



for an independent overview
of local public services

4 December 2009

Chairs of Local Strategic Partnerships

Dear Colleague,

Comprehensive Area Assessment – Area Assessment

Please find attached to this letter the final version of your area assessment. These are the full and summary texts we will publish on Wednesday 9 December 2009.

The assessment is provided to you under embargo until 00:01 on 9 December 2009. Please ensure that the embargo is respected and anything you issue has the same reporting restriction.

We will publish our assessments on the new Oneplace website – www.direct.gov.uk/oneplace. This is a new joint inspectorate website for independent information about the performance and prospect for improvement.

We have produced a press release tailored to your area and will share it with your communications team in advance of publication. We will also provide your communications team with links to the Oneplace website, and have already provided articles that explain Oneplace for use in resident newspapers and other relevant publications.

Finally, I would like to thank you for all your help and support in undertaking this assessment. We will be in touch with you in the coming weeks to let you know how we propose to update the assessments. Our aim will be to minimise work for us both while maximising the value to you and your residents.

Please contact your Audit Commission CAA Lead in the first instance if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Gareth Davies'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Gareth Davies
Chair of the CAA Strategy Group

cc Your nominated CAA contacts

Audit Commission CAA Lead

Audit Commission Appointed Auditor

Her Majesty's Inspector, Ofsted

Area Manager, Care Quality Commission

Single Point of Contact, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary

Leeds

Area Assessment (Summary version)

Pre-publication version dated 03 December 2009

Provided under embargo




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.

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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/>



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Leeds

Area Assessment

Pre-publication version dated 03 December 2009

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About Leeds

A recent survey shows that in Leeds 79 per cent of people are satisfied with their immediate local area as a place to live. This is broadly the same as the average for similar areas and broadly the same as the national average of 81 per cent.

Over 750,000 people live in Leeds - making it the largest city in Yorkshire and Humberside. The economy has grown quickly over the past ten years. The city has changed from being a mainly industrial city into an important business, finance and legal centre. It is at the centre of the 'Leeds City Region'.

The population has been increasing quickly. It is forecast to continue to grow, particularly the number of people aged over 65. Leeds 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 was the 85th most deprived area in England in 2007- an improvement on 2004 when it was 63rd. But parts of Leeds are still very deprived. Over 150,000 people live in areas which are amongst the 10 per cent most deprived in the country. 'Narrowing the gap' between the prosperous parts of Leeds and the less well-off inner city areas is one of the big challenges for the city.

The Council, NHS, other public services like the police, fire and probation,

voluntary organisations and businesses, work together as 'The Leeds Initiative' to improve the quality of life for people in Leeds. Partners share a vision 'to bring the benefits of a prosperous, vibrant and attractive city to all the people of Leeds'. They have ambitions of 'Going up a league' economically and in quality of life and 'Narrowing the gap' between the richer and poorer parts of Leeds.

How well do priorities for Leeds express community needs and aspirations?

The Leeds Initiative has a good understanding of the big issues affecting people in Leeds. A wide range of people and groups were involved in establishing the Vision for Leeds and in agreeing priorities for the city. Many of the things that people have identified as important in the past have seen big improvements. Most types of crime have fallen and roads and pavements have got better. People in Leeds feel safer than they did two years ago.

One Leeds' big ambitions is to go up a league economically and in quality of life. It's prospects for doing so are promising. The other big ambition is narrowing the gap between the richer and poorer parts of the city. Over the last three years, there has been some progress in narrowing this gap. But the Place Survey showed big differences in satisfaction between the most and least deprived parts of Leeds. Development of a Leeds 'Neighbourhood Index' will help local public services understand what is needed to narrow gaps more effectively.

Public sector organisations in Leeds carry out a lot of consultation with people. They also collect a lot of detailed statistical information about Leeds. At the moment, they tend to do this as individual organisations rather than together. This means that information is not always used as effectively as it might be. It also means that people might be asked about the same issues by different organisations. Local public services have recognised the need to work together more closely to improve how they consult people in Leeds.

Partnership working is well established. Partners are looking to improve it further by being clearer about roles and responsibilities. The pace of improvement would also be improved by more effective performance management - challenging quickly where things are not going well and putting them right. The partnership recognises the need to improve its approach to ensuring value for money. It has set up the Public Sector Resources Partnership Group to try and make sure that it spends money in the best way possible. The Group provides public service partners with the opportunity to ensure that their work is subject to detailed evaluation to ensure that it provides good value for money.

