Strategy for the region
 -
- Inquiry into Skills 19 plus and the
 - Local Area Agreement
 - Multi Area Agreement
 - Further education review
- Request for scrutiny by Leeds University Union concerning university fees
- Marketing Leeds work plan and renewal of contract with the Council in 2009/2010

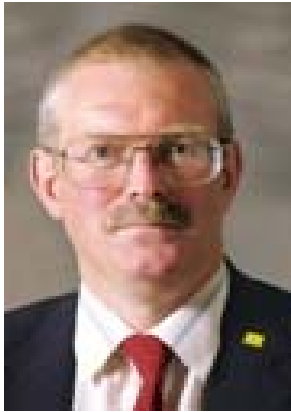
Development of New Policy

- Inquiry into the role of the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) in Council-led community engagement
- Sustainable Communities Act

Briefings

- Small Businesses Working Group
- Presentation by the Chair of the Leeds Initiative Narrowing the Gap Executive

Scrutiny Board (City Development)



*Cllr Ralph Pryke
Chair of Scrutiny Board
(City Development)*

Membership of the Board:

Cllr Ralph Pryke (Chair)
Cllr Andrew Barker
Cllr Chris Beverley
Cllr Bob Gettings JP
Cllr Arif Hussain
Cllr Josie Jarosz
Cllr Matthew Lobley
Cllr Jamie Matthews
Cllr Adam Ogilvie
Cllr Rachael Procter
Cllr Roger Harington
Cllr Neil Taggart
Cllr Gerald Wilkinson

The Chair's summary

I am pleased to present this year's annual report for Scrutiny Board (City Development). The support and encouragement throughout this busy year by all members of the Board has been encouraging. We have had a number of positive outcomes.

We concluded an inquiry into the thorny issue of residents' parking schemes. We were extremely concerned as a Board that the demand for such schemes was increasing year on year, particularly in certain areas of the city. We were of the view that the process and options available needed to be considered if the credibility of the process was to be maintained. We made a number of recommendations as a result of our detailed deliberations. Unfortunately the Executive Board decided not to approve our recommendations.

There has been a three fold increase in the number of Call Ins the Scrutiny Board has had to deal with this year as a consequence of changes to the scrutiny procedure rules. The first related to proposed highway works at Savins Mill gyratory. The second concerned the future ownership and management of the Council's small industrial unit portfolio at St Ann's Mills/Abbey Mills, Kirkstall. Finally, we considered the City Development department's proposals to increase cemetery fees. With regard to the cemetery fees, on hearing the evidence we accepted the department's explanation and agreed that the decision be released for implementation.

However, we were concerned that this decision had been implemented on 10th October 2008 prior to the expiry of the Call In period on the 17th October 2008 and asked that effective measures be put in place to avoid this happening again.

We considered a request for scrutiny from Shadwell Parish Council concerning the continuing delays in adding paths to the Council's definitive map as rights of way. Based on the detailed evidence presented to us the board felt able to support the officers to progress the list of applications in line with the Council's published statement of priorities and to reject this request.

The second request for scrutiny came from the North West (Inner) Area Committee concerning phase 1 of proposed highways works at on the A660 Corridor at Woodhouse Lane/Clarendon Road. We were able to make a number of recommendations as a consequence of our intervention on this matter.

The introduction of the Leeds Strategic and Council Business Plans 2008 to 2011 and changes to the national performance management arrangements has required changes to the Council's performance reporting and accountability arrangements. The quality and robustness of our performance management arrangements are a key element of the organisational assessment under the new Comprehensive Area Assessment and therefore it is important that these arrangements are effective. We have continued to monitor and challenge the performance indicators of the City Development department.

We have continued to receive and comment upon ongoing plans and strategies which provide a framework for many other projects.

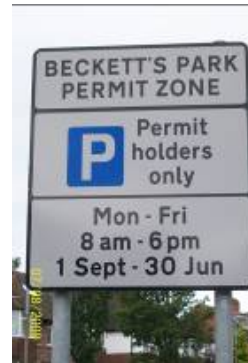
A brief summary of our endeavours during 2008/2009 follows.

Finally, I would like to thank all the witnesses, officers and members of the public who contributed to our work during the year.

Cllr Ralph Pryke
Chair of Scrutiny Board (City Development)

Inquiry into residents' parking schemes

We were concerned that the waiting time for the introduction of residents' parking schemes was unacceptably long even once they had been approved and added to the Council's waiting list for implementation. We recognised that the main reason for this was that there was only a limited amount of funding available in the Council budget each year for such schemes and that it had been necessary to prioritise requests according to greatest need. As demand for such schemes was increasing year on year, particularly in certain areas of the city, we were of the view that the process and options available needed to be considered if the credibility of the process was to be maintained.



“We are grateful to Councillor Andrew Carter for drawing our attention to this issue early in the development of our work programme. We wanted to improve the options available to residents with regard to residents' parking schemes and how they are delivered and funded.”

Councillor Ralph Pryke (Chair)



Scrutiny Board (City Development)

“I think the methodology for introducing a Traffic Regulation Order especially RPZ's, is very frustrating. So much time is given over to dealing with objectors and addressing or disproving their concerns”

Councillor James Monaghan
Headingley Ward

Our main recommendation

That the Directors of City Development and Environment and Neighbourhoods:

- a) undertake a review of residents' parking schemes including detailed cost benefit analysis and consultation with residents, with a view to introducing an option that would enable residents to fund the cost of a residents' parking scheme in accordance with agreed policy and does not accelerate lower priority schemes in advance of schemes on the approved list.
- b) that this analysis work includes the use of the Council's consultants to provide additional staffing resources and methods by which residents could recoup the costs of a residents' parking scheme, especially where a large proportion of residents are commuters, by releasing spaces during the day for 'pay and display' parking by non-residents.
- c) that subject to (a) and (b) above the option to allow residents to pay for a residents' parking scheme be introduced from April 2010.

Our other recommendations were:

- a) That the assessment method for determining the suitability of establishing a residents' parking scheme should include the availability of alternative parking and that this be considered as part of the review proposed in recommendation 1.
- b) That the Directors of City Development and Environment and Neighbourhoods review the issuing of resident and visitor parking permits and consult with residents across the city with a view to
 - a. phasing in charges for resident and visitor parking permits over a period of 5 years with regular progress reports to the appropriate Scrutiny Board.
 - b. residents parking and visitor permits being valid for a period of 1 year instead of 3 years.
 - c. restricting the number of resident parking permits (and visitor permits) that are issued to each household.
- c) That the Directors of City Development and Environment and Neighbourhoods
 - a. consider introducing regular reviews of resident parking schemes in order to ascertain how well they are operating and if they remain appropriate and fit for purpose, particularly if charging for resident and visitor permits is introduced
 - b. report back to this Scrutiny Board on how this might be achieved.

- d) In order to improve the clarity and transparency of the process
 - a. that detailed guidance on resident parking schemes that promotes understanding of the process involved with resident parking schemes be included on the Council's web site by early 2009.
 - b. that a policy document on this issue be developed and submitted to this Scrutiny Board for consideration with a view to it being included on the Council's web site.
- e) That the results of the pilot scheme to look at the level of fraud in residents' parking zones be reported to this Scrutiny Board early in 2009.
- f) That certainty of funding of residents' parking schemes is essential for long term planning of schemes on the approved list and which enables schemes to be run over two or more financial years and that a minimum of a three year planned programme should be adopted for these schemes.

