

Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED: All Wards - Corporate Issue

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:

Cabinet

Monday, 10th November 2007

Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Corporate Assessment

Self assessment

Report of the Director of Partnership, Performance & Policy

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. This report presents the self assessment document.

2. Report

2.1 The Corporate assessment examines how the council is working corporately, and with its partners, to improve services and deliver improved outcomes for local people. It:

- Examines the political, managerial and community leadership of the council.
- Measures how well councils understand their local communities
- Assesses how well this understanding translates into the council's ambition and priorities
- Judges the council's capacity to deliver these ambitions and priorities, and their achievements.

2.2 Set out below is the scoring guidance for the five themes; Ambition, Prioritisation, Capacity, Performance Management and Achievement:

Score	Description	Judgement
1	Below minimum requirements	Inadequate performance
2	At only minimum requirements	Adequate performance
3	Consistently above minimum requirements	Performing well
4	Well above minimum requirements	Performing strongly

2.3 The rules for the corporate assessment score are detailed below:

Scores on five themes (The four corporate themes and an overall score for achievement)	Overall corporate assessment score
Two or more themes with a score of 4 and none less than a score of 3	4
Three or more themes with a score of 3 and none less than a score of 2	3
Three or more themes with a score of 2 or more	2
Any other combination	1

2.4 It is important to bear in mind that the inspectors will focus their judgements on the evidence of outcomes and the scale of the impact of those outcomes. It is also important to note that there are a number of cross cutting themes the inspectors will be considering and these are:

- User focus
- Value for money
- Diversity

2.5 The self assessment is the opportunity for the Council to set out its case and its own view of how well it is performing against the Key Lines of Enquiry. This document also serves as valuable briefing material for those who will be part of the inspection and the process naturally identifies areas for improvement.

2.6 The self assessment has to be with the inspection team on the 10th December 2007. It should be signed off by the Leader and Chief Executive and approved by Members. It is based on the information supplied by departmental leads earlier this year against the Key Lines of Inquiry. There is still work to do in terms of ensuring the self assessment is evidenced based,

especially in the use of performance information to support achievement. Also outstanding is the referencing to supporting documents and work on the presentational aspects.

2.7 The draft at **Appendix 1** covers a draft list of top level achievements over the last ten years presented as a time line, the executive summary and the five main themes of the Key Lines of Inquiry:

- Ambition for the community
- Prioritisation
- Capacity
- Performance management
- Achievement

2.8 The self assessment will be reviewed by the inspection team against the following areas with the major emphasis being on achievement in terms of outcomes set against the local context:

- The balance given to identifying strengths against weaknesses.
- The extent the self assessment is focussed on outcomes rather than internal issues such as structures and processes.
- The use of evidence, including performance data.
- The illustration of achievements over time and recently.
- Whether the context section gives a clear picture of any important changes in the local context and how these issues have been addressed in the KLOE themes.
- How honest has the Council been and what has not been said.

This review is used to inform the areas for investigation during the on site period.

2.9 The table below sets out the projected scores and the key risks.

Theme	Key areas of risk	Key actions/comments	Anticipated score
Ambition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revising the community strategy and corporate plan - ensuring they are based on sound research/consultation and they have a risk assessment, sensitivity analysis, etc. The level of 'buy in' achievable to the emerging strategic agenda by the time of the inspection Alignment of Local Development Framework Links to budget consultation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These are under development - must ensure there is a sound research base and they have a risk assessment, sensitivity analysis, etc. Consultation with key stakeholders is underway 	4
Prioritisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Service plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under review - advice to be provided where improvements required to meet the required standard - capacity is limited 	3
Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR, including staff survey, absenteeism, new processes/policies and a current strategy Risk management/reporting Alignment of budget to priorities Culture/moral - may be at a low point in some areas in the context of the Job Evaluation scheme The impact the Job Evaluation scheme on holding up organisational reviews at this point. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff absenteeism is not improving In key document results of staff survey in last three years sought Work underway Business cases can be made for essential reviews, but inertia now exists 	2
Performance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grievances and complaints Citizens input to performance measures/service standards Operation of the performance management system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals underdevelopment Some evidence may exist Departmental/partner capacity appears to be an issue - report on the situation being written 	3
Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of performance indicators improving 		3
Overall			3

3 Recommendations

3.1 Cabinet is recommended to approve the self assessment.

4 Key Financial, Legal and Other Implications

Key Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, the actions the Council may wish to take to make service improvements as a result of the self-assessment may have budgetary implications. These should be addressed within the Council's budget preparation framework and timetable. Andy Morley - Chief Accountant

Key Legal Implications

- 4.2 None - Peter Nicholls - Head of Legal Services

Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	Yes/No	Paragraph References within supporting information
Equal Opportunities	No	
Policy	No	
Sustainable and Environmental	No	
Crime and Disorder	No	
Human Rights Act	No	
Older People/People on Low Income	No	

3. Background Papers

- Audit Commission CPA 2006 - Key lines of enquiry for corporate assessment

4. Consultations

Heads of Policy and Performance Group
Corporate Directors' Board

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DECISION STATUS

Key Decision	Yes
Reason	Is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising more than one ward
Appeared in Forward Plan	N/A
Executive or Council Decision	Executive (Cabinet)

Corporate Assessment



Executive Summary

Our 25 year vision is to become Britain's most sustainable City. This requires leadership across a range of social, economic and environmental programmes. Supporting the delivery of the vision will be a series of SMART partnership and corporate plans covering periods of five years with clear milestones and driving the budget strategy.

The political clarity, capacity and stability required to deliver this vision over the longer term springs from the substantial majority of the ruling group following the May 2007 elections. This is enhanced by the prior experience in leadership positions of the Leader and his new cabinet. We have a growing regional capacity especially with the neighbouring three Cities and Countiesⁱ.

Our Local Area Agreementⁱⁱ will help us and our partners to tackle the extensive deprivation and low educational achievement, and the complex issues that the diversity of the community of Leicester brings.

The City is nationally and internationally recognised for the breadth and commitment of its work on community cohesion in Britain's most diverse city. We have made a key contribution to national work through the Ted Cante and Darra Singh reportsⁱⁱⁱ and our Chief Executive is a member of the National Migration Impacts Forum. We are part of an innovative mainstreaming moderation programme, working in partnership with Derby and Nottingham and the community on key priorities such as tension monitoring in neighbourhoods and promoting tolerance among young people. Our work on equalities alongside this is externally assessed at level three of the Equality Standard and we expect to be at level 4 following the next assessment this Autumn.

Inward investment for the City is unprecedented and this is transforming the look and feel of the City with accessibility a prime feature. By 2008 we will have a new theatre, a shopping experience rivalling the best and a city centre public realm fit for purpose for the next generation. In the longer term our secondary schools will be transformed by the Building Schools for the Future programme.

An action plan to deliver the Climate Change Strategy was approved by Cabinet in March 2007. This strategy will shape other strategies, plans and actions across the City over the longer term. Corporate Directors have taken steps to ensure suitable high level organisational arrangements are in force to deliver this important strand of the most sustainable city vision.

Leicester used its Best Value review programme to initiate step change. Building on this work we have constructed a Business Improvement Programme that is significantly enhancing our organisational capacity. Major changes include:

- The integration of the Housing and Adult Care departments
- A review of our reward structure (Single Status) and how we get the best from our workforce.

- A new central Information Technology and Communication service was established from April 2007 with a new organisation structure and consolidation of budgets. The new ICT strategy has been accepted at Cabinet briefing, en route to full approval by the Cabinet.
- Our Human Resources function is a significant way through a major transformation to improve its effectiveness and to reduce the cost of this service dramatically. Efficiency savings will be achieved through the formation of a centralized transaction service.
- There are now four customer service centres at key locations in the City improving user accessibility to services at a local level. We continue to work hard on improving our customer care for the City's diverse service users.
- We have restructured our strategic partnership and improved the level of support to ensure the public, private, voluntary and community sectors are all pulling together on a shared agenda and making a real difference.
- Our emerging approach to neighbourhoods through the extended use of Community Meetings will take our community engagement to a new level.

The Council is strongly and consistently committed to improvement and service excellence. This was demonstrated in the improvements made from when the Council became a Unitary Authority in 1997 and received some highly critical inspection reports regarding poor services disaggregated from the County, to the last corporate assessment in 2002 when it was rated at level three. At that time the Council showed how it had turned around many of the poor services it had inherited. The council has continued to make strides towards excellence gaining recognition through many awards and in 2006 it was rated a four star council. The Council is now rated three stars due to the failure of a single computer system provided by an external supplier for Housing Benefits. The resulting backlog of claims is now cleared, a new computer system installed and performance is higher than before^{iv}.

The Deputy Leader has a Cabinet brief on performance management to inject vigour and VFM across all Cabinet portfolios. This will be increasingly important in the context of the Comprehensive Spending Review. We have tied together the critical processes of finance and performance information so at key reporting intervals the interplay of these can be judged. We have monthly exception reporting to the Board, and the Eco-Management & Audit Scheme (EMAS) will be the performance management framework for the Climate Change Strategy.

BIP and departmental efficiency plans – cabinet sub group?

Along with improved performance in the other CPA service blocks we are now in a stronger position than when we were rated four stars. We continue to gain recognition by being short listed for two current beacon awards; Care Matters and Reducing Re-offending. It is therefore reassuring to see that customer satisfaction has bucked the national trend and increased by six

percentage points in the last BVPI survey (Source: 2006/07 Best Value Satisfaction Survey).

Suggestions for timeline

Each section would run at the top of 2 pages.

1999 – First Park and Ride opened; First Young People's Council; Homelessness halved; Leicester Partnership for the Future; 2000 – Housing Maintenance Beacon, New Deal for Braunstone; Star Trak system launched

2001- Maintaining Quality Environment Beacon; Millenium Landmark Space Centre opened; Fall of 29% in household burglaries; First Sikh Museum in UK opened; Leicester Partnership formed

2002 – Race Equality Beacon; Guildhall/Cathedral visitor centre opened, Peoples Panel set up, 3 star housing technical service, LRC Masterplan launched to drive regeneration

2003 – Homeless and Community Cohesion Beacons; New Parks Customer Service Centre Opened, Children's' Trust established, GCSE results improved, New Walk restored

2004 – Housing Renewal Beacon; Leicester Creative Business Depot and Braunstone Leisure Centre Opened, 2 City Learning Centres built; Community Cohesion Fund established;

2005 – Sustainable Energy Beacon; BRITE Centre opened, Level 3 equality standard; Ball mill opened; Fear of crime falls, west of City GCSE results up, Local Area Agreement signed, BSF scheme approval;

2006 – Culture Beacon; Dawn Centre; Peepul Centre and 7 Childrens Centres opened; 101 launched; Institute of Community Cohesion set up; best GCSE results ever; best parkforce

2007- Curry Capital of Britain; More people satisfied with bus services; Opening of Braunstone Primary school, Samworth Enterprise Academy and Madani High Schools, Construction excellence award for Upperton Road Viaduct; Picasso Exhibition smashed all records;

2008 – Performing Arts Centre Opens; Highcross Leicester Opens; Care Matters Beacon; City Development Company formed, European City of Sport; Community meetings enhance local democracy ; Public Realm improvement completed;

2009 – Special Olympics successful; Digital Media Centre opens
2010 – All council homes are decent homes,

Onwards – Clean city streets, 2 more Park and rides ease city

congestion; 4 star council, All secondary schools rebuilt or remodelled; Science Park retains graduates; 10,000 trees planted; Digital Media Centre opened

Leicester – a city of contrasts and challenges

Leicester is a very diverse city and enjoys an international reputation for its community relations and cohesion. With a population of 288,000, it is the largest city in the East Midlands. Towns and villages around the city's boundary bring the conurbation closer to half a million people.

It is a city of deep contrasts – nearly half the adult population live in wards that are amongst the 10% most deprived in the country, yet there are also areas of significant affluence. The city's diversity and levels of deprivation makes Leicester a demanding place to deliver services and to provide community leadership – a challenge greatly increased by the high level of migration into the city from new arrivals seeking to make Leicester their new home.

Leicester has two universities, its high student population bringing further vibrancy and life to the city.

The city has excellent transport links to all parts of the country. Frequent mainline rail services link the city to London and the north, whilst cross-country rail services connect Leicester with Birmingham and the west and with Peterborough and the eastern counties. The city is at the centre of the UK road network, again with main motorway links.

Lying at the heart of the East Midlands, Leicester provides a natural focus for people living in its surrounding rural communities. It is a complex mosaic of communities –

some new, many now well established. Eight major faith communities^v contribute to Leicester's diversity and come together in the city's influential Council of Faiths.

Research suggests that currently 52% of primary school children have an ethnic minority background, and 45% of primary school children have a first language other than English^{vi}. Over 80 different languages are spoken in the city.

Demographics - Facts and figures

- 288,000 residents (2005 Mid-year estimate) - increased by 1.84% from 2001
- 39.46% are BME (2001 Census)
- 47% of primary school pupils first language is not English (Source: DFES)
- 41% of Leicester residents are living in the most deprived wards in the country (IMD2004)
- Overseas nationals entering the UK and allocated a National Insurance number more than double national average - 26.7 per 1,000 pop against 11.4 (Source: DWP)

Leicester's traditional economic base has shown decline for many years. New service and creative sector jobs are under-represented but growing in the city economy; decline in textile-related manufacturing is rapid. The city economy is comparatively low waged and dependency on manufacturing sectors is slightly higher than the national average. Adult literacy and numeracy is

below the national average but improving. The city's population is slightly younger than the national average – 45% of residents are less than 29 years old^{vii}, whilst numbers of older people are growing; an increase of 27% in the over 85-age group is expected in the next few years.

Economic - Facts and figures

- 23.4% employed in manufacturing industries compared to 14.5% nationally (Census 2001)
- Employment rate of 67% compared to 73% nationally (Labour Force Survey from NOMIS Sept 2006)
- 20.1% benefit^{viii} claimants against 14.8% nationally (Source: DWP)
- 24.7% of working age pop have no qualifications compared to 14.8% nationally (Source: Local Area Labour Force Survey, 2004)

The blend of deprivation, new arrivals, population churn, educational turbulence and culture creates a local context as challenging as almost anywhere in the country.

Housing - Facts and figures

- 2.6 households per 1000 dwellings are homeless
- 27.3% of houses rented by Local Authority or Registered Social Landlord compared to 19.4% nationally
- 19% of dependent children in Leicester in overcrowded homes compared to 12.5 nationally (2001 Census)
- 5.3 Low demand dwellings per 1000 compared to 26.6 per 1000 nationally (CLG HSSA returns)

Leicester City Council

With such a high level of diversity and change in its resident

population, Leicester City Council faces major challenges in the years ahead, particularly in relation to the influx of people from abroad.

The failure of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) data and funding formulae to reflect population surges and churn – or even to detect new arrivals at all – represents a particularly problematic financial context. Coupled with a relatively low level of per capita income, demographic changes and the spending review mean the pressure to deliver efficiencies is relentless.

Sound performance and financial management have ensured that priorities are not delivered at the expense of local taxpayers. Local satisfaction rates are positioned in the top quartile across a range of Council service areas. The council went from fair to good and good to four stars in successive years. This fell to three stars as the software suppliers to our Benefits Service were unable to continue their contract following a major service failure. Following investment in a substantial recovery programme, this service has now turned things around and is performing better than ever. On current data, subject to audit, performance the council is now performing better than when it had its four star rating!

Leicester City Council: the politics

Leicester is characterised by an assertive political environment. Nevertheless, on major issues consensus exists and progress is made.

Following a period of coalition cabinets and minority

administrations, the council now has a large Labour majority. The May local elections returned 38 Labour, eight conservative, six Liberal Democrat and two Green Party councillors. The executive consists of 10 cabinet members and the recently reviewed overview and scrutiny arrangements have resulted in three streamlined committees and six task groups.

The new political administration has meant significant investment in inducting 25 new councillors. Cabinet positions are taken up by the more experienced councillors, with the current leader having previous experience in this role. New training programmes are being delivered and a new structure and approach to scrutiny will ensure this process is effective in challenging the council and ensuring it is held to account. Throughout this period members have worked closely with officers to maintain political direction.

Leicester City Council: Structure

The senior management team has undergone a number of changes since it was brought together as a result of local government reorganisation in 1997. Remodelling and refocusing has reduced the number of service departments from six to four, with current corporate directors representing a blend of local experience and fresh, external perspectives. The structure is:

Departments:

Resources

Adults and Housing

Children & Young Persons

Regeneration & Culture

Partnership Executive Team

Working in partnership

Partnership working is reinforced in all aspects of service delivery. The amber/green rated^{ix} Leicester Partnership (LSP) is driving forward an ambitious local area agreement that is the vehicle for implementing Leicester's Community Strategy. This strategy aims to make Leicester...

...the most cohesive city in Europe, with safe and strong communities where people successfully live, work and learn together, new arrivals are made welcome, and where diverse cultural traditions enrich one another and the lives of all of its citizens;

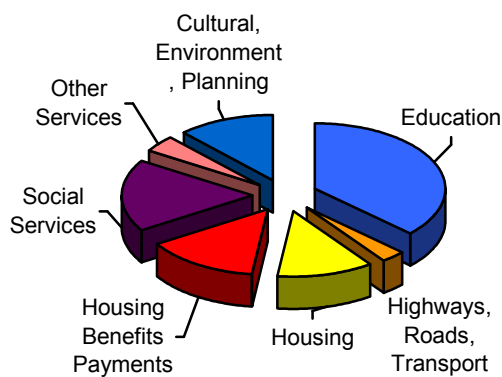
...a city at the heart of a thriving sub-region that has mobilised the skills and economic potential of its diverse population to become a major driver of wealth creation in the East Midlands;

...a sustainable city, recognised as a model of excellence internationally, which minimizes its impact on the local and global environment, and where no-one suffers from serious economic or social disadvantage;"^x

We work increasingly in partnership with whoever is best placed to deliver effective services; be it through major private investment – such as our waste management facility, joint service provision with other local authorities or with the voluntary sector.

Leicester City Council: Financial context

The Council's gross revenue expenditure for 2007/08 is £800M. The net budget requirement, which is funded by revenue support grant, redistributed business rates and Council Tax is £240M. Two thirds of the net budget requirement is met by Government grant, reflecting the high level of assessed need in the City. At £1061, Council Tax is below the national average.



The Council's capital programme for 2007/08 is £117M. 2007/08 is the last of the current three year programme.

The council has created some flexibility around the budget by allocating £10,000 to each community meeting, who can then target local priorities.

Leadership

Leicester works closely with its neighbouring cities to provide leadership for the region. The Strategy for Leicester offers an ambition for the city that is strengthened by stakeholder support. We are working hard to ensure we have the political will and management expertise to deliver the vision.

We have achieved nine Beacon awards^{xi} since the scheme began and regularly share our expertise with other local authorities. Indeed, our chief executive sits on the scheme's national advisory panel.

"Councillors, managers and staff of the council and the council's partners are committed to and proud of the City of Leicester. This shared pride came across strongly at all levels, including with the local residents we spoke to. It underpins the council's determination to improve the quality of life for all local people and is evident in the council's excellent record on social cohesion and promoting the value of diversity." Corporate Peer review report - 2006^{xii}

"Local leadership is vital. Like in Leicester where the Chief Executive, working with other public services and the community, is through the LAA making community cohesion core business" Ruth Kelly MP.

Value for money

The council's self assessment for the 2007 score in the 'Use of Resources' assessment shows an improvement from the current level 2 to level 3 (subject to moderation).

KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY	Score
Ambition	4
Priorities	3
Capacity	2
Performance management	3
Achievement	3

Question 1: What is the council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?

Ambition for the community

The city's new political administration is setting the framework for a new council strategy and programme. Looking 25 years ahead, our aim is to make Leicester the most sustainable UK city. Year-on-year we plan to leave the built and natural environment better than it was before. To achieve this we recognise that we must deliver the following medium and longer-term objectives:

- **A safe, clean and green city** – with ongoing pedestrianisation of Leicester aimed at attracting many more people into the city centre, we recognize the increasing importance of street cleanliness. Accessible and clean transport is also a high priority and we will be looking at the possibilities offered by the new generation of buses. We will continue to enhance traffic management, including examining the viability of 20 mph zones. Improving air quality will be vital if we are to create a cleaner, more carbon neutral and sustainable city environment.
- **A cohesive city** – Leicester has an international reputation for community cohesion. We are building on this through our neighbourhood management and renewal work, which is aimed at reducing inequality and poverty.

To aid integration, cohesion and economic independence we are

looking at creating a new facility for newly-arrived migrant families and individuals. All sectors of the city community have a stake in the city's future and we are making every effort to promote local recruitment to the jobs arising from city regeneration projects.

- **A family-friendly city** – Support for families and children forms a key part of the new city programme – in particular for Sure Start and pre-school age children. Improving schools and key stage performance is a major priority for us, as is the support that eight to 19 year olds receive through our youth services that helps them to achieve their real potential – both inside school and out. We also recognize the opportunities for community and family support offered by extended schools. Safeguarding children and their rights will be at the heart of the programme. Ensuring that young people have the skills, education and employment opportunities they need to participate fully in the city economy is central to the regeneration of Leicester. Support for Building Schools for the Future will continue and we will strengthen primary school provision and performance.
- **A city with homes for all** – Providing sufficient and affordable family housing will be a major aspect of the new policy direction, not least to cater for larger BME family groups. The Continuing Care/Extra Care agenda will shape developments in the city and we will endeavour to ensure that accommodation

in the private rental sector is of decent standard and that landlords behave ethically and within the law. We will be encouraging mixed communities that better reflect the diversity of life in Leicester.

- **A city with a high-quality built environment** – we will continue to encourage private sector investment in the city. Creating a high quality, high density, high performance built environment will be critical to achieving growth targets and delivering our objective of making Leicester the most sustainable city in the UK. A flagship 'ecotown' project^{xiii} will be explored and developed with partners.
- **A healthy city** – We will work closely with health partners to ensure Leicester becomes a city where equality in health is achieved and sustained, particularly in the three priority areas of coronary heart disease, cancer and tobacco. Educating, persuading and helping those city residents most likely to develop smoking-related illnesses to stop smoking will play a key part in ensuring better health for all. In line with our ambition to create a successful, sustainable city, issues like noise pollution and climate change will be priorities. We will act to ensure extremes of weather do not expose vulnerable groups to health risks. We will jointly appoint a new Director of Public Health to the management teams of the PCT and the council and review how best to

commission and deliver health care to meet the city's needs.

Attention will be paid also to the development of the Leicester Market and the influence this can have on improving health and reducing poverty in the city.

A shared understanding of local needs

We listen actively to our residents and stakeholders. Our residents' survey, and the more recent BVPI satisfaction survey, shows we are getting it right on the issues that matter to most local people. For example on environmental issues such as reducing crime, affordable housing, youth provision and a safe, clean and attractive environment^{xiv}.

The consultation process adopted by the Council has improved greatly over the last year. Changes have been made to the consultation toolkit to ensure that feeding back to residents is a fundamental and necessary element of each consultation. Recent examples of good practice include:

- Tenant and resident involvement consultation away day (May 2007)
- Bikeability – Cycle Training Consultation (March 2007)
- Carers Action Group Consultation (June 2007)

In addition, X consultation training sessions have been delivered to Council staff in 2007, to help drive up the standard of consultation across the Council.

Active citizens are the key to building strong communities. The

Leicester Partnership has further extended our reach into Leicester's communities, whilst Leicester's Crime & Disorder Partnership, the Leicester Multicultural Advisory Group, ward committees, our five neighbourhood management areas and elected members' contact with the community help keep us in touch with a grass roots perspective. Our much respected (evidence?) Leicester Link civic magazine, distributed to all households, has proved an effective communication tool with residents. Our people's panel ensures we are in touch with a broad spectrum of views. We have also recently established an Older Persons forum.

Our engagement with young people through our Young People's Forum helped enormously in developing our Children & Young Person's plan. The report 'Yourspace'^{xv} asked "what makes Leicester a good city for young people" and invites us into a debate about values and ethos as well as activity and service delivery. They said

We try to ensure we offer the services our customers' want, when they want them, for example by extending opening hours of?. We have already improved customer care through improved access to services through for example four customer service centres and the use of information technology. We have rationalized our departmental structures with the customer in mind and the development of community meetings will take this further. The aim is to put the customer first by tailoring services to local needs, not

building them around bureaucratic structures.

The index of deprivation and our 'Diversity of Leicester Report'^{xvi} reinforce our existing knowledge about areas of poverty in the City. 13 wards are in the 10% most deprived in the country. Our neighbourhood management initiative targets the priorities amongst these areas and the recently produce plans for each area will address the issues important to the community.^{xvii}

To ensure our demographic intelligence keeps pace, we will continue to invest in the Leicestershire on Line Research Atlas (LSORA) - a local intelligence observatory. We are also working with the Migration Impacts Forum (MIF) to improve understanding and responsiveness in relation to migration needs locally.

Insert map of deprivation – inside front cover

Community leadership and effective partnership

Leicester City is playing a leading role in the 3 Cities City Region development work. The 3 Cities (3Cs) of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham share a common urban agenda and collaborate on key issues. The partnership now includes the 3 County Councils and is known as the 3 Cities & Counties or 6Cs.

Leicester City leads for the 6Cs on the New Growth Points project, which is directed by Rodney Green on behalf of the 6Cs Leadership Group. The project manager is

hosted by Leicester City, and we are also the accountable body for CLG grant. In the pilot year 2007-08, the 6Cs secured £5.485m of the national pot of £40m. In Leicester City £1m is allocated to public realm works at Bath Lane in the LRC Waterside Intervention Area, and £0.5m to Abbey Meadows, again in support of the LRC. The announcement of grant allocation for 2008-11 is expected in December 2007. Leicester City also plays key roles in the 6Cs Transport Innovation Fund and Local Enterprise Growth Initiative projects.

The Sub-national Review requires a complete review of regional architecture to make governance fit for purpose after the demise of the Regional Assembly. Leicester City has led the debate about use of the 3Cs, 6Cs and now 9Cs (the remaining regional Principal Authorities - Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Rutland) to provide strategic democratic leadership to work with EMDA and GOEM in achieving regional priorities.

We are expanding our neighbourhood approach, seeking ways to give people a greater voice at that level. Front line Ward councillors now have more influence on decision-making and so greater community leadership. We believe this encourages citizens to take a greater interest in local public services and makes a significant impact on life in this city.

The Leicester Partnership is now showing its value – evidenced in an improved rating, amber for current performance and green for direction of travel^{xviii}. The

restructuring of the partnership, creating an executive role to oversee the implementation of the Strategy for Leicester^{xix}, has laid the foundation for this rating to improve further. There are four block leads covering the major themes in the Local Area Agreement: children & young people, economic development & enterprise, healthier communities & older people and stronger & safer communities. These leads are accountable for the achievement of the targets for improvement in the agreement.

The LAA is the vehicle for the delivery of the Strategy for Leicester and sets the priorities within this overall plan. The Equalities Diversity Support Services helped to develop the LAA in relation to disadvantaged groups and developed guidance on equality proof commissioning local business to deliver services. We are committed to a Multi Area Agreement for the economic conurbation around Leicester, linked to a new City development company to drive sustainable prosperity for all our communities.

Through the Strategy for Leicester we are fostering understanding of the shared vision through partners and the organisation.

At the heart of the LAA is a fundamental aim to narrow the gap in the quality of life of different communities so that more enjoy a better life experience. Recent 'threats of violent extremist' activity in other parts of the country underlines the importance of cohesive communities. Through the Leicester Partnership's Mainstreaming Moderation

programme we ensure that what is important to the community is translated into targeted actions that have broad support.

To ensure the programme of initiatives makes a difference, we specify the expectations and outcomes required from the investment and put in place monitoring arrangements. A city-wide conference is held periodically to report on progress and review the overall direction of travel.

Prioritisation

Clear and robust priorities for the area

We know what our communities want and we are prepared to take tough decisions to redirect resources to those areas. Community consultation and service performance data come together in regular Cabinet/Corporate Directors' Board awaydays, where our strategic direction is prioritized, developed and agreed. We maintain focus through the Strategy for Leicester and the aligned corporate plan. We have a strong commitment to excellent services and value for money – we test ourselves against the best in class and continue to take robust performance management action where needed.

We consult residents through a three-yearly residents' survey. The latest results were analysed by the four area committees (local consultation /community engagement fora) and informed the allocation of their funding. Consultation influenced the prioritisation of the environment and education in the corporate plan.

Neighbourhood management in five of our most deprived areas focuses on local issues, with national priorities underpinning the justification for this investment. We are now involving people in a variety of ways and implementing neighbourhood plans to contribute to determining local levels of service provision.

Our engagement with groups, such as the Leicester Multicultural Advisory Group, the Council of Faiths and our work on the equality standards, ensures that the needs of vulnerable groups are in the forefront of our planning.

Extensive consultation formed the basis for the 2005 Strategy for Leicester, which shaped an appropriate balance between the national priorities. We then aligned our updated corporate plan to ensure a close fit with the local community strategy. The strategy responded to the issues raised by local people which in essence were; diversity, poverty, support for parents and carers, major development projects that benefits local people and improvements to public transport and the local environment.

Corporate, strategic and service planning

By the end of March 2008 we will have a new sustainable community strategy and aligned corporate plan.

We have a three year rolling financial strategy that aligns resources to the priorities set out in the corporate plan. Thus we are clear about any changes in resource allocations required because of the effects of the

formula grant, other sources of income, savings targets, etc.

Emerging national issues form the basis for regular senior management conferences and briefings to ensure they are considered in service plan preparations. Additionally service plans are linked to the specific plans and strategies the council is required to produce, e.g. the Local Transport Plan, Housing Strategy, Older People's strategy, etc. Ultimately these plans cascade down to the individual in the targets set in our appraisal process.

Our service planning approach makes explicit key linkages, both through the hierarchy of plans and across them. Through strategy mapping we have a clear focus on the difference that will be made to the customer – their expectations are our starting point. We support this with our objective-based performance management tool, which requires all the links to initiatives to be made so that progress monitoring is possible. Plans have a three-year time horizon but they are updated annually.

Equality impact assessments are a key part of service planning. These become 'SMART' through the performance cards that are part of the service planning process. We have realigned the budget process to ensure that service plans lead on informing budgets, not the other way around.

A risk management strategy, regularly reported to corporate directors and members, identifies key corporate risks and action to mitigate them. The process of identifying operational and key

corporate risks is being reviewed to reflect the business continuity plan and to reflect several years' experience. Key decisions are taken only with the benefit of a risk assessment such as the decision to XXXX

Collective learning from inspection reports feeds into council-wide initiatives such as the improvements to procurement, project management and information management.

Our chief executive is a member of the East Midlands Improvement Partnership Board and regular meetings take place between the three cities of Leicester, Derby and Nottingham and our own surrounding counties to share learning and drive forward improvement. We hold seminars and conferences on issues of national concern e.g. MIF Conference with Home Office, CLG and regional partners.

The council is on course to meet its 7.5% efficiency savings target for the three years to 2007/08.

Question 2: What is the capacity of the council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?

We continue to invest heavily in developing Leicester's organisational capacity to deliver our ambition: through our councillors, partners, staff, technology and innovation. Value for money for the local community is at the forefront of everything we do. Sound financial and performance management, coupled with

risk management and an increasingly effective scrutiny ensure we keep our finger on the pulse in the addressing priority issues yet not neglecting the more everyday issues.

Recently a priority of the council has been low tax increases. To ensure there was no corresponding service reduction we drove up efficiency. We have identified areas of high spend in comparison to performance and a programme of review^{xx} is under development/action to reduce costs. This has provided a lean cost base on which to build capacity for the new administration's priorities and a low Council Tax relative to other authorities (3% change 2006/07 to 2007/08 against average of 4.1% nationally^{xxi}).

Accountability and decision making

We have in place a scheme of delegation with regular reports to Cabinet summarising the delegation undertaken. Whilst Cabinet members have individual portfolios they also have collective decision making powers. Senior officers work closely with cabinet members and have regular briefing meetings.

At Cabinet briefing meetings Cabinet members and corporate directors come together to discuss policy and strategy development, ensuring the direction of travel is constantly reviewed against the current issues. Our Corporate Directors' Board meets weekly to discuss cross-cutting policy development as well as at regular focused awaydays.

The joint appointment of a Director of Public Health is an example of building the capacity of the board, along with quarterly meetings with the PCT.

By bringing together this year the adult and housing services within a single service department we have been able to align housing and care issues, e.g. for older people, much more effectively.

A number of business improvement, change and performance management enhancements have continued or been introduced over the past year to deliver better value and highlight issues requiring early intervention.

Senior management briefing and interactive events are held regularly to ensure a consistent understanding of the overall direction of travel and to provide for wider debate on the needs of the local community.

In May 2007 the new political leadership introduced major changes to scrutiny. An Overview and Scrutiny management board was established, chaired by an opposition councillor with six Labour-led task groups to create more capacity to undertake scrutiny investigations. Two select committees are chaired by opposition members – Performance & VFM and Health. There is a scrutiny forward plan.

Examples of where Scrutiny has directly contributed to service improvement include the recommendations from the night time economy investigation (included in the city centre strategy) and transport.

Each scrutiny committee has a dedicated member support officer to support the chair/leader, provide information, research topics etc. Departmental officers also provide technical support. The Scrutiny committees are starting to look at the work of partners, e.g. through scrutiny of the Local Area Agreement Scrutiny can involve partners and stakeholders in holding the council to account.

Our ethical standards are high. We know this is non negotiable if the trust of the community is to be had. Training is therefore in place to keep this at the forefront, especially relevant since about half of all members are new since May 2007. The Standards Committee meets regularly and deals successfully with referrals from the Standards Board.

Constitution, codes of conduct and political conventions are in place and regularly reviewed and updated and, training workshops are run on the political conventions.

A healthy working relationship exists between officers and members and between the main political parties. Cross-member working parties and collaboration with our partners ensure the best outcomes for our residents and businesses.

The further development of community meetings will enhance the role of ward members, placing them at the heart of our neighbourhood agenda, strengthening their voice and capitalizing on their local expertise.

Since we improved the structure of the Leicester Partnership there is a clearer focus and delivery of the LAA outcomes. There are now two

main strands to the structure of the partnership. The main body acts as a sounding board and sets the strategic direction whilst the executive board ensures decisions are translated to delivery actions. We have also repositioned the corporate centre of the council to be a shared resource between the council and the partnership. This is a significant aligning of resources to support partnership delivery, increased capacity, joint visioning and working and investment by the council in future delivery mechanisms.

The council has successfully completed the annual refresh of its Local Area Agreement. This will ensure that the external funding streams channelled via the LAA are directed to the specific services with the greatest need in line with the Council; and its partners' priorities. The operational protocols for the LAA are being strengthened through a review of the requirements of stakeholders, including the Council as the Accountable body.

Human resources

Our human resources function is undergoing a major transformation to improve effectiveness and reduce costs, and support and empower managers to be more effective in dealing with employees within their services, focusing on preventative measures to eliminate the need for major interventions. Additional efficiency savings were achieved through a centralized transaction service.

The council has invested in its workforce to raise people capacity to meet future demands. Over 500

managers have undergone a 360 degree competency profile assessment against the standards as a means of targeting further skills development. The council has a fully integrated and formally accredited management development programme for all levels of managers and supervisors. Over 600 managers have successfully participated. The Council has identified a need for improved project management skills and has adopted the Prince 2 standards and trained over 50 managers with relevant responsibilities. The council also has a workforce development plan and as part of this over 500 employees have participated in Essential Communication Skills to help raise core skills for front line employees.

The Council is changing the way that training and learning is managed with a new council wide learning and development service delivering core programmes for all staff against agreed organisational needs. This went live in April 2007. This will help with future workforce planning and skills analysis.

All departments have maintained IIP standards and we hold accreditation across the council. Our appraisal process identifies areas for development and there are development opportunities for all levels of staff. Service and business planning processes and individual appraisals make links between the individual and the organisation.

News and corporate issues are communicated directly via *Face*, our staff magazine and our e-bulletin *Source*. Team briefing is

used extensively throughout the council.

Our 2003 staff survey led to many improvements for our staff such as better communications and an improved intranet site. A new survey is now appropriate given that the major reorganisation of the departmental structure is in place. Since that time other consultation mechanisms have been in use including the joint consultative forum with Trades Unions, organisational reviews, consultation in relation to the Business Improvement Programme and Job Evaluation.

We need to improve our sickness record. This is a priority issue and there is a specific improvement plan in force to reduce this absence. