



Report of the Head of Policy, Performance and Improvement

Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: Tuesday 5th February 2008

Subject: Quarter 3 Performance Report 2007/08

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 Directorates as at 31st December 2007.

2 Purpose of the Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to present the key areas of under performance at the end of Quarter 3 (1st October to 31st December 2007).

3 Background Information

- 3.1 This 'highlight report' has been prepared in readiness for the Accountability process, which includes the CLT meeting on 29th January 2008, Leader Management Team on 31st January 2008 and Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 5th February 2008; separate reports will be prepared for each of the scrutiny boards in readiness for the February 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 service assessment scores should potentially have a positive impact on the council's Direction of Travel assessment and overall CPA Star Rating.

5 Directorate Performance Issues

5.1 City Services

LKI-SC6 The average time taken to remove fly tips

The average time taken to remove a fly-tip is dependent on two factors. First the number of fly-tips reported and second, the time taken to remove. If a fly-tip is proactively spotted by a crew and not reported from the public the fly-tip is effectively removed immediately it is reported, i.e. in zero working days. These proactive removals have a great effect on performance given the zero days figure.

In recent months the number of proactive removals has fallen, likely due to the overall fall in the number of fly-tips and the activity of environmental pride teams, as evidenced by a fall in reports from the public. This effectively means that a greater proportion of fly-tips are those that are reported through the contact centre, having a negative impact on performance against the indicator.

BV-199b The proportion of relevant land and highways (expressed as a percentage) from which graffiti is visible

Although levels of graffiti were lower in the latest survey results, measured performance still shows a year on year decline. BV-199b is measured on the basis of a sample survey across five wards every four months. As mentioned to OSC in previous quarters, during the first survey, wards which have significant problems with graffiti (Hyde Park & Woodhouse and Headingley) were included in the sample. This led to a significant measured fall in performance in terms of the overall BV-199b figure.

A graffiti strategy, to deal with areas such as the above wards is in production, with the results of these surveys being used to target resources to the areas of greatest need, such as recreation and industrial areas. The strategy will set out the council's plans to deal with and manage graffiti across the city. Consultation on the draft strategy will take place in the coming months and it is envisaged that the strategy will be launched in early 2008/09.

In some areas of the city, there is an issue where graffiti quickly re-appears as soon as it is removed (such as the North West Inner wedge). In an effort to address these issues a hot spot team operates in the North West and deals with graffiti removal accordingly. The council is also examining new ways of working and the graffiti team and the Enforcement Section are working together to see how they can be more pro-active in dealing with anti-social behaviour issues such as graffiti and fly tipping. The teams have purchased some remote wireless CCTV cameras and are in the process of agreeing a service level agreement with Security Services in an effort to catch the perpetrators in action. The cameras will then be deployed in problem areas in an attempt to alleviate the problem of graffiti.

It is important however, to see Leeds' performance in the context of other comparable large cities. Obviously, graffiti is a problem associated with large urban areas and as such the All England results are not comparable. It is worth noting that, even with these challenging wards included in this year's survey results, our performance (7%) compares well with the Core Cities average of 11% and we fully expect to hit our target of 7% for the year.

BV-218a Percentage of new reports of abandoned vehicles investigated within 24 hours of notification

BV218b Percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours from the point at which the authority is legally entitled to remove the vehicle

Performance in terms of the investigation and removal of abandoned vehicles over the last year has got comparatively worse compared to the 2006/07 position.

The long-term sickness of the seconded Police Officer who investigates abandoned vehicles led to a deterioration in the speed of investigation of vehicles (BV-218a). Given that the sickness was not

covered, the maintenance of performance at a level over 80% has been an achievement for the service involved. The Officer has been back in post since December 2007 and performance improved to 90% in that month.

As previously reported, performance in the removal of abandoned vehicles has also fallen, largely due to the effects of flooding in June last year. The contractor was unable to maintain its level of performance due to their premises being flooded and the need to provide assistance to local priorities. The council has a contract with Doncaster Motor Spares (DMS) for the removal of abandoned vehicles and it is standard practice to have only one contractor for this type of operation, therefore the option to use another contractor was not available. The contract is due for renewal in 2008 where all interested parties will be able to tender for the new contract.

BV-215a The average number of days taken to repair a street lighting fault which is under control of the local authority

BV215b The average number of days taken to repair a street lighting fault which is under the control of a Distribution Network Operator (DNO)

Performance on the repair of street lights that are under the control of the local authority (BV-215a) has improved significantly when compared to 2006/07, from 12.11 days to a predicted 5.90 days. Unfortunately, the targeted performance for the year is likely not to be met, especially given a likely increase in jobs during the winter months.

Performance over the last quarter was adversely affected by the number of bank holidays (the measure is on calendar days) and several old jobs which are still on the system which have not yet been closed. Even so the performance reflects real improvements over the last six months when compared to performance at the start of the PFI scheme, and performance is good when compared to the Core Cities average.

Performance on the repair of lights that are under the control of a DNO is less positive, with no improvement on last year and performance well below the target. Performance against this measure is heavily dependent on the performance of YEDL (the DNO in this case). Over the last quarter YEDL have had issues with their depot in Bradford, with incomplete jobs and the quality of work, which has generated extra work for SEC. These issues have been escalated to the Head of Repairs for YEDL and the PFI Contract Manager.