"I am concerned that as car parking charges at the Leeds Bradford International Airport are high travellers are parking their cars in local residential streets up to two miles away from the airport. What is more they are left there for two to three weeks while they are on holiday"

Councillor Ryk Downes
Otley & Yeadon Ward

"I think the Council should have a very clear policy on where and when schemes can be put in and what those schemes are designed to do."

Councillor Colin Campbell
Otley & Yeadon Ward



Residents' Parking Zone sign

Inquiry on Phase 1 highways improvements A660 corridor Woodhouse Lane/Clarendon Road

We received a request for scrutiny from the North West (Inner) Area Committee on proposals for phase 1 of proposed highways improvements to the A660 corridor involving junction improvements at Woodhouse Lane/Clarendon Road, an inbound bus/cycle lane and improvements to a sub standard bus stop.

We received a substantial number of enquiries and emails on this matter from the general public, some of whom had been misinformed about the proposed scheme and the role and powers of scrutiny. Some residents attended our meeting in January 2009.

We agreed a Statement and made a number of recommendations as a consequence of our investigations at our meeting in February 2009 as follows:

Our recommendations

That the Chief Highways Officer:

- a) reviews the current consultation process to ensure that at the very least consultees and particularly elected members are encouraged to respond to requests, and how a nil response to invitations to comment may be interpreted as no objections received or support for a particular scheme or project.
- b) reviews the process by which highways schemes are reported to Area Committees and particularly those that affect more than one ward, in order to ensure proper consultation and feedback from all members of Area Committees on proposed highways schemes.
- c) reviews the traffic modelling for the proposals at Clarendon Road to ascertain what alternative solutions, if any, are available including options for using the existing road space to make bus lane provision where it is needed.
- d) ensures that early consultation is carried out in respect to options for making early improvements to the A660 and that this shows the overarching strategy for the corridor to ensure that schemes are not considered in isolation.



Woodhouse Lane towards
junction of Clarendon Road



Woodhouse Moor



Clarendon Road towards
junction with Woodhouse Lane

Call In of Executive Board or officer delegated decisions

We received a number of Call In requests from Members in accordance with the Council's scrutiny procedure rules concerning decisions taken by the Executive Board or by officers under the officer delegation scheme.

Savins Mill gyratory

The first Call In we considered was an officer's delegated decision concerning proposed highway works at Savins Mill gyratory.

We decided on the evidence presented to release this decision for implementation.



Savins Mill Way



Entrance to St Ann's Mills



Abbey Mills

St Ann's Mills/Abbey Mills, Kirkstall

The next Call In we heard was in relation to an Executive Board decision concerning the future ownership and management of the Council's small industrial unit portfolio, St Anns Mills / Abbey Mills, Kirkstall and the investment and agricultural property portfolio.

We concluded that the factors raised by the signatories of the Call In would not have made a material difference to the Executive Board's decision and the decision was immediately released for implementation.

Cemeteries and Crematoria fees and charges

Finally, we heard a Call In regarding an officer delegated decision concerning cemeteries and crematoria fees and charges.

We noted that the substance of the Call-In was that charges for burials had increased by 9% whilst inflation was around 5%.

On hearing the evidence we accepted the department's explanation and agreed that the decision be released for implementation.

However, we were concerned that this decision had been implemented on 10th October 2008 prior to the expiry of the Call In period on the 17th October 2008 and asked that effective measures be put in place to avoid this happening again.



Entrance to Lawnswood Cemetery and Crematorium

Request for Scrutiny: delays in adding paths to the Council's definitive map as Rights of Way

In July 2008 we considered a request from Shadwell Parish Council concerning delays in adding paths to the Council's definitive map as rights of way. We received a report on this matter from the City Development department in September 2008.

We were satisfied on the evidence presented to us to support the officers to progress the list of applications in line with the Council's published statement of priorities.

Presentations and Reports

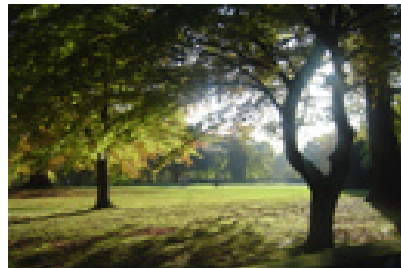
We received during the course of the year a wide range of reports and presentations as part of our monitoring and review role. These included:

Parks & Greenspace Strategy

We received an update in September 2008 and contributed to the development of a draft Parks and Greenspace strategy for the Council.

We were delighted to be able to give our input to this document in advance of consideration by the Executive Board.

We recognise the importance of this strategy for the efficient and effective management of all our parks and greenspace in the city.



Roundhay Park in Autumn



Climate Change Strategy

We commented on the Leeds Climate Change Strategy: Vision for Action prior to submission to Executive Board and full Council for approval.

The Leeds Climate Change Strategy is a city-wide strategy focused on carbon reduction and climate adaptation and aims to fulfil the Council's commitment in the Nottingham Declaration.

Review of the Leeds Economic Development Strategy

In September 2008 we received a presentation and gave our views and input to the development of the city's agenda for improved economic performance.



Tower block in the city

Traffic congestion – key locations

We considered a report on key locations for congestion on the major highway network. This paper also provided information concerning congestion locations specifically identified by ward Members.



Traffic queuing



Swimming pool at Kirkstall Leisure Centre

Consultation on the draft Vision for Leisure Centres

We were advised of and commented upon the consultation exercise that was being carried out on the draft vision for leisure centres in Leeds prior to recommendations being presented to the Executive Board.

Leeds flood alleviation scheme

We heard from the Chief Highways Officer and a representative from the Environment Agency on the latest version of the Leeds Flood Alleviation Scheme design, vision and guide which aims to minimise the potential detrimental impact of the scheme and maximise the opportunities along 19km of the river Aire.



Dark Arches, Granary Wharf



Planning Compliance

Management and capacity of the Planning Compliance service

We received an update from the Chief Planning Officer on the actions being taken to address key issues in the Planning Compliance service, focusing around the themes of improving the customer experience, developing skills and building capacity.

Strategic review of the Planning and Development Services

The Chief Planning Officer gave an update on progress being made on implementing the solutions within the five improvement themes identified in the strategic review of Planning and Development services.

We were pleased with progress which included the introduction of electronic consultations where objections and comments to applications would be included on line.



City Point



My bus

Sustainable Education Travel Strategy and Integrated School Transport policy for Children's Services

We discussed at some length the Executive Board's approval of the Leeds Sustainable Education Travel Strategy (LSETS) and the development of a Children's Services Schools Transport policy which would be integrated in to the LSETS by 2010.

We identified from our enquiries that a number of schools still did not have approved travel plans in place. We requested that all members of Council be provided with details of schools in their ward which did not have approved travel plans.

Major arts organisations funded by Arts@Leeds 08/09

We considered information on the process for awarding Council grant aid to major arts organisations.

We requested details of the funding provided during the last three years to the seven major arts organisations referred to in the report and this was provided by the City Development department.



City centre park

We considered a report on the vision for a new city centre park and proposals to undertake further feasibility work to explore the potential to develop a new piece of greenspace on the Council's site at Sovereign Street.

We agreed that this was an exciting proposal with a longer term objective of exploring land assembly opportunities in partnership with landowners of major sites that would function as a new park for the city centre.



To Sovereign Street car park



Roundhay Park

Roundhay Mansion

We were pleased to hear that an agreement for lease had been agreed with Dine Hospitality Ltd for the Roundhay Mansion.

