



---

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

### Children's Services Scrutiny Board

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> July 2009

Subject: Leeds Strategic Plan Performance Report for Quarter 4 2008/09

---

#### Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted  
(referred to in report)

#### Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

---

## 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since April 2008 and the introduction of the Leeds Strategic Plan and Council Business Plan we have seen a significant change to the council's accountability processes, in particular, the identification of lead and contributory officers for each improvement priority and the introduction of a reporting process that will provide a single source of performance information to be used by the full range of different stakeholders in the accountability process.

At the end of the first year of delivery of the Leeds Strategic Plan and Local Area Agreement this report provides an overview by exception (i.e. red and amber) on the progress against improvement priorities relevant to the Board at Quarter 4 2008/09.

## 2.0 Purpose of this Report

- 2.1 This report provides a strategic overview of performance against those improvement priorities within the Leeds Strategic Plan 2008-11, and specifically in relation to Children's Services priorities. In particular the Action Tracker Summary Sheet (appendix 1) provides an overall assessment of progress against each of the improvement priorities relevant to the Board; a rating of Red, Amber or Green is applied to indicate the status of each improvement priority.
- 2.2 In appendix 2 to this report the Action Trackers are provided on an exception basis for those areas of under performance and/or of concern in relation to the improvement priorities for Children's Services within the Leeds Strategic Plan, as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009. In addition, performance indicator information is provided for the full National Indicator Set together with any locally agreed indicators where appropriate. Through this process the Board receives the full set of performance indicator information.

### 3.0 Background Information

3.1 Executive Board approved a new corporate planning framework for the council in July 2007. The strategic element of this framework includes two high level plans which set the policy objectives for the organisation and our partnership working. These are:

- **Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 to 2011** - which sets out the customer/citizen (external) focused strategic outcomes being sought by the council and its partners for the city. This plan includes our requirements to produce a Local Area Agreement and is the main delivery mechanism for the Vision for Leeds 2004 to 2020.
- **Council Business Plan 2008 to 2011** - which sets out what the council needs to do internally to enable the organisation to achieve the Leeds Strategic Plan. That is outlining the business development, organisational change, process transformation and financial planning activities that we will be undertaking over the next three years.

3.2 Both these plans include a set of outcomes, improvement priorities and aligned performance indicators with three year targets. Through our performance reporting and accountability arrangements we need to track our progress against the improvement priorities as well as against the indicators to provide both a qualitative and quantitative picture of performance. This is because the scope of most of the improvement priorities is wider than that of the performance indicator and without some form of contextual reporting we would not be able to capture or monitor this progress.

3.3 Within this report the following information is provided:

**Appendix 1 Action Tracker Summary Sheet** - this sheet sets out all the improvement priorities relevant to the Board and shows the full set of overall progress traffic lights.

**Appendix 2 Action Trackers** – this appendix includes the action trackers for the improvement priorities that have been given an *amber* or *red* rating for overall progress. There is a guidance sheet to assist members in interpreting the information provided.

**Appendix 3 Performance Indicator Report** – this appendix provides a full performance indicator report including the year end results for all strategic, national and local indicators organised by Directorate.

### 4.0 Main Issues - Progress Towards Improvement Priorities

The Children's Services Scrutiny portfolio contains 14 improvement priorities. 4 of which are rated *green*, 10 *amber* and 0 *red*. The overall progress summary is provided below for each of the improvement priorities rated as *amber* as recorded on the action tracker.

#### Thriving Places

##### **TP-3b - Reduce the number of children in poverty.**

Leeds' bid for Beacon Status for tackling child poverty helped to raise the profile of the importance of adopting a corporate and city wide approach to tackling this tough issue. Reducing the child poverty is now a priority within the Leeds Strategic Plan and this has been carried through into the Children and Young people's plan. A Child Poverty Outcome Group has been established to coordinate the work on Tackling

Child Poverty across the city and they first met in mid May 2009 and are working to agree the basket of indicators against which the effectiveness of this work will be measured.

**TP-3c - Develop extended services, using sites across the city, to improve support to children, families and communities.**

80% (212/264) of all schools in Leeds now provide all 5 elements of the full core offer of extended service: childcare; a varied menu of activities; swift and easy access to services; parental support; and, community use of schools and other buildings. Clear strategies are in place to meet the national target of 85% of all schools providing access to the core offer by September 2009.

Evidence from external evaluation continues to confirm that clusters of schools and children's centres across the city are making good progress in delivering integrated children's and family services and in raising the profile of extended services with schools and other partners. Clusters are at different stages of development but overall there is confidence in the capacity to further develop and improve. Areas for development include targeted youth support, business planning and access for vulnerable groups and those with disabilities or additional needs. Work to improve the range of outcomes for children (e.g. attainment and engagement), young people and families is incorporated into each cluster action plan.

**Health and Well being**

**HW-2a - Reduce teenage conception and improve sexual health.**

The reduction in Leeds for 2007 of 4.6% from the 1998 baseline is very positive. This is the first reduction for 4 years and although it cannot yet be said to be a downward trend, it is contrary to the national direction for 2007 in which the majority of the Core Cities increased. The rate for Leeds is 48.1 conceptions per 1000 female population aged 15-17 (677 conceptions), still above the national rate of 41.7.

National research and guidance is for each Authority to have certain key elements in place for a sustained reduction to be achieved. If any are weak or missing then it is difficult to maintain momentum in terms of reduction. These key elements are the basis of the work programme for the Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Partnership and are set out in the 'Local Teenage Pregnancy Strategy Self Assessment Toolkit: prevention and support - an outcomes-focused self assessment toolkit'. Due to the fact that teenage pregnancy and parenthood cuts across a large number of services and agencies it is not easy to maintain the momentum for improvement in each area.

There has been substantial and continued progress in strategy, data, communication and supporting school age parents. There is the opportunity for further improvement in SRE, CASH, Targeted, IYSS and Maternal services; and Child Health. Areas where progress is slower, for a wide variety of reasons, include raising aspirations, work with parents/carers and supporting teenage parents to achieve better outcomes and economic well being. There has also been progress on linking Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood with other relevant strategies, e.g. Infant Mortality. Work is still continuing to ensure better fit with other appropriate strategies, e.g., Housing, Parenting.

### **HW-2b - Improve the assessment and care management of children.**

Progress has been made on the timeliness of Core Assessments despite an increase in referrals and children becoming looked after. The Children and Young People's Social Care Service has performed well in light of the increase in anxiety from partner agencies around the city following the fall-out from the Baby P case in Haringey. The Service has worked with staff on developing and now implementing a project to improve the quality and processes involved with assessment and care management. This project has a high degree of support in all tiers of the service. The capacity to improve in the areas of assessment and care management is good.

### **HW-3a - Improve psychological, mental health and learning disability services for those who need it.**

Emotional Health - using ONS data, the needs assessment within Leeds estimates that at any one time at least 14,000 children will have some significant emotional health difficulty. Emotional health is 'everybody's business' and the Strategy has set out what services are required to meet the emotional health needs of children and young people in Leeds. In previous years, performance targets have focussed on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services but this is now changing to monitor emotional health in a broader sense. Monitoring this is challenging, new processes are being introduced and further national guidance is awaited to enable baselines and targets to be established.

Disability - the Disability Strategy is the overarching framework for the next three years, outlining required areas of service transformation. It sets out key strategic objectives 2008 to 2011 underpinned by a more detailed work programme. This is closely aligned to the national drivers such as Aiming High for Disabled Children and with local strategies on Inclusion and Emotional Health. In Leeds 19.5% of children have been identified as having some special educational need. Work is on-going to develop a robust information set and needs assessment for the total population. A key achievement has been to increase the availability of Short Break provision. Further detail on work streams is listed in the action tracker. In previous years there have not been specific national performance indicators so a new indicator is being developed and initial work has just been completed in 30 pilot sites.

### **HW-3d - Improve safeguarding arrangements for vulnerable children and adults through better information, recognition and response to risk.**

Progress has been made on timeliness of assessments and on initial and review of child protection conferences and this impacts positively on this priority. Looked after children numbers have decreased slightly but not in line with the challenging targets set. There is a recognition however, that this is a key priority across children's services requiring action from all partners and that it will take time to safely reduce the numbers.

The indicator alone does not capture the complexity of making progress against this priority, which can only be understood in conjunction with the Social Care Transformation Programme.

## **Learning**

### **LN-1c - Improve learning outcomes and skill levels for all 19 year olds.**

There have been steady improvements in the proportion of young people achieving level 2 qualifications. The proportion achieving Level 3 remains a challenge. Initial analysis of the national data for 2007/08 published 30/04/09 shows that level 2 performance has increased to 68% (6218/9110). This is an increase of 3.8% points and is slightly above the national increase of 2.7% however with a national level of

76.7% a significant gap remains. Level 3 in Leeds has increased from 41% to 42% (3848/9110) with the gap to the national figure marginally widening, as national performance went up 1.7% to 49.8%. Progress to deliver key activities is largely on track but this has not yet resulted in step changes to outcomes. Complex changes to the structure of 14-19 provision designed to transform outcomes are currently being implemented across the city along with increased personalisation of learning pathways and new learning options such as Diplomas.

#### **LN-1d - Increase the proportion of vulnerable groups engaged in education, training or employment.**

The baseline for NEET was set in 2007 at 9.1%. Performance declined to 10% in 2007/08 however there has been a reduction in the number of young people NEET from last year back down to 9.5% (2,246 young people). This fall has not met the annual target of 8.9% (2,104 young people). However the main Connexions service has now been recommissioned and the new provider, Prospects, in place from April 2009, will make improvements to Connexions delivery leading to improved performance by a) working more closely with schools to ensure the right young people get the Connexions support at the right time and b) by improving referral processes into appropriate education or training for young people who are NEET. Other Connexions contracts are being recommissioned.

Whilst a NEET Strategy Group has been established its leadership and membership is being reviewed in the light of performance against this target. In addition to specific risks the overall risks against the achievement of this target are: - the impact of the economic recession; budget cutbacks within central and local government; data quality and availability and duplication and inefficiencies.

#### **LN-1e - Improve participation and early learning outcomes for all children, with a focus on families in deprived areas.**

Confirmed results of outcomes from the 2007/08 academic year are now available, Key Stage 2 performance remains in line with previous years and with national results. City-wide results at Key Stage 1 have declined and overall performance has remained static in the Early Years Foundation Stage. A range of strategies are in place to ensure sustained improvements in attainment at the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

At this point in the year it is not yet possible to provide an update on outcomes for the current academic year. The next stage is that pupils will be assessed in the summer term, and provisional results will start to become available during the summer break. National Strategies have recently undertaken an audit of early years provision, based on a self-evaluation, and have judged provision to be amber.

### **Harmonious Communities**

#### **HM-1a - An increased number of local people engaged in activities to meet community needs and improve the quality of life for local residents.**

Progress is largely being driven through two complementary processes. At a city wide level, the VCFS Partnership Group established by the Narrowing the Gap Board of the Leeds Initiative has established a sub-group on Active Citizenship. This Sub-group has a focus on the NI6 and its work programme is focused on increasing volunteering opportunities and improving access to these. At a local level, Area Committees have started to enable a wider range of opportunities for engagement and supported a number of community led activities through their use of well-being funds.

Work to engage young people is being led by Children's Services particularly through the Integrated Youth Support Service. Key developments are the introduction of an integrated youth activities offer called the Breeze Youth Offer and a new Management Information Project designed to capture engagement across the newly integrated service which has brought the former Connexions and Youth Services together.

## **5.0 Recommendation**

- 5.1 That members of Scrutiny Board note the content of the report and comment on any particular performance issues of concern.

## **Background Papers**

Council Business Plan 2008 - 2011  
Leeds Strategic Plan 2008 - 2011