



---

## Report of the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement

### Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> June 2007

Subject: Performance Report Quarter 4 2006/07

---

**Electoral Wards Affected:**

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

---

## 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report discusses the key performance issues considered to be of corporate significance identified for each of the Corporate Priority Boards (CPBs) as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007. In addition, the report also includes a predicted CPA score for 2007/08.

## 2 Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to present the key areas of under performance that have been identified by Corporate Priority Boards.

## 3 Background Information

- 3.1 This 'highlight report' has been prepared in readiness for the Accountability process, which includes the CMT meeting 22<sup>nd</sup> May, Leader Management Team on 31<sup>st</sup> May and Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> June; separate reports will be prepared for each of the scrutiny boards in readiness for the June cycle of meetings.
- 3.2 The issues discussed in this report have been identified because performance in these areas impacts upon one or more of the following; the delivery of effective services, the delivery of our corporate priorities; our CPA score; or our ability to deliver efficiency savings. This report is supported by detailed PI information.
- 3.3 Any improvement in assessment scores should potentially have a positive impact on the council's Direction of Travel assessment and Star Rating.

## 4 Main Issues

4.1 The table below summarises our predicted CPA scores for February 2008.

	Direction of Travel	Star Category	Corporate Assessment	Level 1 Services			Level 2 Services			
				Use of Resources	Children & Young People	Social Care (Adults)	Benefits	Culture	Environment	Housing
CPA 2006	Improving Adequately	3 star	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
CPA 2007 (provisional)		3 star	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3

4.2 The CPA 2007 provisional score is mainly based on the category scores allocated in 2006. Where this applies the cells are highlighted in grey. This information will be updated as and when assessment scores are confirmed during 2007/08.

4.3 The provisional CPA 2007 Service Assessment scores for Culture, Environment and Housing which are included in each Accountability report are based on 2006/07 year-end returns. It must be noted that we have included in this analysis several performance indicators that the Audit Commission are proposing to delete from the CPA 2007 scoring methodology, once a decision is confirmed the service assessments will be adjusted accordingly. We believe this should have a positive effect on the Culture score and impact on the overall score.

4.4 At this stage we are unable to make an informed judgement as to our predicted Direction of Travel score.

### 4.5 Modernising Our Council

- BV-4: % of those making complaints satisfied with the handling of those complaints**  
The Corporate Customer Relations Manager has recently taken a paper to Customer First Board recommending that departments apply a 'lessons learned' approach following all complaints, to identify how these could have been handled differently. There are also plans to introduce a post-complaint evaluation questionnaire to understand more about the reasons behind customer satisfaction levels with how their complaints were handled.
- CP-AS51: Increase the % of public telephone calls to the council that are answered**  
This indicator is below target because some large services such as Choice-Based Lettings and Homelessness Advice and Prevention were only migrated into the corporate contact centre part-way through the year (e.g., HAP was only at the end of February) so the full-year effect of the improvements to answer rates in these services will not be seen until next year.
- CP-AS53: Increase the proportion of public telephone calls to the council that are handled by a corporate contact centre**  
There are a number of reasons why this indicator shows performance that is worse than last year's result.

The means of calculating this is calls answered at the contact centre divided by all calls answered, using a basket of lines that are included in the BT advert. When lines are migrated into the contact centre we work with partners to try to manage down demand, by cutting down on repeat contact. Non-contact centre lines are not in a position to do this, because they have no idea how much of their contact is repeat callers, whereas we can use Siebel to obtain this information. Reducing repeat calls means that volumes fall, but this PI effectively penalises this outcome, if only one part of the council is taking this approach.

We believe that calls answered may actually be increasing on non-contact centre lines, although it must be borne in mind that we rely on other services for this telephony data and it can be missing or unreliable.

Within the contact centre we have reduced the calls answered across Housing Repair and ALMO lines by about 40,000, but this is not so apparent when comparing total calls answered in the contact centre 2005/06 to 2006/07, because newer services migrating in have offset some of this fall. This pattern is also not consistent across all West Gate lines, e.g., there's been an increase of about 7,000 calls answered on Housing General.