Leeds is at the centre of the Leeds City Region. This involves 11 local authorities from across North, South and West Yorkshire working together on big issues like regeneration, skills and housing. The City Region has been given special status by the government to make changes to the way that councils and their partners minimise the impact of the downturn and speed up recovery. The challenge for the City Region will be to make sure that these

changes have an impact on people's lives.


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. Free events like 'Opera in the Park' and 'Party in the Park' attracted record audiences in 2009. The Council has spent money on refurbishing the Grand Theatre, Art Gallery and Central Library. It has also opened new attractions such as the City Museum and Kirkstall Abbey visitor centre. The museum attracted nearly 200,000 visitors in the first six months. This investment led to visits to museums and galleries nearly doubling to just under one million, although visits to libraries fell slightly. Eight per cent more adults were active and participated in sports - one of the largest increases in the country. There is a comprehensive programme of Sport and Active Recreation for disabled service users.

Although there is concern about the impact of the recession on future plans, the Council and partners are working to improve facilities further and prospects for improvement are good. There are plans to improve the City Varieties theatre and the Northern Ballet. Plans are well advanced to build and open the Leeds Arena - a 12,500 seat multi-purpose venue in the heart of the city - which is a high priority for residents and local businesses. There are also plans to improve and relocate leisure centres, to provide a wider range of facilities and make them easier to get to.

But the benefits of this investment are not being felt consistently by 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 have never used leisure facilities. Partners need to do more to ensure that cultural facilities are accessible by all the people of Leeds.

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

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

People in more deprived communities have benefited from Leeds' economic growth through 'Leeds Ahead'. It has encouraged enterprise, improved skills and attainment and raised the aspirations of people in disadvantaged communities. Businesses have become valued members of local communities.

Leeds Ahead has engaged with nearly 200 local businesses. These businesses have invested more than £500,000 and donated 13,000 hours of voluntary support, through 460 separate projects. The work has benefited 147 different community partners and helped more than 12,000 of the 75,000 most deprived people in the city.

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. Before 2007, businesses helped support local communities in an unco-ordinated way. The Leeds Ahead approach has ensured that support is better directed to what is important for local people. Relationships with local communities are long-term, rather than one-off. Businesses have better ownership and understanding of local needs. Employees stay in their jobs for longer, businesses are financially stronger and have better links with local partners. As a result, businesses enjoy better goodwill and reputation benefiting local people and the places in which they live.

Pupils in inner city schools have been helped with maths and english through mentoring by employees of a major law firm. Exam results in targeted schools have increased and in one school the number of children getting five GCSEs at A-C grade, including maths and english, has increased from 20 to 53 per cent. Mentoring schemes have helped increase the participation of young people in positive activities, improved school attendance rates and attitudes to learning. Higher aspirations for achievement, work, careers and enterprise offer to break cycles of deprivation and reliance on state benefits.

Businesses have provided specialist advice, support and other forms of help to local communities. In a local prison, their input has helped to engage prisoners in the world of work, to get them a job and so contribute to local society. Initiatives have supported economic regeneration by providing opportunities for work experience, and training to improve general work, entrepreneurial and business management skills. Community development projects have been helped to increase local project design and delivery skills. Council employees have also gained from Leeds Ahead. They are now better engaged with, and understand, the needs of people in deprived areas.

This has improved the prospects, community cohesion and confidence of many people in the most disadvantaged communities in Leeds. Marginalised groups have been re-integrated. Families in poverty have gained the opportunity to become more independent and financially secure. People now have greater pride, sense of belonging and achievement in their local communities.

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

As with all major cities, the recession has affected Leeds, particularly developments in the city centre. As a result, it has reviewed its priorities and is focusing on the development of the Arena, City Park, city centre improvements, new retail developments at Trinity Quarter and the expansion of Leeds Bradford airport. This clear approach gives confidence to investors, developers and residents that the city is in good shape to overcome the

recession.

Leeds has responded well to the recession. Local public services understand how it has affected individuals, business and areas. They have provided targeted help to those most affected, including advice and support to the recently unemployed. Public and private sector business support services have been located together in White Rose House. New businesses have been supported in deprived communities through the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI).