We were also advised that planning permission and Listed Building Consent had also been approved for the remodelling works to the interior of the building and a new fire escape.

We had wanted to visit the Mansion, but as works will not be completed in this municipal year, the next Board will receive the invitation.

Visits by the Board

City Varieties

The Board visited the City Varieties prior to the commencement of the refurbishment of the building which would include the installation of an external lift.



Inside the City Varieties



Howard Assembly Rooms

Grand Theatre and Howard Assembly Rooms

The Board visited the Grand Theatre and Howard Assembly Rooms which have been refurbished to an extremely high standard. The Assembly rooms have created a permanent home for Opera North.

The Board's full work programme 2008/09

Review of existing policy

- Inquiry on residents' parking schemes
- Request for scrutiny by Shadwell Parish Council regarding delays in adding paths to the Council's definitive map as rights of way
- An agenda for improved economic performance: review of the Leeds Economic Development Strategy 1999
- Update on the strategic review of planning and development services
- Publicity and promotion of leisure events
- Request for Scrutiny by North West (Inner) Area Committee on proposals for phase 1 of highways improvements to the A660 corridor and draft statement and recommendations by the Board

Call In

- The future ownership and management of the Council's small industrial unit portfolio, St Ann's Mills/Abbey Mills, Kirkstall and the investment and agricultural property portfolio
- Proposed highway works at Savins Mill gyratory
- Cemeteries and crematoria fees and charges

Development of new policy

- Parks and greenspace strategy
- Sustainable education travel strategy and the development of an integrated school transport policy for Children's Services
- Consultation on the draft Vision for Leisure Centres in Leeds
- City centre park
- Sustainable Communities Act
- Climate Change Strategy
- Leeds flood alleviation scheme

Briefings

- Major arts organisations funded by Arts@Leeds 08/09
- Visits to the City Varieties, Grand Theatre and Assembly Rooms
- Traffic congestion - key locations
- Roundhay Mansion update

Performance management and monitoring

- Accountability arrangements for 2008/09 and quarter one, two and three performance reports
- Previously received performance indicators

Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)



*Cllr Barry Anderson
Chair of Scrutiny Board (Environment and
Neighbourhoods)*

Membership of the Board:

Councillor Barry Anderson (Chair)
Councillor Ann Blackburn
Councillor Ann Castle
Councillor Brian Cleasby
Councillor Debra Coupar
Councillor Angela Gabriel
Councillor David Hollingsworth
Councillor Graham Hyde
Councillor Graham Kirkland
Councillor Joe Marjoram
Councillor Lisa Mulherin
Councillor Mohammed Rafique

The Chair's summary

I am very pleased to present the 2008/09 annual report of the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods). The Environment and Neighbourhoods portfolio encompasses a wide range of services which strive to meet the Council's ambitions for Leeds in terms of creating neighbourhoods that are inclusive, varied and vibrant within an environment that is clean, green, attractive and above all, sustainable. As a Scrutiny Board we continue to oversee those issues which remain key priorities for local people, such as offering affordable and decent housing; tackling crime and anti-social behaviour; reducing worklessness; and improving the quality and sustainability of the built and natural environment. At the beginning of the year, we challenged ourselves to conduct a number of high profile inquiries focusing on the provision of street cleaning services in Leeds; the provision, management and regulation of private rented sector housing; the development of older people's housing; and the impact and management of the Asylum Seeker Case Resolution Programme in Leeds. The details of our inquiries are set out within this report, including our final recommendations, which I hope will add value towards the development of policy and service delivery around these particular issues. I therefore look forward to receiving the initial response to our recommendations and monitoring progress against these over the coming months.

In addition to our main inquiries, we conducted a review of dog fouling enforcement in Leeds in recognition of the fact that this remains one of the highest sources of complaints by the public both locally and nationally. In February 2009, we published a Statement setting out our findings and recommendations and were pleased to note that the Council's Executive welcomed and supported the findings of our review. This year we also provided formal comments on the proposed changes to the Council's Lettings Policy. As many of the changes reflected the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny inquiry into Housing Lettings' Pressures last year, we were very supportive of these.

In March 2009, we commenced an inquiry into the East and South East Leeds (EASEL) regeneration project following a request for Scrutiny. This inquiry aims to ensure that the objectives of this regeneration project continue to remain a priority for all key partners and that the residents of the EASEL area are informed and consulted effectively throughout the project. This inquiry will continue into the new municipal year.

I am proud of what we have achieved this year and would like to sincerely thank my fellow Board members, officers, and other witnesses for their commitment and contribution to the Board's work.

Councillor Barry Anderson, Chair of Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods)

Inquiry into street cleaning

In September 2008, we commenced our inquiry into street cleaning services in Leeds. The primary focus of our inquiry was around the statutory duty of the Council in keeping land clear from litter and refuse and exploring opportunities for further improvements in the way that street cleaning services are delivered to the residents of Leeds.

However, we also acknowledged the need to educate individuals and influence behaviour towards littering as we all play a part in the quality of the local environment and therefore have a responsibility to deal with litter in an acceptable way.

Research by ENCAMS (Environmental Campaigns) reported an estimated cost of £547 million to local authorities in 2005-2006 to clean and clear streets of litter and refuse.

During our inquiry, we sought the views of a wide range of stakeholders, including ENCAMS who provided a professional and independent opinion based around their experiences of working with other local authorities in addressing issues around street cleaning.

As part of our inquiry, we also acknowledged the need to gather opinions of local residents. We therefore invited residents to write in and share their experiences and opinions on the standards of cleanliness across the city and the provision of street cleaning services. We received numerous letters, which formed part of our evidence base and helped us to identify common issues and potential hotspot areas across the city.

Leeds' performance in terms of street cleanliness standards is considered average when compared to other comparable core cities, yet Leeds has one of the lowest spends per head of population. Our inquiry clearly demonstrated the high level of importance placed upon this issue by all stakeholders, including the public, and the demand for this issue to become a priority for the Council.

We believe that the key elements to success are around the development of a co-ordinated and coherent street cleaning service across the city; robust monitoring and recording mechanisms; more local baseline data around street cleanliness needs; targeted enforcement and education campaigns; and identifying and maximising all available resources.

There were 14 recommendations arising from our inquiry. In summary, the key recommendations were as follows:

- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods conducts a piece of research over the next 6 months to determine the wider implications, including any consequential management arrangements, and potential costs involved in bringing the Council's responsibilities under the Environmental Protection Act for keeping land clear of litter and refuse into one single service area. That the findings of this research is brought back to Scrutiny for consideration.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods conducts an urgent piece of work aimed at strengthening communication links between the different street cleaning service areas and reports back to Scrutiny within 3 months.
- That the Council uses the Code of Practice for Litter and Refuse 2006 to produce a Charter for Leeds that clearly sets out the statutory duties of the Council and other duty bodies for keeping land free of litter and refuse and also the minimum standard of street cleanliness that the public can expect to see across the city.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods ensures that robust monitoring and recording mechanisms are put in place for all street cleaning services to link into, in order to produce an audit trail of when a particular street or area has last been assessed and cleaned.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods conducts a review of the current cleansing schedule to ensure that correct minimum cleansing frequencies are being set across the city and also reflects areas of priority in terms of cleanliness needs.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods produces an action plan within the next 6 months for delivering street cleaning enforcement and education campaigns across the city and particularly within known hotspot areas.