Another significant reason that this indicator does not show a year on year rise is because of how we treated council tax and benefits data last year. The 2005/06 figure that we reported on this indicator was only for the last two quarters of the year, because the first two quarters was not robust data. This in effect meant that we recorded a % result as though these services had been in all year, but the actual raw data was only from Dec 2005 onwards. So for 2005/06, we recorded 72,317 Benefits calls answered and 67,633 council tax calls answered. In 2006/07 these volumes rose to 138,181 for Benefits and 218,564 for council tax - more than doubling. However, this does not mean a % rise in the calls answered at West Gate, because we applied the full year effect of this migration last year by only reporting the last two quarters' results.

In reality we are migrating services in, and an example is CBL, answering between 6000-7000 a month. However, because this line was never included in the original basket, the PI does not demonstrate any rise. If this had been included in 2005/06 we would have had 12 months worth of data 'below the line' (outside the contact centre) and this year 7 months worth below the line and 5 months worth above the line, which would have brought the contact centre percentage up.

The basket of lines used for this indicator will change in 2007/08 to be more representative of the council as a whole.

- **BV-8: The percentage of invoices for commercial goods and services that were paid by the authority within 30 days of such invoices being received by the authority**  
Although performance for 2006/07 has improved since last year, the target for 2006/07 has not been met (actual = 91.6% against a target of 92%). The year end position places Leeds in the middle quartile of all England performance; all England top quartile performance based on 2005/06 actual is 96.71%. In addition, the targets for this indicator have been set consistently at 92% for the 3 years 2005/06, 2006/07 and 2007/08. More importantly this indicator is part of a basket of indicators used by the Audit Commission to measure the rate of improvement across the council and, therefore, contributes to our Direction of Travel assessment.

It is anticipated that performance in this area will improve due to the Creditors function transferring to shared services, resulting in departmental staff being brought together and a more streamlined process introduced creating a more efficient and effective service.

- **BV-11c: Percentage of top 5% of earners that are disabled (excluding schools)**
- **BV-16a: The number of staff declaring that they meet the DDA disability definition as a percentage of the total workforce**

Currently we recruit and retain disabled people through various initiatives, including LEODIS and Workstep. Around 130 disabled staff is supported through the use of the Workstep grant. This helps people with moderate to high needs find and retain work. This is currently administered by Social Services through LEODIS; an internal agency promoting disability employment primarily within LCC. Our contract with Workstep which is worth c.£600k pa will expire in 2009. It is presently unclear what will replace this funding. The Council also directly delivers or works in partnership to provide wider social inclusion employment initiatives (not exclusive to disabled staff) including :

- Jobs and Skills: - a wide range of programmes including possible bids to help people on incapacity benefit into work (Pathways to Work)
- The Academy in Customer Services

To address our current performance and tackle barriers, the following headings have been developed by members of the Inter-departmental Working Party who helped shaped solutions for Roseville. Whilst the focus is on disability; some action would be transferable to support other priority groups within the context of Narrowing the Gap:

- Changing Culture, Perceptions and Knowledge
- Work-force Planning and Service Commissioning
- Improving Delivery
- Improving Results and Returns on Investment

### Next Steps – requirements to go forward

Low employment rates suggest we are not replacing disabled people who leave. To make a difference we need to recruit more disabled staff and our arrangements, both specialist and general, are not achieving this. A draft report on this issue has been prepared for discussion at the HR Strategy Group to develop a strategy to promote employment opportunities for disabled people. Once the Draft Strategy has been agreed by HR Strategy Group, proposals will be presented to CMT for consideration.

- **BV-12: The proportion of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence**

The table below illustrates a comparison of the cumulative figures for this year compared with the out-turn from 2005-2006.

Department	2005/06	2006/07	Variance
Chief Executive's	11.24	11.64	↑ 0.4
City Services	17.14	16.51	↓ 0.63
Corporate Services	8.87	8.15	↓ 0.72
Development	7.75	8.04	↑ 0.29
Schools	9.35	9.19	↓ 0.16
Learning and Leisure	13.55	12.33	↓ 1.22
Neighbourhoods and Housing	12.81	13.74	↑ 0.93
Social Services	17.84	16.6	↓ 1.24
Average per person across LCC	12.43	12.0	↓ 0.43

It can be seen that sickness absence across the Council continues to fall with an overall improvement of nearly half a day when compared with last year. This is a similar improvement as was achieved between 2004/05 and 2005/06 and accounts for an improvement of around 1 day over the past two years. The overall improvement of 0.43 days represents a saving of over 11,184 days. This was seen as a 'significant achievement' for an organisation of the size of Leeds City Council in an independent review by the Improvement and Development Agency. As ever, it is also interesting to note the number of staff who have taken little or no time off through sickness absence:

- 35.75% of LCC employees have had no sickness during the year;
- 14.41% have had 1-2 days;
- Staff with 3 more days absence is 49.85%.

