

Leeds

Area Assessment (Summary version)

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oneplace

for an independent overview
of local public services



Leeds at a glance

This independent assessment by six inspectorates sets out how well local public services are tackling the major issues in Leeds. It says how well they are delivering better results for local people and how likely these are to improve in future. If, and only if, our assessment shows that the following special circumstances are met in relation to a major issue, we use flags to highlight our judgements. We use a green flag to highlight where others can learn from outstanding achievements or improvements or an innovation that has very promising prospects of success. We use a red flag to highlight where we have significant concerns about results and future prospects that are not being tackled adequately. This means that local partners need to do something more or different to improve these prospects.

Green flags - exceptional performance or innovation that others can learn from

-  Green flag: People in deprived communities benefiting from Leeds' economic growth - Leeds Ahead

Red flags - significant concerns, action needed

-  Red flag: Keeping vulnerable children and young people safe
-  Red flag: Burglary in parts of Leeds

The local area

Over 750,000 people live in Leeds. The economy has grown quickly over the past ten years. The city has changed from being mainly industrial into an important business, finance and legal centre.

The population has been increasing quickly. It is very diverse, with over 130 nationalities including a black and minority ethnic population of just under 11 per cent. It is an area of great contrasts. It includes rural areas like Harewood and Wetherby, where most people are relatively well-off. It also includes densely populated, inner city areas where people are poorer and housing quality is a big problem. Although improving, the health of people in Leeds is generally worse than the national average, with big differences across the city.

Leeds's public services have agreed the following challenges that they need to tackle:

CULTURE: Enable more people to be involved in sport and culture, and facilitate delivery of major cultural schemes

ENTERPRISE AND THE ECONOMY: Increase innovation, promotion of the City and facilitate major city centre developments.

ENVIRONMENT: Increase recycling, reduce emissions, improve cleanliness and access, improve sustainability of the built and natural environment and improve our resilience to current and future climate change.

HARMONIOUS COMMUNITIES: increased local engagement and empowerment to establish increased sense of belonging and enable vibrant communities.

HEALTH AND WELL BEING: reduce mortality in the most deprived areas and improve assessment, access to services and support to vulnerable people.

LEARNING: improve workforce skills, learning outcomes and engagement of vulnerable groups.

THRIVING PLACES: Increase numbers of decent and affordable homes, reduce homelessness and fuel poverty. Create a safer environment, reduce worklessness and develop services to improve to support children, families and communities.

TRANSPORT: Improve public transport services in Leeds, condition of the transport infrastructure and road safety.

The next section tells you how Leeds's public services are doing in each of their local priority areas.

How is Leeds doing?

CULTURE: Enable more people to be involved in sport and culture, and facilitate delivery of major cultural schemes

More people than ever before are using cultural and leisure facilities in Leeds. The Grand Theatre, Art Gallery and Central Library have been refurbished. New, popular attractions such as the City Museum have been opened. Visits to museums and galleries nearly doubled to just under one million, although visits to libraries fell slightly. The number of adults being active and participating in sports rose by nearly eight per cent in the year to October 2008 - one of the largest increases in the country. Prospects for improvement are good. Plans are well advanced to build the Leeds Arena - a 12,500 seat multi-purpose venue which is a high priority for residents and local businesses. There are also plans to improve and relocate leisure centres. But the benefits of this investment are not being felt consistently by all Leeds people. Satisfaction with libraries, theatres and concert halls, and open spaces, has

fallen. Whilst many residents regularly use services, a quarter of Place Survey respondents has never used them. Partners need to do more to ensure that cultural facilities are used by all the people of Leeds.

ENTERPRISE AND THE ECONOMY: Increase innovation, promotion of the City and facilitate major city centre developments.

Leeds has responded well to the recession. As with other major cities, the recession has affected Leeds, particularly developments in the city centre. In response, local public services have reviewed their priorities and are focussing on the development of the Arena, new retail developments at Trinity Quarter and improving Leeds Bradford airport. This clear approach gives confidence to investors, developers and residents that the city is in good shape to overcome the recession.

Partners have a clear ambition to help drive the region's economic growth. They are on track and are successfully developing the city's economy and reputation. Until the recession hit, employment was increasing, as was the number of people using the city's shops, cultural and leisure facilities. Partners have a detailed understanding of the city and wider city-regional economy. They have identified the new facilities needed to achieve Leeds' ambitions, including the Arena and improved transport into the city. This places the city well to continue to grow.

People in more deprived communities have benefited from Leeds' economic growth through 'Leeds Ahead'. Leeds Ahead is a social enterprise that works with the Leeds Initiative to involve Leeds businesses in innovative joint work between public, community and business sectors. It has encouraged enterprise, improved skills and attainment and raised the aspirations of people in disadvantaged communities.

ENVIRONMENT: Increase recycling, reduce emissions, improve cleanliness and access, improve sustainability of the built and natural environment and improve our resilience to current and future climate change.

Note: At the time of this assessment, industrial action had disrupted refuse collections for several weeks. The impact of this on recycling rates and street cleanliness was not yet known.

People in Leeds continue to produce less waste than most parts of the country. In the past Leeds has not been good at recycling, but over 30 per

cent of waste is now being recycled, re-used or composted. This is less than most other areas, but is likely to get better as more garden waste is being recycled and the Council has invested in more kerbside collections. Streets are now cleaner and public access to footpaths and other rights of way has improved.