Partners have a clear ambition for the Leeds economy to help drive the wider economies of the region. They are on track to deliver this goal 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 and have identified the facilities the city must have if its economic ambitions are to be realised, including the Arena and improved transport into the city. The business, voluntary and community sectors have been closely involved in setting priorities and in decision making.

Prospects for the future are promising. Partners have ambitions of 'Going up a league' economically and in quality of life. Good progress has been made on raising the profile of Leeds as an international city and a new economic strategy is being developed to support this. Leeds' role at the centre of the Leeds City region places it well to take advantage of new opportunities and to continue to grow its economy.

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.

Leeds has improved its waste recycling and over 30 per cent of it 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 recycled and there are more kerbside collections. The Council has spent significant amounts of money to reduce the amount of waste produced by people in Leeds and the amount that is sent for recycling. People in Leeds now produce less waste than most parts of the country. The Council's Integrated Waste Strategy is a comprehensive approach which aims to maintain progress and meet the long-term demands of the Government and the European Union.

Streets are cleaner than they were and public access to footpaths and rights of way has improved. Other work to improve the environment has included the crime and grime initiative and the Graffiti Charter. The Council is reviewing its environmental performance and plans to invest in areas like improved street cleaning.

Work has been started to reduce carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from public sector buildings and day to day activities, and to encourage businesses to do likewise. For instance, Housing Associations have put energy-efficiency upgrades into 3,350 properties, the Council has set up a £1 million fund to improve its buildings between 2008 and 2010, and its Fuelsavers Team is helping people to get grants for home improvements. Although work is taking place to deliver biomass, solar and wind projects there is only a piecemeal approach to reduce carbon emissions. A lot of work is focused on understanding current levels of CO₂ emissions and how to measure levels accurately in the future. This will provide a clearer picture of what can be done to reduce CO₂ emissions between 2010 and 2012 and in the longer-term.

Partners are in the early stages of preparing for the possible impacts of Climate Change. They have recently agreed a Climate Change Strategy for the city. They have set aside funds for projects to cope with possible floods and set up a Programme Board to strengthen focus and leadership. But partners are not yet able to demonstrate clear results from much of the work to improve the environment. The newly-produced Climate Change Strategy has not yet been translated into a detailed, prioritised action and delivery plan. The contribution of other partners, including business, is not yet clear. One of the big challenges for Leeds is how it balances its ambitions for economic growth, for example the expansion of Leeds-Bradford airport, with its ambitions to reduce carbon emissions. We will follow up progress on environmental issues later in the year.

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

Fewer people in Leeds feel that people from different backgrounds get on well than in 2006/07. There are big differences within Leeds, with people in East, South and West much less positive than those in the North of the City. Local public services have a programme of work to improve relations between different groups. This includes the Safer Schools Partnership, which places safer schools officers in high schools to work with young people on issues like racial tolerance.

Community Cohesion pilots are being carried out in three areas where there are particular tensions between different communities - Armley, Chapeltown/Harehills and Middleton. Work in these areas focuses on trying to help people to get on better together, rather than addressing some of the underlying inequalities that create tensions between communities. It is not

clear how 'narrowing the gap' work to reduce inequalities is integrated with partners' ambitions to build more harmonious communities. A Leeds 'Neighbourhood Index' is being developed to help local public services understand the specific issues facing different communities, how best to tackle them and how to measure if they have made a difference.

The most recent Place Survey showed that satisfaction levels in Leeds compare well with similar cities. Older people in particular are more satisfied than elsewhere, with over 80 per cent saying that they are satisfied or very satisfied. But there are big differences 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. It is likely that this hides even bigger differences within these fairly large parts of the city. The recent place survey shows a mixed picture on how well people in Leeds are involved in their local communities. Fewer people in Leeds than other big cities participate in civic activities, and there has been a big fall in the number of people who know how they can get involved in local decision making. On the other hand, the number of people who felt that they could influence decisions has increased. Local public services are carrying out a much more detailed residents' survey to try and understand better the differences within the city.

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

Red flag: Keeping vulnerable children and young people safe

Some vulnerable children and young people are not being kept safe from harm in Leeds. An inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements - the first point of contact for referring children who might be at risk - found that child protection referrals do not ensure that children are adequately safeguarded. Discussions between the Council, police and other agencies do not take place quickly enough and children are not always seen, even when there are concerns about their safety.