Analysis of rolling 12 month periods also shows that the improvement in sickness absence in the Council is being maintained. The 'Happy, Healthy and Here' programme, an integral part of the People Strategy, continues to drive the work to improve safety, well-being and attendance and this is complimented by specific projects aimed at tackling hotspots within particular departments.

Only three departments showed a downturn in performance from the previous year the most notable of which was **Neighbourhoods and Housing**. Whilst this department is now encompassed within the Environment and Neighbourhoods portfolio of services, the DMT with support from local HR has identified the following specific pieces of work to improve sickness absence during 2007-08:

- A pilot has been scoped, with assistance from Corporate HR, that will look at employees speaking to an Occupational Health Advisor from the first day of absence, after notifying their line manager as normal. This will enable their illness to be discussed with a medical professional who will be able to offer advice on return to work, any matters which may speed recovery and early access to further treatment or reasonable adjustments. This has had a positive impact on sickness absence rates when trialled in other organisations. Discussions are on-going with the Trade Unions to introduce this as soon as possible.
- Stress related absence is significant in the Directorate and they are currently rolling out the HSE's Stress Management Standards, which have had an impact already in Learning and Leisure and Development. This is in partnership with the Unions.
- 'Hot Spots' have been identified within certain services and work is on-going to consider causes of absence in these areas including the impact of change and management style.
- Rigorous monitoring of sickness absence has highlighted an increase in long-term absence and work is underway to establish the reasons why this should have increased.
- Refresher training on the use of Managing Attendance Procedures has been directed at all Senior Management Teams to increase ownership and accountability.

The former **Development** department has also seen a very marginal downturn in performance in this area (0.29), but at 8.04 days lost per FTE, it is still well below the 'industry' average. Maintaining low absence levels is important, however, and the HR team have identified the following specific pieces of work:

- The Development department carried out a 'work-life' survey two years ago and this is to be revisited in 2007-08 and extended to include a broader range of services. This will hopefully have an impact on stress-related absence.
- Specific work on monitoring and addressing long-term absence has been identified.
- More rigorous monitoring will be undertaken to highlight 'persistent offenders' and move people more efficiently through the procedures, where this is appropriate.

The only other area to have not made an improvement on last year is the **Chief Executive's Department**, which showed a 0.4 increase in sickness absence per FTE. Work to improve this position includes:

- Identification of a 'hot spot' service i.e. Customer Services. A senior HR Officer has been seconded specifically to this service to assist, amongst other things, in addressing sickness absence.
- A senior operational manager has also been made responsible for this area of work within this service and he has established a 'sickness absence working group', which includes the Corporate 'lead' on safety, well-being and attendance. This group will scope an improvement plan.
- The Occupational Health 'first day' referral pilot is also currently being considered in this area.
- All services will continue to formulate improvement strategies for sickness absence in line with Happy, Healthy and Here. This is especially important in the current climate of change and modernising the pay structure.