Work to reduce carbon emissions from public sector buildings is still at an early stage. Partners have started to prepare for the possible effects of Climate Change and have recently agreed a Climate Change Strategy for the city. They plan to invest in projects to cope with possible floods. A big challenge for Leeds is to balance its ambitions for economic growth, for example the expansion of Leeds-Bradford airport, with its ambitions to reduce carbon emissions. Partners need to speed up their efforts to combat climate change. They also need to get better at measuring the results of their work to improve the environment.

HARMONIOUS COMMUNITIES: increased local engagement and empowerment to establish increased sense of belonging and enable vibrant communities.

Fewer people in Leeds than in 2006/07 feel that people from different backgrounds get on well. There are big differences within Leeds, with people in the east, south and west much less positive than those in the north. The Council and its partners have done a lot of work to try and improve how well people get on, but it is not always clear whether this is making a difference.

Resident satisfaction varies widely depending on where you live in Leeds. People in the north east of the city are much more likely to be satisfied with their area than people in the south or west. There are likely to be even bigger differences, which are hidden within these fairly large districts of the city. Local public services are carrying out a much more detailed residents' survey to try and understand better these differences. They are also developing a 'Neighbourhood Index' to give them a better understanding of individual neighbourhoods.

HEALTH AND WELL BEING: reduce mortality in the most deprived areas and improve assessment, access to services and support to vulnerable people.

Some vulnerable children and young people are not being kept safe from harm in Leeds. A recent inspection found that discussions between the Council, police and other agencies do not take place quickly enough and children are not always seen by professionals, even when there are concerns about their safety. Key procedures are out of date and the speed and quality

of assessments varies too much.

Older people in Leeds are happier than in most similar areas. More than 80 per cent of people over 65 said that they were satisfied with their home and neighbourhood. Most people have a choice about the care that they receive and more people than average are supported to live independently. Arrangements to make sure that vulnerable adults are kept safe have been improved, but further work is needed to make sure that they are having an impact.

People in Leeds are living longer than ever before. Early deaths from cancer are decreasing. Fewer adults in Leeds are obese than the national average and more are physically active. But there are big differences in health across the city. For example, an average man in City and Hunslet will die just over 10 years earlier than an average man in Harewood. NHS Leeds, the Council and other organisations are working to try and improve this. They are targeting work more effectively on vulnerable communities, but there is still more to do.

LEARNING: improve workforce skills, learning outcomes and engagement of vulnerable groups.

Most children in Leeds achieve well at school, but progress is inconsistent. At Key Stage 2 results fell in both English and maths and the number of schools not hitting government targets is not getting better. The number of pupils getting good GCSEs is around the national average. Whilst some schools recorded big improvements in GCSE results some slipped back.

Progress for some groups is particularly slow. For example Asian pupils perform well below the national average. Behaviour in some secondary schools is not as good as it should be and despite improvements, the rate of persistent absence in some schools is still too high. 9.5 per cent of young people are not in education, employment or training (NEET). Prospects for improvement are promising, as support is being targeted on the individuals and groups who most need it.

THRIVING PLACES: Increase numbers of decent and affordable homes, reduce homelessness and fuel poverty. Create a safer environment, reduce worklessness and develop services to improve to support children, families and communities.

Most types of crime have fallen in Leeds, including some that people are most concerned about, such as violent crime. Most people feel safe in their local area after dark and fewer people see drug dealing as a big problem. But burglary is very high in parts of Leeds like Harehills, Beeston, Armley and Headingley. In some cases, it is up to three times the national average. The police and Council are working together with probation and the courts to try and reduce burglary in Leeds. There has been some recent improvement, but this trend must continue over a longer period to demonstrate that there are strong prospects for continued improvement.

Housing is a problem in the poorer parts of Leeds. Many people living in rented housing in the private sector are living in over-crowded accommodation. Partners have worked hard to try and increase the number of affordable houses. The quality of public sector housing is improving. Fewer people are homeless than before in Leeds, and numbers continue to fall. But the latest official figures show that over 24,000 people are on the waiting list for housing.

Many people in Leeds do not have basic skills, and getting people into work in the poorer areas of the city is a problem. Unemployment is over 10 per cent in some parts of Leeds, compared to a city wide average of less than three per cent. Up to 30 per cent of people are either unemployed or unable to work in some inner city areas. Partners are taking a lot of action to try and help people into work, but recognise that they still need to do more to improve things.

TRANSPORT: Improve public transport services in Leeds, condition of the transport infrastructure and road safety.

In 2004, Leeds people said that public transport was the most important thing for the future of Leeds. Since then, progress has been relatively slow. Some improvements have been made. Bus shelters and train stations are better and new bus lanes mean that buses run faster and services are more convenient for passengers. But bus usage is not meeting targets, and passengers are no happier than before about bus services.

Roads and pavements in Leeds have got better. In 2007, local people said that repairing roads and pavements was their top priority for improvement. Since then, the Council has increased spending. Fewer people now see repairs as a big problem.

Reducing congestion was also a big priority for Leeds people in 2007. Access to the city has been improved through new roads. More people are leaving their cars at home when they travel into Leeds in the morning peak, and more people cycle to work. Prospects for improvement are mixed. Congestion remains a problem on many roads. Plans for the future include 'New Generation Transport'. This includes a trolley-bus system which could significantly improve public transport.

CAA looks at how well local public services, working together, are meeting the needs of the people they serve. It's a joint assessment made by a group of independent watchdogs about the performance of local public services, and how likely they are to meet local priorities. From 9 December you will find the results of Comprehensive Area Assessment on the Oneplace website - <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/>



for an independent overview
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