Review of dog fouling enforcement

The issue of dog fouling was the subject of an earlier Scrutiny inquiry in December 2001 by the former Neighbourhoods and Regeneration Scrutiny Board. However, dog fouling still remains one of the highest sources of complaints by the public both locally and nationally. In view of this, we agreed to revisit this issue again and review the Council's current responsibilities and resources for the enforcement of dog fouling in Leeds.

During our review, we acknowledged that dog fouling was just one of a range of dog control and enforcement duties of the Council which needed to be taken into consideration. Particular reference was made to the Council's statutory duty for stray dogs. Since this responsibility was transferred completely to local authorities from the police in April 2008, the number of strays that the service was dealing with had increased by approximately 25% in less than a year. In view of the existing pressures on the Dog Warden service, we recognised the need to maximise available enforcement resources, which would involve working more closely with local parish and town councils too. We also recognised the need for more flexible working hours for Dog Wardens and other enforcement officers in order to tackle dog fouling offences more effectively.

At present, Leeds has only one Dog Control Order and this relates to dog fouling. There are five Dog Control Orders for local authorities to enforce. We believe that the introduction of additional Dog Control Orders can provide real benefits in terms of easier control of dogs, particularly in areas such as parks and children's play areas, and therefore recommended a review of the options available to the Council to extend these Orders in Leeds.



There were 10 recommendations arising from our review. These were as follows:

- That the Council works in close partnership with local parish and town councils to ensure the effective use of Dog Control Orders across the city and maximise available enforcement resources.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods determines a suitable figure for Leeds that will be enforced in relation to the maximum number of dogs that any one person can walk at any one time.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods carries out a review within the next 4 months of the options available to the Council to extend Dog Control Orders in Leeds.
- That an action plan is drawn up on how the Dog Control Orders agreed upon following the review can be progressed. This action plan will be brought back to the Scrutiny Board for consideration by June/July 2009.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods will roll out the training programme for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for litter and dog fouling over the next 12 months to all Neighbourhood Wardens and Park Ranger staff and recommend that this involves any other enforcement staff who may be able to carry out such works.

- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods conducts a review of existing staffing resources within the Dog Warden team to determine whether it is adequate to meet current service demands.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods ensures that the full budget provision for the Dog Warden service each year, which includes the additional funding from West Yorkshire Police, is spent on improving that service.
- That the contract specification for the provision of stray dog kennels is reviewed prior to its renewal and that further opportunities are explored to help generate greater interest from local suppliers.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods reviews an out of hours flexible working scheme for the Dog Warden service and explores opportunities to utilise other relevant enforcement staff working out of hours to assist with the enforcement of dog fouling.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods produces a Dog Control Strategy for Leeds by September 2009 setting out the duties of the Dog Warden service; the current and potential role of other officers in enforcing Dog Control Orders; strategies for future education campaigns; and the implications of having additional Dog Control Orders for Leeds.

Inquiry into asylum seeker case resolution

In July 2006, the Home Secretary made a commitment to clear a backlog of 450,000 legacy records relating to pre April 2007 unresolved asylum cases by July 2011. The priorities for this case resolution programme was to focus on those who pose a risk to the public; those who could more easily be removed; those in receipt of UK Border Agency (UKBA) support; and those who may be granted leave to remain.

However, concerns about the overall management and potential impact of the case resolution programme on Council services and on the city as a whole were brought to the attention of the Scrutiny Board by the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Housing at the beginning of the municipal year. We therefore agreed to investigate this matter further.

As well as meeting with internal officers to discuss the impact of the case resolution programme from the Council's perspective, we also recognised the need to meet with other key external partners involved in driving forward and managing the programme on a wider scale. This would enable Scrutiny to understand their roles and also allow them the opportunity to raise any particular issues.

We therefore welcomed the involvement of the UK Border Agency and the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership in our inquiry. We were also pleased to learn that, to their knowledge, Leeds is the first local authority in the region to conduct an inquiry into the case resolution programme. Our inquiry was therefore welcomed.

“As well as receiving accurate baseline data and projection details from the UK Border Agency on cases to be resolved as part of the case resolution programme, the Council should also be given sufficient time and, where necessary, additional resources to manage any referred cases effectively.

Partnership working is vital if we are to deliver on the case resolution programme, or any other initiatives, as a region”.

Councillor Barry Anderson - Chair

The target set by the government to clear the backlog of legacy records by July 2011 clearly places additional pressures on local authorities to respond accordingly. Whilst we are very confident in the skills and commitment of officers within the Council to manage such pressures, our inquiry has demonstrated a wider need for all key partners to work more closely together in order to achieve this for Leeds and across the region and therefore many of our recommendations are focused around strengthening such partnership work in the future.

There were 11 recommendations arising from our inquiry. In summary, the key recommendations were as follows:

- That the Regional Director of the UK Border Agency ensures that accurate baseline data on cases to be resolved as part of the case resolution programme is provided directly to the Council as a matter of urgency.
- That the Regional Director of the UK Border Agency ensures that details around projections of likely resolutions and timeframes are shared with the Council regularly to allow officers to assess potential impacts and plan the management of these cases more effectively.
- That the Council be given sufficient time and, where necessary, additional resources from the UK Border Agency to effectively manage any referred asylum seeker cases.
- That the UK Border Agency acknowledges the effective role of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership and strengthens its communication links with the partnership in future.

- That the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Migration Partnership takes a lead role on producing a joint action plan with the UK Border Agency, aimed at strengthening the communication links between all key partners across the region and that the Regional Director of the UK Border Agency plays a proactive role in overseeing the delivery of this action plan and reports back to the Strategic Migration Group on its delivery.
- That the Council works closely with the Regional Asylum Impacts Group to ensure that the regional cluster guidance does not conflict with the Council's policies around community cohesion and equality.
- That the Council continues to work closely with the UK Border Agency to ensure that systems are in place to target 'cluster areas' and provide for a greater choice of housing accommodation throughout the city.

Inquiry into private rented sector housing

The private rented sector in Leeds now represents approximately 13% of the total housing stock and as such provides accommodation for a significant number of Leeds households, some of whom are amongst the most vulnerable members of society.

Many people will have some experience of renting privately during the course of their lives and therefore we set out to explore the current provision, management and regulation of private rented housing in Leeds. As part of our inquiry, we considered evidence from the various Council services involved in the management and regulation of the private rented sector and also sought the views of a number of private landlords from local landlord representative bodies and Unipol Student Homes. During our inquiry, we noted that there was a lack of representative bodies specifically for private sector tenants in Leeds outside of the student market. We therefore explored opportunities for the Council to help develop such a representative body, as this would also aid communication links with private tenants in future.

We also learned of a national review of the private rented sector in October 2008, undertaken by the University of York, and found that there were a lot of common issues raised about the capacity of this sector to meet a range of housing needs. In particular, we too acknowledged the danger of describing the private rented sector as one homogenous tenure given the different variations available. In view of this, we recognised that the Council's approach in dealing with this sector will need to be multi-dimensional to meet the needs of the various sub-markets within the sector.

"The complexity of the sector has to be appreciated in any policy development, and underpins discussion of the obstacles and issues that attach to the private rented sector fulfilling its potential".

Julie Rugg and David Rhodes, Centre for Housing Policy, The University of York.

Our inquiry highlighted a clear need to improve professionalism within this sector by improving the quality and condition of private rented sector housing; driving up standards of management; providing effective advice, information and support to the sector; and putting in place effective regulatory and enforcement mechanisms to target and enforce sanctions against the small minority of wilfully bad landlords. Many of our recommendations therefore focused around these specific issues.