Inspectors found that key procedures were out of date and that different child protection teams adopted different approaches. The quality of assessments and the time taken to complete them varied too much. They found that record keeping was poor. Some children were identified as having been left at potential risk of serious harm.

The inspectors also had concerns that the systems for ensuring that the service is working properly were not good enough and were not helping the service to get better.

There are other problems with keeping vulnerable children and young people safe. The number of children admitted to hospital because of unintentional and deliberate injuries is increasing and is higher than the national average.

Inspectors also found in 2007 that safeguarding is inadequate in the private fostering service, which has yet to be re-inspected.

Some of these issues have been raised in previous inspection reports, but the Council and its partners have been slow to respond to concerns.

The Council responded quickly to the concerns raised in the unannounced inspection and prepared an action plan in response to the findings. It is too soon to judge whether these actions are enough to ensure that vulnerable children in Leeds are safe from harm.

What's being done in response?

Since the unannounced inspection, Leeds has accelerated its improvement plans to respond to the issues identified. Partners have taken immediate action to:

- add significantly to the management and leadership in children's social care;
- invest in an additional 12 senior social workers and 10 administrative staff to support front line workers;
- ensure that all children identified by the Ofsted inspectors as being potentially at risk of serious harm are safe;
- review all cases of potential harm or neglect reported since 1st April 2009 which did not progress to initial child protection conferences, and ensure that any concerns identified in the files are addressed;
- agree revised thresholds for action across the partnership and launch new materials across all agencies to support this. The guidance and publicity materials adopt a 'no closed doors' approach, in order to ensure that needs are met at the right level for children, young people and their families
- implement a revised Child Protection Enquiry process;
- introduce a professional triage system for referrals in the Contact centre;
- start a process to both improve and quality assure decision making processes; and
- conduct fortnightly staff seminars in social care to focus on quality of service delivery (topics have included: inspection findings, revised Child Protection Enquiry processes, learning from serious Case Reviews and quality assurance).

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

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. For

example, the Independent Living Project has helped people with a learning disability and adults with mental health needs in Leeds to live more independent lives. But people do have to wait longer in Leeds for minor alterations to their home. The Council provides good information and support to help people maximise benefits and pensions. It helped people to claim nearly £11 million in extra benefits in 2009.

Arrangements to make sure that vulnerable adults are kept safe have been improved. New staff have been recruited and more training provided to existing staff. Partners are working better together to help ensure that vulnerable people are safe and work has already been done to ensure that the new procedures are working. 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 other problems. Although recently there has been a slight drop, more teenagers become pregnant in Leeds than the national average. Leeds also has higher rates of binge drinking than other parts of the country.

There are big differences in health across the city. An average man in City and Hunslet will die just over 10 years earlier than an average man in Harewood. Women in City and Hunslet can expect to live almost nine and a half years less than women in Adel/Wharfedale. NHS Leeds, the Council and other organisations are working to try and improve this through a more systematic approach and by focusing on helping the most vulnerable communities. We will be following up progress on this as part of next year's assessment.

Deaths from smoking are higher than the national average, so reducing the number of smokers is a priority. The number of people who smoke in Leeds is reducing, particularly in the most deprived areas where, like most big cities, more people smoke. But there are still one and a half times as many smokers in deprived areas than in Leeds' more affluent areas. As in most big cities, more babies die young in Leeds than the national average. NHS Leeds is taking action to improve this, and is targeting neighbourhoods like Beeston and Chapeltown which have the worst problems.

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

Most children in Leeds achieve well at school, but progress is inconsistent. Achievement is not improving for the youngest children and is not as good as for children elsewhere. At Key Stage 2 results fell in both English and maths and the number of schools not hitting government targets is not getting better. Recent information from the Council shows the number of pupils getting five A-Cs at GCSE including maths and English remained at just over 46 per cent - the same as in 2008 - after increasing in the previous years from just over 40 per cent in 2006. Whilst some schools in Leeds recorded big

improvements in GCSE results some slipped back and six schools failed to meet the government target for 2011. Of these, one closed to become an academy and two closed to emerge as a new school.

Progress for some groups is particularly slow. For example, at key stages 2 and 4 Asian pupils perform well below the national average. The gap in achievement between Asian groups and the Leeds average for GCSEs including maths and English increased between 2006 and 2008.

Behaviour in some secondary schools is often only satisfactory and despite improvements, the rate of persistent absence in some schools is still too high. Nearly 10 per cent of young people are not in education, employment or training (NEET). There are high numbers from minority ethnic groups who are NEET progress to improve this has been slow.

More people in Leeds lack Level 2 skills than in other parts of the country, and the gap with national figures is not narrowing. Level 2 skills cover a wide range of academic and vocational qualifications that are designed to help people's employment prospects. Achievement of these level 2 qualifications by the age of 19 is below national averages, but improving.

Prospects for improving learning are promising, as more action is being taken to target support on the individuals and groups who most need it. We will monitor progress on this as part of the 2010 assessment.

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.

Red flag: Burglary in parts of Leeds

Burglary rates in Leeds are amongst the highest in the country. In some parts of Leeds, they are three times the national average. Burglary is particularly high in deprived areas like Beeston, Harehills, and Armley. Areas with high student populations also suffer, such as Headingley, where burglary was nearly nine times higher than in Wetherby in 2008/09.

Overall burglary across Leeds reduced from over 16,300 offences in 2002/03 to 9,248 in 2008/09. But it has increased for each of the last three years, at a time when the national trend has been downwards. Public service partners including the police have been slow to respond to this.

Partners recognise that they must make better use of intelligence to identify high risk offenders. They also know that they must target their efforts

effectively at local level rather than take a 'blanket' approach to dealing with the problem. Partners need to work better with the criminal justice system to try and ensure that offenders are given the right sentences and are properly supervised when they leave prison.

There are particular problems with young offenders - Leeds has a higher proportion of younger offenders than average. Most detected burglaries in Leeds are carried out by males under the age of 21. The Safer Leeds Partnership's figures show that just under a half of all offenders are aged between 15 and 19. The high number of young people not in education, employment or training and high rates of persistent absence in secondary schools highlight problems around the engagement of young people in positive activities.

The Partnership has identified the need to do further work to target socially excluded young people, provide the right level of support and improve how the management of young offenders is co-ordinated. This means sharing information on exclusions and persistent absence from school, identifying families that need the highest levels of support and targeting youth services and supervision. The Safer Schools Partnerships provides a good opportunity to make these links more effectively.

The police and council are working together with the probation service and the courts to try and reduce burglary, but this is not yet having a big impact. Actions include making properties more difficult to break into, improved street lighting, providing activities for youths and targeting prolific offenders. There has been some recent improvement, but this trend must continue over a longer period to deliver the very big improvements which are needed to reduce the wide gap between Leeds and similar areas.

What's being done in response?

Key public service partners in Leeds recognise that burglary is an area of concern and that rates are too high. Burglary action plans include a wide range of activity aimed at reducing burglary, but some of the plans are still under development. Work is being done through the Burglary Improvement Team to improve how burglary is tackled, but this work is not yet complete

Safer Leeds has incorporated best practice from better performing areas into its action plans.. Partners have developed a joint intelligence function and tasking process to support the identification and management of offenders. This is reducing the reoffending of the most prolific offenders and coordinates the resources of all partners to target the offenders who are identified as causing the most harm to communities.

These actions are starting to reduce burglary and detection rates have improved. Discussions are continuing about how to deliver the very big improvements which are needed. We'll update this section with more detailed information when it is agreed.

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.

Apart from burglary, many types of crime have fallen in Leeds, including some that people are most concerned about, such as violent crime and car theft. In general, people feel that Leeds is becoming safer. More people feel safe in their local area after dark than two years ago and significantly fewer people see drug dealing as a big problem. Fewer people than in other big cities feel that anti-social behaviour is a problem, whilst more people feel that public services are working well to make Leeds safer.

The number of serious assaults fell by nearly seven per cent in 2008/09 - with 426 fewer offences than the previous year. This has been helped by targeting efforts on 'hotspot' pubs and bars in the city, including a more visible uniformed police presence and stronger licensing enforcement. Special powers have been used to restrict drinking alcohol on the streets. This has reduced levels of street drinking. Plastic glasses have been introduced in some bars and pubs to reduce injuries. A recent survey showed that fewer people in Leeds than other big cities see drunk and rowdy behaviour as a big problem and levels of concern have not increased in the last two years. More young offenders re-offend in Leeds than in similar areas, but the Youth Offending Service works reasonably well.

Anti-social behaviour by problem families has been reduced. 'Signpost' works closely with families who are prolific and persistent perpetrators. It helps up to 98 families at any time, also helping with access to other services, for example health, housing and benefits. The families are fairly chaotic and often have problems including alcohol & substance misuse and domestic violence. Anti-social behaviour fell in nearly 9 out of 10 families who completed the programme. In half the families, criminal behaviour fell and school attendance improved significantly. The recent place survey showed that fewer people in Leeds feel that anti-social behaviour is a problem than in most big cities.

Housing is a problem in parts of Leeds. Many people in private rented housing are living in over crowded accommodation. The latest official figures show that over 24,000 people are on the waiting list for housing. Fewer people than before turn down the public sector houses they are offered as unsuitable, but the rate is still too high. This suggests that the system to provide choice does not work as well as it should.

Local public services have worked hard to try and increase the number of affordable houses. Funding has been agreed to deliver affordable housing as part of the East Leeds regeneration scheme. Planning policies have been strengthened to ensure that 30 per cent of all new housing developments include properties that people on lower incomes can afford. The quality of public sector housing is improving. All homes are set to meet the government's 'decent homes' standard by 2010/11. Fewer people than before are homeless in Leeds, and numbers continue to fall. Private sector tenancies are being used as an alternative to becoming homeless. The use of temporary accommodation for homeless people has fallen by 70 per cent since 2006. A sanctuary scheme is proving successful and mediation has been used in 182

cases to prevent homelessness. We will follow up progress on housing as part of next year's assessment.

Getting people into work in the poorer areas of the City is a problem. Unemployment - the number of people claiming Job Seeker's Allowance - rose by 90 per cent between May 2008 and 2009. This was higher than the rise in most of the other big cities, although more recent figures are much more encouraging. Unemployment is over 10 per cent in some inner city areas in Leeds - more than double the Leeds average. In Chapeltown, it is 17 per cent. Worklessness (the number of people either unemployed or unable to work) in some inner city areas is well over 30 per cent. Partners are doing a lot to try and help people into work. For example, the Local Employment Partnership (LEP) has seen 651 employers sign up to offer work opportunities to people in less well off communities. Partners 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.

Transport congestion, public transport and the condition of roads and pavements are consistently high priorities for Leeds residents. In response, partners have decided to improve transport systems and how easily people can use them, improve the condition of the streets and public transport facilities and improve safety for all users of the roads.

In 2004, one third of people thought that public transport was the most important thing for the future of Leeds. This was the top priority. Progress since then on improving the quality, use and accessibility of public transport has been relatively slow. One of the main problems is that public transport is provided by private companies and local public services have limited influence on bus and train services. Some improvements have been made. Bus shelters and train stations have been improved and bus lanes built to help buses run faster and make services more convenient. But not enough people are using buses across West Yorkshire, and passenger satisfaction with bus services in Leeds isn't getting better.

Roads and pavements in Leeds have got better. In 2007, Leeds people said that repairing roads and pavements was their top priority for improvement. Since then, the Council has increased spending on repairs and fewer people now see this as a top priority for improvement. Reducing congestion was also a big priority for Leeds people in 2007. Access to the city has been improved through new roads, such as the East Leeds Link Road and Inner Ring Road 7. More people are leaving their cars at home when they travel into Leeds in the morning peak. More people are cycling to work, with the number of cycle trips exceeding targets. But congestion remains a problem on many roads.

The Council, police and fire service are doing a lot of work to help make roads safer. Success has been mixed. Fewer people have been killed on the roads, but more have been seriously injured, especially cyclists and pedestrians and the Leeds target for reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured

in road accidents was just missed.

Leeds has identified that improved transport is key to the city's future economic success- so the Council is working with a range of partners on a new local transport plan for 2011. This will help link transport plans more closely with other work and help support a more sustainable Leeds in the future. Plans include 'New Generation Transport'. This includes a trolley-bus system which could improve public transport access for communities. In the long-term, there is some hope that 'Quality contracts' with bus operators will improve bus services, though this is a difficult challenge which has not yet been resolved anywhere in the country outside London.

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/>



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