## 4.6 Environment and Community Safety

- **BV-82a: The proportion of household waste sent by the authority for recycling.**  
We have missed our target for recycling (BV-82a) for the year, largely due to our timber contractor refusing to accept MDF, and other low quality waste wood, during the first part of the year. In the latter part of the year we have implemented a new contract which once again allows MDF to be recycled through the household waste sites and performance has improved. The target for composting of waste (BV-82b) has been hit, due to the roll-out of the garden waste pilot, and the inclusion of gully waste in the calculation.
- **BV-82d: The proportion of household waste sent by the authority to landfill**  
The proportion of household waste sent to landfill has missed the target for the year by 0.9%. This is largely due to the reasons outlined above. Comparisons with other authorities should be made with caution, due to the availability of other disposal options in other large cities, e.g. Energy from Waste in Sheffield, Nottingham and Bristol.
- **BV-91: Percentage of the population resident in the authority's area served by a kerbside collection of recyclables**  
Performance over the year has not reached the target of 95%. Although over 10,000 more households have been given access to a collection of recyclables over the year, the number of households in Leeds has also grown by 3,500 to 325,027. This has meant that the impact of the new roll-out has not been as strong as first predicted. In addition there are a number of property types which present particular difficulties which regard to kerbside recycling for example, farm routes, some high rise and some city centre properties. We continue to work to resolve these issues and provide a comprehensive kerbside recycling service.
- **BV-90a, b, c, BV-89: Percentage of people expressing satisfaction with household waste collection, waste recycling, waste disposal, cleanliness standards**  
The figures for satisfaction may have been affected by a change in survey methodology, however overall satisfaction levels for waste and recycling and cleanliness are comparatively high when compared to other core cities and the national picture.
- **BV-100: Number of days of temporary traffic controls or road closure on traffic sensitive roads caused by local authority road works per km of traffic sensitive roads**  
Improvements in data recording and the road closures for the East Leeds Link Road and Pontefract Lane have contributed to an increase in the number of days per km. East Leeds Link Road and Pontefract Lane account for over half of the days.
- **BV-224b: Percentage of the unclassified road network where structural maintenance should be considered**  
The methodology for this indicator has changed completely to a four year rolling average for road condition. This effectively means that this year is a baseline year for performance. A new local indicator has been developed (LKI-224b) to measure the annual result. Performance for the year is 19%, meeting the 2006/07 target of 19.5%.
- **BV-215a, b: The average time taken to repair a street lighting fault which is under the control of the local authority, under the control of a Distribution Network Operator (DNO).**  
The transfer of the street lighting maintenance function under PFI to a private sector contractor is progressing well. However, there have been some issues around the transfer of data to the contractor in the first instance and subsequent recording and data quality issues with the contractor. These have resulted in doubts being shed on the accuracy of the figures for the year so far. These issues have been managed through the contract management process. We are working with Internal Audit to rectify the issues. An action plan is in place to provide an end of year figure before the end of May and to ensure robust reporting in 2007/08.

- **BV-126: Domestic burglaries per 1,000**

This result can be partially explained by a number of factors believed to be impacting adversely on performance:

- Increase in student population over the last few years has brought a large number of vulnerable young people into high crime areas and thereby increasing the opportunities for offenders to target those at risk.
- During the summer months of 2006 the hot weather provided increased opportunity for sneak in thefts. Sneak-ins currently running at over 20% of all domestic burglaries.
- Location of bail hostels in high crime areas also increases the opportunities for individuals to re-offend.
- Early prison release of prolific offenders and shorter sentencing for convicted offenders.
- Increase in 'Hanoi' style burglaries where car keys are taken from insecure properties and high value vehicles stolen.

The Leeds wide Operation Strikeback has a dedicated team focusing on the most prolific offenders committing burglary and greater emphasis will be placed on linking these offenders with the Drug Intervention Programme to address their drug behaviour. We will continue with the proactive and reactive target hardening service to protect and reduce the risk to vulnerable neighbourhoods and properties and utilising technology e.g. smartwater and asset tracking. The Safer Leeds Acquisitive Crime Group will be split into 3 sub groups one of which will focus on domestic burglary. The control strategy will be reviewed and monitored on an ongoing basis in line with intelligence reporting.

- **BV-127b: Robberies per year, per 1,000 population in the local authority area**

This result can be partially explained by a number of factors believed to be impacting adversely on performance:

- The impact of the National Crime Recording Standard is having an adverse effect on the number of robberies recorded. This is because the test applied by police crime evaluators, in accordance with Home Office counting rules, to demonstrate an offence of robbery is now wider than previously and as a consequence they now record more offences as robbery and fewer offences as theft from the person
- In addition, there has been a growing trend of young people on young people robberies (mobile phones and portable electronic goods).

A review of the robbery control strategy has been undertaken in March 2007 following a visit from a Home Office consultant. The Safer Leeds Acquisitive Crime Group will be split into 3 sub groups one of which will focus on robbery. This is to be chaired by a DCI from North East Leeds Police Division. The control strategy will be reviewed and monitored on an ongoing basis in line with intelligence reporting.

#### **4.7 Thriving and Harmonious Communities**

- **BV-203: The percentage change in the average number of families placed in temporary accommodation**

The return for BV-203 in 2006/07 shows a 24% rise in temporary accommodation placements. It is important to note that the indicator does not capture the actual number of families placed in temporary accommodation at a particular point in time. Rather the figure reported is the average number placed over the four end of quarter snapshots. This figure is compared to the equivalent figure for the previous year to calculate the percentage difference.

There was a significant increase in the number of families in temporary accommodation during the first three quarters of 2006/07. This was primarily due to the continued reduction in the number of social housing lettings which meant that households were waiting longer in temporary accommodation.

The Housing Services Division have developed a plan to reduce the number of temporary accommodation placements by 50% by 2010. This plan focuses on the need to maximise permanent accommodation options, including those within the private sector, identifies opportunities to prevent homelessness and also considers the role of housing support services in speeding up the re-housing process. There were 30 less families placed at the end of Q4 than the position at the end of Q3. The nature of the indicator means that if this rate of placement reduction is maintained the Council will in all likelihood attain upper quartile performance against BV-203 in 2007/08.

#### 4.8 **Health and Well-being**

- **CP-OP50 (PAF A0/C72) - Permanent Admissions of Elderly People to Residential/ Nursing Care per 10,000 population aged 65+**

Admission to residential care may not be appropriate for some older people who with the effective support of community based services can be enabled to live at home or to return home following hospital treatment. Preventative and rehabilitation strategies should lead to falling numbers of elderly people entering residential care.

This indicator is therefore associated with PAF C28 (Intensive home care) with which it forms a key threshold indicator. The threshold is defined as if intensive home care is less than 8 per 1000 and there were 140 or more admissions to residential/nursing care per 10,000 population then performance is limited to 'Serving most people well'.

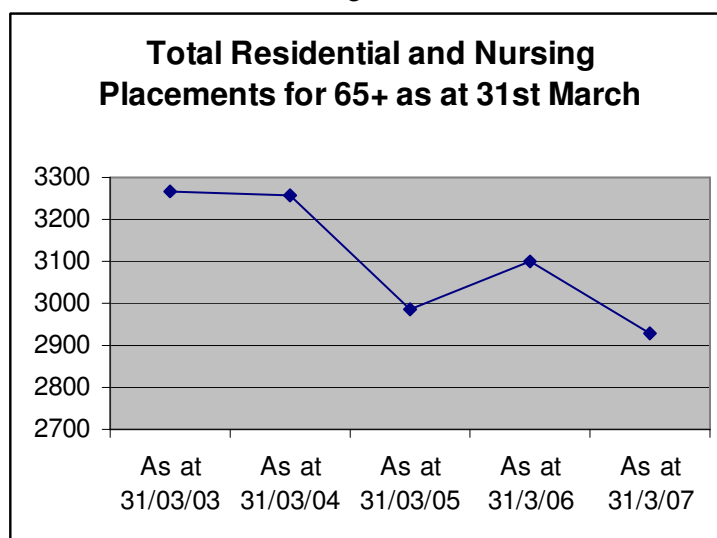
##### **The issue**

The **PAF AO/C28** performance indicator measures the number of households receiving intensive home care *per 1,000 population aged 65+* Leeds performance fell from 10.3 in 2005/06 to 10.0 in 2006/07. Leeds remains at 3 star (acceptable) status for this PI and this level of performance ensures that the key threshold has been met.

Intensive home care support appears to have declined by around 40 service users in the year. A positive performance with regard to reducing residential admissions would allay concerns that this could reflect an overall decline in the effectiveness of preventative services for adults.

##### **Performance**

Performance for **PAF AO/C72** has not yet been calculated for 2006/07. Performance in 2005/06 was 82.6. This is top banded performance (5\*). A count of the total residential and nursing care for older people indicates that the total population of older people in care at 31<sup>st</sup> March has declined between 2005/06 and 2006/07 (Figure 1). This suggests that the numbers of older people entering care in the year are unlikely to have significantly increased, although this is possible if, for example the increase in number of people dying or leaving care is greater than the increase in the number entering care.





- **BV-196 (PAF D56): Percentage of Packages of Care for new elderly service users provided within 28 days of assessment**

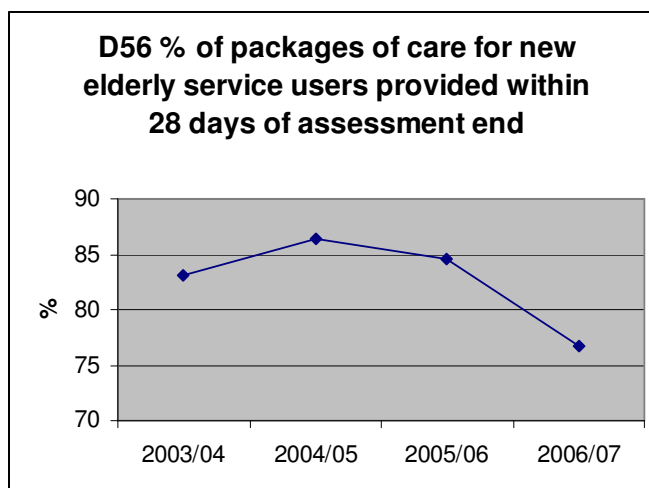
Users and carers should expect practical help and other support to arrive in a timely fashion soon after problems have been referred to Social Services. The Department of Health has set targets that all care packages should be in place within 4 weeks of assessment. This is a key threshold indicator. The threshold set by the Government for 2006/07 is greater than 60% for both waiting times for care packages. The threshold raises to 75% in 2007/08. Failure to meet the threshold limits the judgement of social care performance to ‘Serving most people well’.

**The Issue**

Leeds performance for 2006/07 has declined from 84.6 in 2005/06 to 76.8% in 2006/07. It failed to meet its target of 88%.

**Performance**

Leeds performance for waiting times for care packages is currently rated in the second of five bands by the Department of Health. It is classed as “Ask questions about performance”. A performance of 80% would be required to be “Acceptable”. Core City average for 2005/06 was 81%. Performance has declined for the last 2 years.



Performance significantly deteriorated at the start of the financial year but recovered steadily during the year. There are concerns that the completion date for some care packages may not have been appropriately reported and this could affect the accuracy of data used to calculate this indicator. A data quality audit is currently being undertaken.

**Current Improvement Plans**

The issue is being addressed through monthly performance management and reporting at area and team level. Teams showing weak performance have been identified and Service Delivery Managers have been instructed to implement local service improvements. Where health teams have demonstrated poor performance the Head of Adult Service Delivery has directly intervened. Team planning is currently being introduced for all teams in order to extend front line operational attention upon this priority area for improvement.

- **BV-201 (PAF C51): Direct Payments**

This indicator measures the number of adults and older people receiving direct payments at 31<sup>st</sup> March per 100,000 population aged 18 or over.

Direct payments are intended to give the recipient greater control over their lives by providing an alternative to services provided by social services departments. Councils have a duty to provide these services where individuals consent to this and are able to manage them. The indicator shows how well authorities are able to implement direct payments.

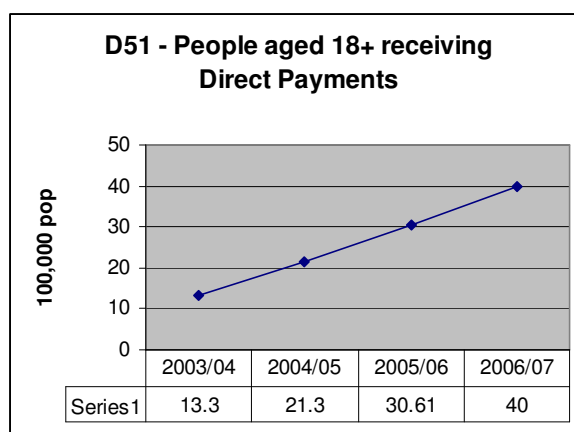
## The issue

Performance has been improving since 2002/03 but at a significantly lower rate than comparator authorities. This indicator is a key threshold indicator. The threshold set for 2006/07 by the Government is greater than 15 per 100,000 pop. Aged 18+. The government has raised the threshold for 2007/08 to a rate significantly higher than current performance (60) and has announced its intention to increase the threshold to 70 in 2008/09.

## Performance

Leeds performance for Direct Payments for 2006/07 is **40**. A target of 43 was set for the year. 2006/07 performance is rated in the third of five bands by the Department of Health. It is classed as "Acceptable". The core city average for 2005/06 was 70. The Key threshold for this indicator rises to 60 in 2007/08 and 70 in 2008/09.

This area of work has been identified as a key service improvement area.



## Current Improvement Plans

A two year direct payments improvement plan was implemented in April 2007. Its main components are:

- Update the department's written direct payments procedures (Last updated 22/03/06).
- Review the direct payments pay rates.
- Promote and publicise direct payments in Leeds.
- Revisit training on direct payments for assessors/ care managers to raise awareness and improve understanding of direct payments.
- Direct payments user satisfaction survey (last completed in April 2004).
- Ensure that triggers in the assessment /care planning process are effective.
- Monitor performance against area targets.
- Properly identify direct payments spend.
- Ensure direct payments users are supported effectively by ASIST.
- To make direct payments as inclusive as possible through the use of user led trusts.
- To introduce a system of accurate performance management data collection in respect of direct payments.
- To introduce a system to identify the number and value of direct payments packages being agreed for service users who are over 65 and service users who are under 65.
- Increase the use of direct payments to purchase items of equipment.
- Budgetary sign off responsibility re-assigned from Head of Service - Adults To Service Delivery Managers – Adults, for people over 65.
- To revisit promotion of direct payments to people from black and ethnic minority Communities.
- To introduce service user involvement in the Direct Payments Project Operational Group.
- To ensure the strategy for implementing access to direct payments for all those eligible to use them is approved by members and is led by all senior staff across the council.

## **4.9 Children and Young People**

This report highlights key issues raised by the indicators included in the Q4 performance report. These are grouped under the Every Child Matters five outcomes.

### **Be Healthy**

#### **Key Issue: Teenage Conceptions**

##### **Why is it important?**

This is a key issue because reducing teenage conceptions is a national PSA target for central government and an important local target for children's services in the Children and Young People's Plan. One reason that this is a national target is because teenage conception rates in the UK are significantly higher than in other comparable countries. It is a local target because reduction in teenage conception in the city has been slower and less consistent than in many other areas. Teenage conception is an important measure as it is a good proxy measure for young people's wellbeing.

##### **What are we doing about it?**

The lead services within the children's partnership for teenage conception, the PCT and Education Leeds, were tasked with reviewing partnership and commissioning arrangements. This is now complete and an action plan has been agreed and is now being implemented.

### **Stay Safe**

#### **Key issue: the proportion of children coming into care**

##### **Why is it important?**

This is a key issue because the children are placed in care due to severe problems in their home life, because children in care generally have poor outcomes, and because rising numbers poses a significant challenge to services in responding to the needs of these children and young people. A significant driver of rising numbers of children in care in Leeds is the growth of children and young people that arrive in the city as unaccompanied asylum seekers. It should be noted that this indicator needs to be used with care due to the number of factors involved. In particular, previous inspections of social care have indicated that thresholds are correct and children are placed in care appropriately.

##### **What are we doing about it?**

We are responding to this rise in numbers in a range of ways. Firstly there is a strong focus on wider preventative support and services through children's trust arrangements and the associated growth in parent and family support services and improved assessment and early identification. Secondly work is underway within social care to improve information on children in need, particularly around unaccompanied asylum seekers.

## **Enjoy and Achieve**

### **Key Issue: GCSE results**

#### **Why is it important?**

GCSE results have seen sustained and significant improvement in standards over recent years, so that 2006 was the first year where over half of students in Leeds gained 5 or more grades A\*-C. However, despite this improvement results are still below target and the national average. In addition results for vulnerable groups continue to be an area for development because, despite improvement, there remains a significant gap for many young people, as can be seen in the figures for Looked After Children. Lastly, measures of the progress made between Key Stages (value added) remains weak, in part because schools have focused on pupils at the borderline between grades C and D. Attainment is vital for young people in ensuring progression *to further work and learning and its role in determining future life chances*

#### **What are we doing about it?**

Secondary standards continue to be a key focus for schools, the authority, Education Leeds and partners. There are a wide range of programmes working to provide schools with support and challenge, from the work of the National Strategies team to the use of experienced headteachers as School Improvement Partners, to the No Child Left Behind programme that is developing collaborative networks of schools to support inclusion. Over the next year new projects will include: the Achievement for All initiative that will provide targeted support for schools facing the most significant challenges, the Personalisation Programme that will develop more tailored support for individual learners and lastly the recruitment and work of a headteacher to better coordinate support for Looked After Children within a 'virtual school'.

#### 1.1 Key Issue: Attendance

#### **Why is this important?**

Attendance is important because it is one of the main statutory targets for schools as well as central and local government. Attendance is important because it is a proxy measure of each learner's engagement and enjoyment of school, as well as the support and commitment of parents and lastly the focus and effectiveness of schools. Attendance at school is important to children and young people because not only is it vital if they are to learn but also to ensure that they are in a safe environment and away from behaviours that could put themselves or others at risk.

#### **What are we doing about it?**

Education Leeds is working in close partnership not just with local schools but also with the DfES because of the challenges faced in Leeds as in many other big cities. Feedback from the DfES is very positive about the range and efficacy of the Attendance Strategy, and monitoring has shown a very positive impact on targeted schools. However, as can be seen from the data, attendance fell overall in the 2005/06 year, mainly due to a decline in attendance in schools not previously targeted by the Strategy. After a resultant review there has been agreement to enhance the local strategy with improved partnership working between attendance teams, wider school improvement services and networks of schools in order to share expertise and develop more capacity across the city.

## **Make a Positive Contribution**

### 1.1.1 Key issue: Youth Services Outcomes

### 1.1.2 Why is this important?

Engaging young people through the youth service is important in providing positive opportunities within their communities. The recent Best Value survey and consultation for the Children and Young People's Plan emphasised that activities for young people was an important issue for young people, parents as well as the wider community. Accredited activities through youth provision are important to provide structure and achievement for young people and to support wider learning within school.

However, as the attached figures show, there is a high degree of uncertainty at present over the performance of the service due to weaknesses in management information. This was raised at inspection in 2004.

### 1.1.3 What are we doing about it?

The Youth Service is working with corporate services to address these weaknesses through priority work to improve data quality and procure and implement a new management information system.

## **Achieve Economic Wellbeing**

No issues for comment on current performance report.

## **4.10 City Development**

### **General satisfaction Pls comment**

Satisfaction rates in the most recent Best Value survey were lower for many services than recorded performance at the last BV survey. This is true for the three satisfaction indicators (BV-111, BV119c, BV-119d) listed below. However, in each case specific reasons for a decline have been identified, and remedial action has been identified that will hopefully contribute to a rise in satisfaction rates by the next survey.

- **BV-111: Percentage of Planning applicants satisfied with service received**

The focus of the Planning Service over the last year has been on stabilising performance against BV-109 (which relates to time take to process planning applications) to ensure that the Council did not become a Planning Standards Authority. Performance has now stabilised and the service can change its emphasis to customer care improvements. Planned actions include additional resourcing within the service, improved levels of information to customers, web site development, and customer focus groups.

- **BV-119c: Percentage of residents satisfied with museums and galleries**

Museums and galleries provision in Leeds will be substantially improved over the next three years, with the opening of the Leeds Museum Discovery Centre and the new City Museum. The first phase of the refurbishment of the Art Gallery, and the works at Kirkstall Abbey will also be completed. This investment will see a change in the service's culture towards a more overtly inclusive, customer-focussed approach, with a strong emphasis on learning and community partnerships in programming, collection development, and exhibitions.

- **BV-119d: Percentage of residents satisfied with theatres and concert halls**

Theatre and concert hall provision in Leeds will be substantially improved over the next three years with the completion of the Grand Theatre refurbishments, and the opening of a new arena, which will attract concerts and other events to the city.

- **BV-165: Percentage of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people**

A thorough, internal inspection audit of 486 pedestrian crossings is currently underway. The city centre crossings have already been inspected, and crossings outside the city centre are now being audited. KPMG have approved the standards/procedure currently being used to audit the crossings, and will use this information as the basis of their own audit, which will start in due course.

- **BV-204: Percentage of appeals allowed against the authority's decision to refuse on planning applications**

In addition to the member and officer training that has been agreed to ensure soundness in decision making, a report was submitted to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) on Monday 05 March 2007 providing further detail of actions designed to improve the performance of this indicator (compulsory training for panel members, non-compulsory training for non-panel members). The report was approved by OSC, who will receive regular update reports in order to monitor progress.