As the quarter has progressed performance has improved, with November and December 2007 averaging 14.64 days, and although this is still below the target figure of 14 days, it is significantly above the Core Cities average of 31.5 days. It should also be noted that future performance against this indicator may be adversely affected by OFGEM, who are proposing a national service level agreement of 25 days for repairs, well below our current target.

5.2 City Development

BV 204 The number of planning appeal decisions allowed against the authority's decision to refuse on planning applications, as a percentage of the total number of planning appeals against refusals of planning applications.

In the last quarter, 33% of appeal decisions were in the Council's favour which has resulted in some marginal improvement in the performance figure. The trend, rolling forward into the current quarter, appears to be continuing. However, this improvement is unlikely to greatly change the cumulative performance figure for this current accounting year and performance against this indicator remains at risk of falling within the bottom quartile at year end. The service has undertaken an in depth review of appeal performance. Whilst the numbers of decisions accounted against this indicator are relatively small, there is scope for improvement. A number of actions have been identified including training, improvements to report templates, standardising the approach for appeal submissions, liaison with the Planning Inspectorate, guidance and procedural improvements. This indicator will remain an important measure for the quality of decision making locally, even though it is dropped as a national indicator after this accounting year.

BV 109 Percentage of planning applications determined in line with the development control targets.

As a result of the strategic review of planning services we have recruited additional staff and improved the management of major applications together with reducing the backlog of older applications. Performance above target levels is expected to be sustained as workload trends and resource levels are reasonably stabilised. The service is now focussing on reducing further the backlog of "out of time" applications and improving standards of customer service whilst still maintaining performance above target levels.

5.3 Environment and Neighbourhoods

CP-CS50 / LAA-SSC8 / PSA1 Reduce overall crime levels in Leeds by 35% by 2008

The PSA1 target measures the main offences used in the British Crime Survey against the level recorded for those offences in 2003/04. These offences include Criminal damage, theft from vehicles, domestic burglary, wounding, theft of vehicles, theft from persons, robbery from persons, robbery of personal property, injury without assault, assault without injury and theft of cycle. In December 2007, the latest figures for Leeds show a 30.5% reduction, which are 24,000 fewer offences. The biggest reductions have been theft of a vehicle (60%), theft from a vehicle (44%), theft from the person (43%) and criminal damage (24%).

In general terms, success in achieving these reductions can be attributed to a number of initiatives, including Operation Champion (a multi-agency project aimed at improving neighbourhoods), the Drug Intervention Programme (which links to changing offenders' behaviour for all crime types), the Tackling Violent Crime Programme and Reducing Offending in Schools.

This reduction in crime figure - one of the highest in the country - marks a real success for Leeds, showing that the Safer Leeds Partnership is working well and making a real difference to people's lives.

5.4 Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care performance has improved significantly during the first three quarters of the current financial year. All performance indicators within this report are improving. The trajectory of improvement is steep in a number of cases. Targets for 2007/08 have already been surpassed for six indicators.

Improvements should, however, be regarded as being from an overall baseline position of moderate or poor performance. Leeds performance in 2006/07 against national indicators was ranked as 138th out of 150 local authorities in England in respect of our scores against the 23 Performance Assessment Framework indicators relating to adults. Amongst our comparator authorities Leeds was ranked 14th out of 16. Leeds current performance would now be ranked 6th out of the group of 16 providing performance in the other authorities remained static. This is highly unlikely and it should therefore be considered that Leeds has at this stage, only made the first steps in an improvement 'journey' in relation to the performance of neighbours and comparators.

5.5 Children's Services

Enjoy and Achieve – GCSE results for Looked After Children and Young People

Looked After Young People achieved the local target for **BV50**, the proportion of those leaving care with at least one GCSE or GNVQ. However, the proportion of young people Looked After achieving five or more higher grade GCSEs (**CP-CF51**) was well below target, despite some improvement since 2006. Whilst these young people are generally more likely to have special educational needs and other barriers to learning than the population as a whole they are the direct responsibility of the Council and as such should be expected to make better progress than the current data suggests.

To address this key issue Education Leeds has employed an experienced local secondary headteacher to lead a 'virtual school' for Looked After Children and Young People, working to provide leadership and challenge across the local educational community. He is working closely with Children and Young People's Social Care, School Improvement Partners and wider agencies to agree further strategies for improvement.

Make a Positive Contribution – youth services participation and outcomes

As the attached data show, the indicators relating to participation and outcomes in youth services are flagged as causing concern. At present it is estimated that there may be a considerable shortfall in performance and targets may not be fully reached, however accurate assessments and estimates are difficult due to ongoing data management problems.

As reported in Quarter 1, there are longstanding data quality issues within youth services that are only now starting to be fully resolved. A new management information system has now been implemented but as is common with such changes, there is a considerable lag between new IT systems and improved data quality as staff and partners are supported in changing their recording and reporting processes. As such it is now estimated that data will only become more reliable later in this year. Senior managers in the service are involved and an audit will be undertaken in Month 10 to assess progress and target further action.

Stay Safe – Adoptions

As the data for **BV163** show, current estimates suggest that the authority will not achieve its target for raising the rate of adoptions for Looked After Children and Young People. As the commentary explains, service managers believe that this is largely due to the continuing high numbers of children in care in the city. Whilst managers expect that adoption numbers will be increased over 2007/08, the number of children in care is expected to remain higher than planned, and as such this indicator will not improve.

Action to improve performance against this indicator is being considered as part of wider plans for reducing the overall number of Looked After Children and Young People, as mentioned in Quarter 2. It is also expected that the impact of additional resources for this area, agreed as part of recent investments in children's social care services, will also contribute to improved performance in 2008 and future years.

5.6 Resources

BV12 The number of working days/shifts lost to the authority due to sickness absence.

Q3 shows a continued rise in days lost due to sickness absence, with a result of 9.23 days. If the trend continues this will relate to a 0.44 increase on the 2006/07 out turn i.e. 12.44 days.

Whilst there has been an overall increase in most types of sickness absence, there has been a particular increase in the proportion of days lost related to chest and respiratory, ears/nose/throat, infections and stomach/liver/kidney/digestive disorders. These conditions accounted for 18.2% of days lost in quarter two and 29.7% of days lost in quarter 3.

Although this is a pattern which was also seen at the same time last year the impact this year has been greater, with these conditions contributing to an additional 2% to the days lost to sickness absence and has been influenced by the recent outbreak of viral gastroenteritis.

Whilst this particular trend is disappointing, it is worth putting it in context of improvements made over the past 6 years i.e. sickness absence was 13.9 days in 2000/2001 and it has been reduced by nearly one day over the past two years alone. It is also positive to note that health and safety incidents continue to fall and that at the end of Q3 40% of employees have had no absence while 15.9% have had 1-2 days.

What has been done to address sickness absence?

- **Policies/Procedures/Guidance**
A new Managing Attendance Policy has been agreed together with a new procedure for Pre-Employment Health Declaration. Briefing sessions have been held for all HR staff. Individual Directorates have also worked hard to review and standardise processes for managing sickness absence and sharing best practice. Further work is planned, particularly focusing on reinforcing the role of line managers in taking greater responsibility for the effective management of attendance issues and upskilling them where necessary.
- **Accountability**
The Leader(s) of the Council and the Director of Resources have continued to regularly monitor and review the performance against sickness absence targets with Directors and Chief Officers. As mentioned above, this accountability message needs to be clearly cascaded down through the organisation to realise improvements.
- **Pilots**
Schemes aimed at reducing sickness absence in Service Area hotspots have been piloted e.g. a musculo-skeletal management programme which introduced a fast-track physiotherapy scheme for any employee reporting relevant conditions; 'stress' surveys have also been undertaken utilising the HSE's Stress Management Standards and action plans are being developed as well as learning outcomes which need to be shared across the organisation. 'Hot-spots' of sickness absence were also targeted e.g. contact centre.
- **Occupational Health**
An Occupational Health Needs Analysis was undertaken in partnership with Leeds Metropolitan University to better understand the current and future health needs of the Council and to propose a better model to meet these needs through an effective Occupational Health Service. An Options Appraisal to inform the delivery of the proposed model has been produced with a view to delivering a new service by 2008. An Employee Assistance Programme is being further developed following a tender exercise.
- **Well-being**
A Well-being Programme has become embedded throughout the Council, which is driven through a cross-council steering group and in partnership with the Trade Unions. A 'social marketing approach' has been adopted and there has been a focus on: men's health; physical activity; smoking; healthy eating; alternative therapy; health screening; mental health and infection control.
- **Health and Safety**
A new and robust Health and Safety Management System is being implemented, with a new focus on providing consistent procedures throughout the organisation. This has been aligned with the Health and Safety Executive's 'fit for life, fit for work and fit for tomorrow' strategic intervention programme and is being supported by a new approach to health and safety learning prompted by a training needs analysis.
- **Narrowing the Gap**
A cross-city event organised by Healthy Leeds Partnership entitled 'Managing Attendance – Promoting Well-being' was held and further work on producing health advice to SMEs is ongoing.

Further Initiatives for Q4

- HR Leadership Team is considering some short-term, focused work to try and improve upon the predicted out turn for 2007/08. This work includes: local action plans in Directorates such as Social Care and Environment and Neighbourhoods; detailed analysis and resolution of current long-term and frequent short-term absence cases; consideration of implementing a pilot first day referral to Occupational Health helpline; making more active use of Occupational Health and other professionals to reduce periods of long term absence and using Care First pro-actively in

teams and for managers support; and joint approaches to target hotspots and certain causes of sickness absence.

It should be noted that successful implementation of the revised policies for the management of attendance as well as pre-employment health screening, the subsequent training of staff and a focus on developing the role of managers in engaging with staff and the impact/effect on attendance management are seen as critical elements to bring about improvements in performance in this area.

6 Recommendation

It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the Quarter 3 performance information and highlight any areas for further scrutiny or referral to Scrutiny Boards as appropriate.