At the time of conducting our inquiry, we acknowledged that the Council was in the process of updating both its Leeds Housing Strategy and Private Rented Sector Strategy. We therefore hope that our findings and recommendations have contributed towards the development of these strategies. There were 17 recommendations arising from our inquiry.

In summary, the key recommendations were as follows:

- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods raises greater awareness of, and helps private landlords gain access to, available grant or loan funding to improve the quality and energy efficiency of private sector housing.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods continues to proactively educate and empower private tenants to understand their rights and have the confidence to approach the Council for assistance if landlords refuse to improve standards in line with minimum requirements.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods continues to engage with private landlords in regularly reviewing the standards set within the Leeds Landlords Accreditation Scheme with the aim of attracting more members and expanding the scheme across the city.

- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods continues to further develop an Accredited Tenants Scheme for Leeds and explores opportunities for developing a representative body specifically for private tenants in Leeds.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods continues to seek means of bringing empty private housing back into use which maximises recent government initiatives and takes advantage of the current economic climate by brokering deals with property owners to temporarily let their empty properties to the Council for people on the housing register.
- That the Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods considers the feasibility of establishing a single point of contact within the Council for the private rented sector, acting as a conduit for both private landlords and tenants to gain access to accurate and timely advice, information and assistance.

Inquiry into older people's housing

The expectations and aspirations of older people are evolving and therefore the Council will need to ensure that service delivery is reconfigured so that it responds to these changing needs. In view of this, we agreed to conduct an inquiry into older people's housing in Leeds.

Some of the key aspirations of older people, now and in the future, are highlighted in the Government strategy 'Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods'. The Government's vision is now focused around supporting older people to live independently within their own homes and exercise greater choice and control over their lives. The Lifetime Homes standard therefore provides flexible housing design that reflects the changes that occur over a lifetime and so people are not excluded by design as they grow older and more frail.

During our inquiry, we were pleased to learn that the Council is responding accordingly in trying to meet the Government's vision. We learned that a jointly sponsored project between the Environment and Neighbourhoods and Adult Social Care Directorates has been developed with the aim of creating a network of extra care and affordable lifetime homes in the city to meet primarily the needs of older people, but which will also make a significant contribution to neighbourhood regeneration and achieving affordable housing targets. To help progress with this project, the Council has submitted a bid to Central Government for £271 million of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits. This bid includes proposals for the development of 600 units of extra-care housing and 510 units of Lifetime Homes housing.

During our inquiry, we were particularly interested in the extra-care housing model. We therefore held our February 2009 meeting at the Moor Allerton Care Centre, which is based on the extra-care model, and combined this with a tour of the centre. We also conducted a visit to Sheffield's Brunswick Gardens retirement village, which opened in March 2008 and consists of 217 one and two bedroom units of mixed tenure. As this is one of only a few extra care 'villages' in England, we were keen to learn more about the benefits of developing a scheme of this size and to take back any lessons for future developments in Leeds.



The 'village centre' at Sheffield's Brunswick Gardens retirement village



Meeting with senior officers and relevant cabinet members from Sheffield Council

As part of our inquiry, we recognised that the development of housing related services for older people also needs to be rooted in the evolving national ‘personalisation’ agenda: that recipients of social care services should play an integral role in shaping or choosing the services they use, so that they can be empowered to live independently. We therefore explored the use of assistive technology, telecare and telehealth services to support people to live as independently as possible.

We have now concluded our inquiry and are in the process of producing a final report setting out our findings and recommendations. We hope to publish our report early in the new municipal year.

Other work of the Board

Changes to the Council’s Lettings policy

Last year the Environment and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board carried out an inquiry into housing lettings pressures and recommended that Scrutiny be consulted on the proposed changes to the Council’s Lettings policy. We contributed to the consultation process in August 2008 and provided our formal comments in the form of a Statement, which was published in September 2008.

We were pleased to note that the recommendations arising from last year’s inquiry were taken on board and covered by the proposed changes in the Lettings policy. We therefore supported all the proposed changes to the Lettings Policy, as detailed in the consultation document.

Observing Yorkshire Water’s £43 million upgrade of Waste Water Treatment Works

In December 2008, we were pleased to be invited to visit Yorkshire Water’s Knostrop Waste Water Treatment Works to observe the ongoing work being carried out as part of its £43 million investment to provide more modern and efficient treatment processes that will help to ensure the water returned to the River Aire meets the standards required by the European Fresh Water Fish Directive, which becomes law in the UK in 2010.



Leeds Materials Recycling Facility

In February 2009, we visited the Leeds Materials Recycling Facility, which is operated by Martin Waste Limited. We met with the Council’s contracts manager within Recycling and Waste services and also the Marketing Manager and Materials Recycling Manager from Martin Waste Ltd. As part of our visit, we were shown around the site to observe how the recycling facility operates.

In March 2009, we also considered the outcome of a recent external Eco Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) audit. This audit focused on a broad range of environmental aspects relating to Leeds City Council operations and services, but a specific focus on recycled waste was considered appropriate in light of media speculation around municipal recyclate destinations. We were pleased to note that the audit concluded that the Council and its contractor have robust systems in place to ensure the effective and responsible management of municipal recyclates.

The Board's full work programme 2008/09

Requests for Scrutiny

- Inquiry into EASEL regeneration project (to be continued into 2009/10)

Review of existing policy

- Review of dog fouling enforcement in Leeds
- Street cleaning inquiry
- Asylum seeker case resolution inquiry
- Private rented sector housing inquiry
- Older people's housing inquiry (to be finalised in 2009/10)
- Review of miscellaneous properties

Development of new policy

- Draft Leeds Housing Strategy
- Grounds maintenance draft Service Improvement Plan
- Sustainable Communities Act
- Revised Lettings Policy

Monitoring Scrutiny recommendations

- Quarterly recommendation tracking
- Formal response to previous inquiry into housing lettings pressures
- Formal response to previous inquiry into CO2 emissions

Performance management

- Quarterly performance reports
- Monthly performance updates on the Dog Warden service and the enforcement of dog fouling
- Quarterly updates on the Supporting People programme

Briefing

- The role of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)

Call In

- Review of parking facilities including adjustments to prices

Scrutiny Board (Health)



*Cllr Pauleen Grahame
Chair of Scrutiny Board
(Health)*

Membership of the Board:

Cllr Pauleen Grahame
Cllr Alan Lamb
Cllr Andrea McKenna
Cllr Ann Blackburn
Cllr David Congreve (from November 2008)
Cllr Denise Atkinson (until November 2008)
Cllr Graham Kirkland
Cllr Graham Latty (from September 2008)
Cllr Jackie Langdale (until February 2009)
Cllr James Monaghan
Cllr John Bale (until July 2008)
Cllr John Illingworth
Cllr Judith Chapman
Cllr Linda Rhodes-Clayton
Cllr Lucinda Yeadon (from February 2009)
Cllr Mohammed Iqbal

Co-opted members:

Eddie Mack – representing Leeds Voice
Samoud Saqfelhait – representing Touchstone

The Chair's summary

I am pleased to be able to present this year's annual report for the Health Scrutiny Board. It has been a very interesting year – particularly considering my previous time as Chair – with some of the issues from 2004/05, such as hospital services for children and hospital acquired infections, remaining topical issues throughout this year.

We have considered a broad range of matters over the course of the year – and have particularly focused on aspects of service delivery at Leeds Teaching Hospital NHS Trust. This has ranged from the provision of renal services (and associated transport) through to the provision of hospital food, and children's hospital services reconfiguration through to the payment of compensation claims. We have also conducted a number of inquiries, including improving sexual health among young people and GP-led health centres.

Performance monitoring has remained an important aspect of the Board's role and we have considered a range of reports from NHS Trusts and the Council. It is pleasing to see the start of a more coordinated approach to performance reporting – a development strongly influenced by the Board's continued involvement.

As always I would like to thank all my colleagues on the Board for their attendance and contribution to the work we have undertaken this year: It has proved to be a very busy year and one which I hope will contribute to the continuous improvement of healthcare services for the people of Leeds.

Cllr Pauleen Grahame, Chair of Health Scrutiny Board

Improving sexual health among young people

A high profile issue both locally and nationally, sexual health among young people and, in particular, teenage pregnancies has consistently made headlines in recent years. Across England, many local authorities have struggled to make progress against the government target to reduce teenage conceptions; and the rates of chlamydia screening and access to Genitourinary Medicine (GUM) services remain important national indicators.

That these areas are seen as local important priorities in Leeds is, in part, demonstrated by their inclusion as an improvement priority in the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The issue of teenage conception was also highlighted as an area of concern in the 2008 Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

As such, aware that these issues had been considered by Scrutiny before, we were keen to undertake a piece of work which would allow us to further explore the variety of factors which impact upon sexual health among young people and to examine the effectiveness of current strategies.



The 2008 Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board Statement on Teenage Conception concluded that, while there were some excellent services in Leeds to support teenage parents, there was still much work to be done around reducing teenage conceptions and improving sexual health services.

Taking this into account, the initial aim of our inquiry was to examine and make recommendations in the following areas:

- the links between teenage pregnancy and low aspiration;
- the consistency of Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) (in both educational and non-educational settings);
- the availability of access to contraception/family planning for young people;
- the rise in conception rates in under 15s.

Our investigations were also influenced by the report of the Teenage Pregnancy National Support Team (TPNST) that visited Leeds in Autumn 2007 which, while identifying a number of strengths, highlighted a number of areas for improvement, including:



- Strategy
- Local data set
- Communications
- Access to sexual health services
- A coherent vision for SRE within and outside schools

During our inquiry we examined progress against all of these priorities and were particularly struck by the continued need for better coordination and communication between services – as such, many of our recommendations are focused on this area. We hope that in responding to our recommendations, the range of services involved will work together to provide a single response, and a more coordinated approach for the future.

Our recommendations were:

- 1) That NHS Leeds works with its partners to continue to develop the sexual health services on offer to young people, with a focus on:
 - making these services more accessible, both geographically and through appropriate opening hours;
 - better coordination of services in order to target those parts of the city where the need is greatest;
 - advertising the availability of services more widely to the general population, with some advertising targeted specifically at adults.

- 2) That NHS Leeds and Leeds City Council work together to establish a local data set as soon as possible, and that this information is regularly made available to everyone who has a role to play in tackling teenage conception.

That full use is made of this data to measure the effectiveness of schemes and to target resources.

- 3) That Education Leeds and Children's Services continue to support and coordinate initiatives to raise standards in SRE in schools across Leeds.
- 4) That continued targeted support is provided to those schools in 'hotspot' wards, particularly in terms of:
 - developing innovative methods of delivering SRE to young people
 - encouraging staff and governors to be at the centre of such initiatives, through improved training and communication.That efforts are also made to meet the needs of vulnerable young people across the city.
- 5) That Leeds City Council and Education Leeds work together to provide support to parents, particularly in 'hotspot' wards, to enable them to communicate effectively with their children about the range of issues surrounding sexual health and teenage conception.

- 6) That Leeds City Council and Education Leeds continue to support young people-led activity which is focused on improving sexual health, and that this work is targeted on those young people who are otherwise 'hard-to-reach'.

- 7) That all the agencies in Leeds working with young people collaborate to offer a consistent message on sex and relationships, and promote healthy behaviour, and that this partnership working is centrally coordinated to form a coherent strategy.

- 8) That a coordinated effort is made by Education Leeds, Children's Services, NHS Leeds and other service providers to increase the involvement of elected members in tackling sexual health issues among young people, both in terms of involving members in decision making and making use of their unique role within the community.

That elected members themselves are encouraged to learn more about the complex issues surrounding sexual health and teenage conception through the Member Development process.

- 9) That, with the appropriate consideration of working collaboratively, the issue of sexual health among young people be considered by the Health, Children's Services and Environment and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board's in the next municipal year when setting their work programmes, particularly in terms of the links with:
 - Alcohol
 - Drugs
 - Deprivation
 - Attendance and
 - Self-esteem.

Inquiry into GP-led Health Centres

In June 2007, Lord Darzi was instructed to carry out a national review of the NHS and advise on how the challenges of the next decade would be addressed. In October 2007, Lord Darzi published an interim report that highlighted a number of concerns including:

- Continuing and widening health inequalities
- Poor provision of GP surgeries in some areas
- Poor access to GP services among some sections of the community

Given these concerns, we were eager to examine these findings in the context of local healthcare provision in Leeds. As such, at the beginning of the year we agreed to undertake an inquiry to look at how NHS Leeds were addressing Lord Darzi's recommendations.



Much of the inquiry was carried out by a working group and included a series of discussions with NHS Leeds. During these discussions we looked at current provision, planned changes to existing provision, and how such changes would benefit patients accessing healthcare services in Leeds.

We initially established that all Primary Care Trusts had been instructed to create a new GP-led health centre – offering longer opening hours than traditional GP practices (8am – 8pm, 7 days a week) and a 'walk-in' facility to enable patients who were not registered, to see a doctor.

We were informed that in Leeds the new health centre would be located in the Burmantofts area of the city and would aim to cater for around 1000 registered patients by the end of the first year.

We were advised of planned refurbishment works at Burmantofts Health Centre and held 'before' and 'after' site visits and heard that the new provision would be known as the Shakespeare Medical Practice.

A number of discussions were also held at full board meetings, culminating with a dedicated meeting at the Thackray Medical Museum in February 2009, where we heard from both NHS Leeds and the appointed service provider – Care UK Clinical Services.

Despite some difficulties regarding the different terminology used during our inquiry, we gained a clearer appreciation of how the new service will benefit patients and go some way to address some of the concerns highlighted by Lord Darzi. We look forward to being updated on performance of the new centre and will follow further developments with interest.



Inquiry into hospital discharges



The quality of hospital discharges was first raised as an area of inquiry by the then member of the Scrutiny Board, Councillor Denise Atkinson, in October 2008. Then in December 2008, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) published its '*Independence, Wellbeing and Choice*' inspection report, which also highlighted some concerns over the consistency and quality of hospital discharges for Leeds residents.

As a result, we agreed to undertake an inquiry aimed at examining and assessing the current hospital discharge arrangements for the adult residents of Leeds. We particularly wanted to consider:

- The coordination of services between the Council and its partners, including the discharge arrangements between the Council and out of boundary hospitals.
- How the Council and its partners ensure that any necessary support plans/packages are in place before patients are discharged.
- The processes for collating, analysing and using discharge performance data and customer feedback.

Outcomes and findings

We held discussions with senior managers in NHS Leeds, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (LTHT), Leeds Partnership Foundation Trust (LPFT) and Adult Social Services.

We received a wealth of information on the current hospital discharge process and details of how the areas for improvement identified in the CSCI report were being addressed. A summary of the information we received is detailed below:

- Planned and Urgent Care group in place to consider discharge issues, with formal mechanisms in place for this group to report on progress.
- Revised discharge protocols will ensure that dignity and safeguarding principles and values are at the forefront of arrangements.
- Revised discharge protocol by March 2009 (Leeds hospitals).
- Revised discharge protocol by November 2009 (out of Leeds hospitals).
- Improved processes to establish a baseline for patients' experience following hospital discharge using information drawn from:
 - service user reviews following hospital discharge
 - complaints arising from hospital discharge
 - user experience surveys

Due to the range of activities seeking to address the identified areas for improvement, we concluded that more time was needed in order to fully assess the impact and effectiveness of current and future actions. Therefore, we see this as an important strand of work for next year's Board.

Forward planning and consultation

Draft Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan (2009-2012)

We considered the draft Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan (2009-2012) and supported the four priority areas identified:

- Reducing health inequalities
- Improving quality of life
- Enhanced safety and support for vulnerable people
- Inclusive communities

We firmly believe that these improvement priorities should act as the foundation for the Health Scrutiny Board's future work programme.

We were particularly interested in the Plan's key connections and believe the success of the Plan is largely dependent on the ability of the Council and its partners to act as 'one', particularly in terms of joint commissioning and use of the voluntary sector.



There were mixed views within the Scrutiny Board regarding the proposed recruitment of 'locality enablers'. However, whilst not reaching a clear consensus on whether such appointments should be made, there was agreement that a close relationship with Area Committees would be essential in order to focus on delivering improvements at a local level.

In terms of helping to deliver better health outcomes for the people of Leeds, we believe that other strategies, plans and policies need to be much more complementary. As such, we highlighted that the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan should not be seen as the sole preserve of health professionals – but rather the responsibility of all directorates.

We also recognised that it would be highly appropriate for future Health Scrutiny Boards to consider the contributions of all relevant directorates when looking at performance outcomes and holding officers to account.

Our comments on the draft plan were recorded and forwarded to the Executive Board.

Health Proposals Working Group



At the beginning of the year, we established a working group that would periodically consider any proposed changes to healthcare services across the city and subsequently monitor the progress of any agreed changes.

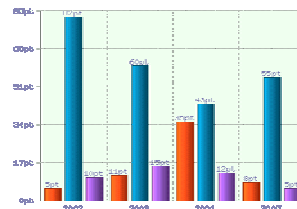
Throughout the year the working group considered a number of issues and a range of proposed service changes. Alongside the proposed service changes, the working group was also presented with the level and methods of user involvement as part of the wider consultation process. The service change proposals considered this year included:

- Development of Primary Care services (LS17)
- Older people's Mental Health services
- Citywide Mental Health treatment services

The working group routinely reported back the issues it had considered to the main Board.

Quarterly performance reports

Performance monitoring remained an important aspect of the Board's work programme and we considered a range of reports from both NHS Leeds and the Council. In addition to keeping a watching brief on some key areas of performance, this work has also resulted in a more coordinated approach to performance reporting by NHS Leeds and the Council.



Monitoring performance is a key role

This development should not only help future Boards undertake the performance monitoring role more efficiently, but it should also help the Council and its partners continue to work collaboratively, improving the coordination of services and improvement activity.

Annual Health Check

Introduced by the Healthcare Commission in 2005/06, this involves each NHS Trust submitting an annual self assessment declaration against core standards set by the Government, including:

- Safety
- Governance
- Patient focus
- Public Health

We considered the declarations from NHS Leeds, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (LTHT) and Leeds Partnership Foundation Trust (LPFT).



While compliance against the majority of standards was reported by each of the Trusts, there were some exceptions, the most notable of which was LTHT's failure to meet the standard for reducing the risk of healthcare acquired infections.

We were alarmed about this position, not least due to the significance this holds for patients and their relatives.

As such, we believe this should remain a priority area for next year's Scrutiny Board and until suitable assurances are given that this core standard is being met.

The Board's full work programme 2008/09

Scrutiny Board inquiries

- GP led Health Centres
- Sexual health among young people
- Hospital discharges
- Implications of National Blood Service Strategy

Hospital service matters

- Children's Hospital Services and Clinical Services reconfiguration
- Provision of Renal Services and associated patient transport
- Peripheral Hospitals Strategy report
- Maternity services and neonatal provision
- Provision of stroke care
- Provision of hospital food
- Leeds Hospitals' compensation payments

Mental Health matters

- Mental Health legislation implementation
- Mental Capacity Act (2005)
- Mental Health Act 2007 – supervised community treatment

Forward Planning and Consultation

- Draft Health and Wellbeing Partnership Plan (2009-2012)
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Leeds Local Involvement Network (LINK)
- NHS Next Stage Review – High quality care for All
- Health Proposals Working Group – feedback on service change proposals and consultation

Performance monitoring

- The Localisation of Health and Social Care Services – response to previous inquiry recommendations
- Primary Care Trust (NHS Leeds) performance reports
- Leeds City Council – quarterly performance reports
- Recommendation tracking
- Annual Health Check (NHS Leeds, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, Leeds Partnership Foundation Trust)

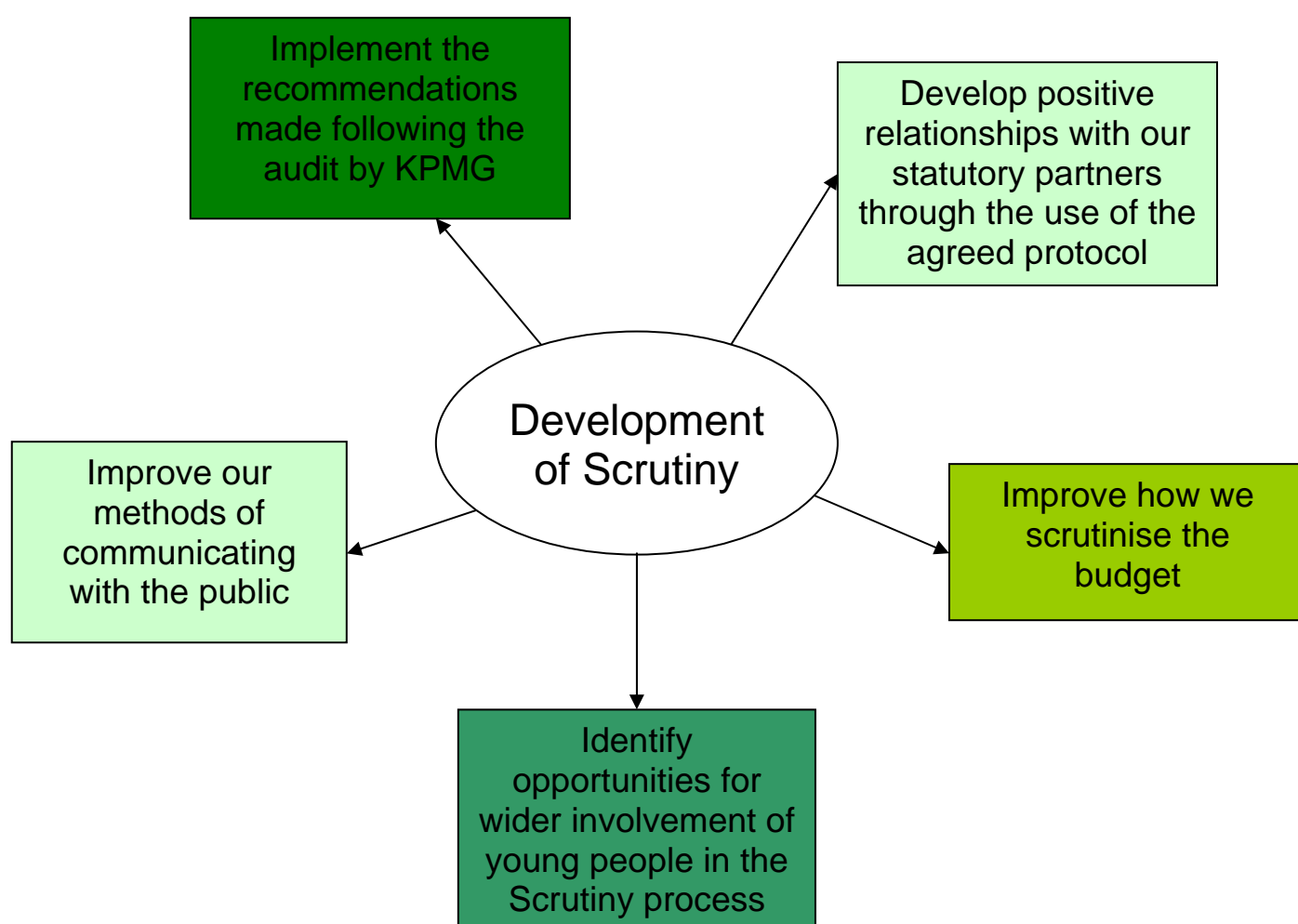
Developing Scrutiny

As has been our practice in previous annual reports, we have published an action plan for the coming year. We have also reviewed last year's plan and made an assessment of how well we have met our previous ambitions.

The action plan this year reflects what we consider to be the main areas for development. A key focus remains ensuring that Scrutiny is a worthwhile process for elected Members and adds value to the running of the Council.

Our goals this year include increasing the participation of young people in the Scrutiny process, enabling the voice and concerns of the public to be heard by Scrutiny and responding to the recommendations made within the KPMG external audit report.

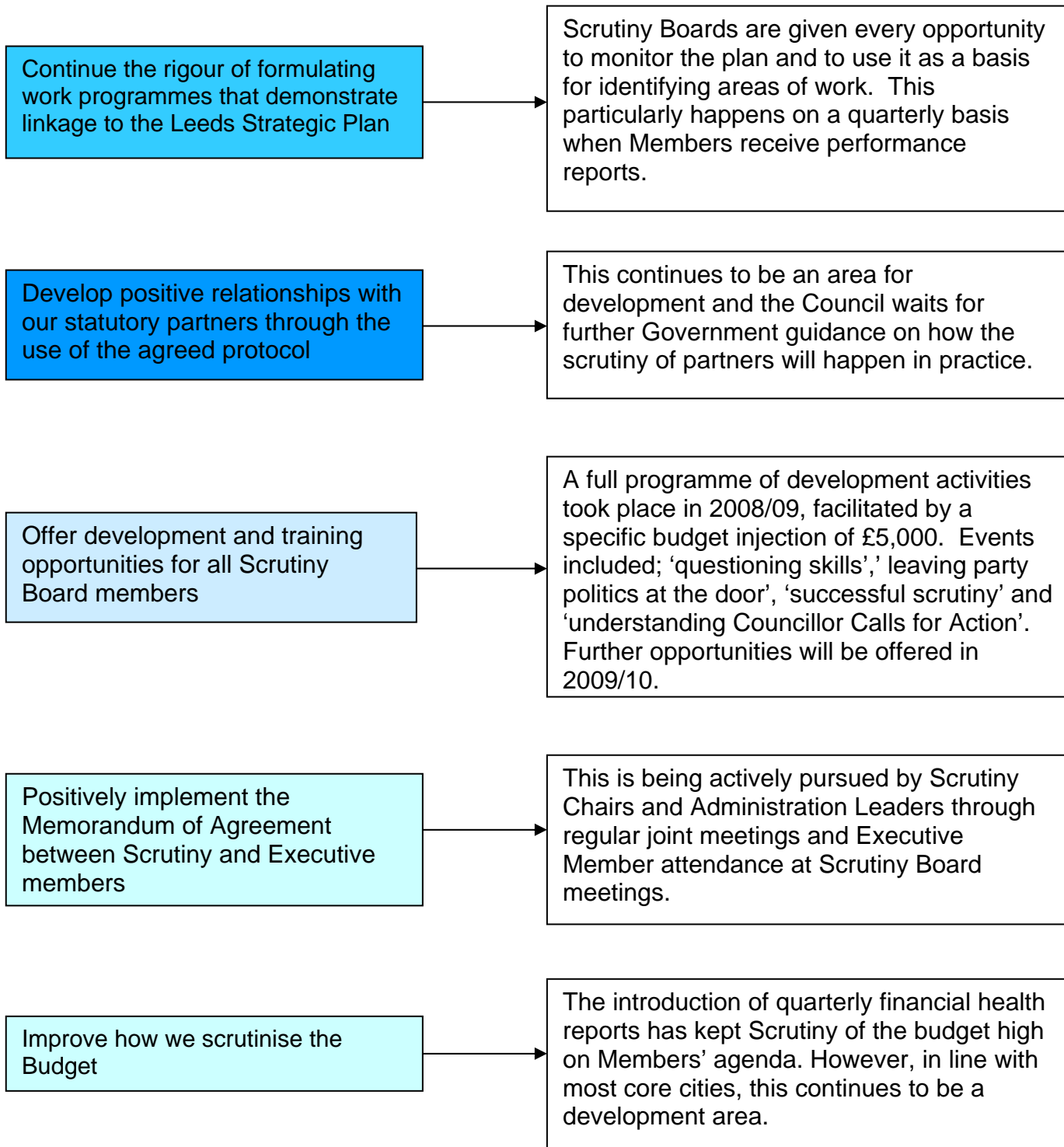
Action Plan 2009/10



Action Plan

2008/09

Progress



Scrutiny Publications 2008/09

Final reports issued by Scrutiny Boards in 2008/09:

- Review of residents' parking schemes
- Multi Agency Support Team inquiry
- The role of the Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector (VCFS) in Council-led community engagement
- Attendance Management
- Improving Sexual Health among Young People
- Member Development
- Procurement of services
- Protecting our Environment (Young People's Scrutiny Forum)
- Asylum Seeker Case Resolution
- Private rented sector housing
- Skills
- Street Cleaning

Statements issued by Scrutiny Boards in 2008/09

- ALMO Inspections - Meeting the Equality Standard and Preparing for Inspection
- Cover Pricing
- Changes to the Lettings Policy
- Embedding equality, diversity & cohesion & integration
- University fees
- A660 corridor transport issues
- Enforcement of dog fouling
- Dignity in care

Operational documents

- Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules Guidance Note: Equality, Diversity and Cohesion and Integration Issues
- Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules Guidance Note: Requests for Scrutiny, including Councillor Call for Action, Local Crime and Disorder Matters and Health and Social Care matters.

Other

- Guide to Scrutiny – comprehensive publication
- Revised and updated information leaflets:
 - Guide to Scrutiny – officers
 - Guide to Scrutiny – Members
 - Guide to Scrutiny – external witnesses

A list of all final reports since 1999 can be found on our internet site.

www.leeds.gov.uk/scrutiny

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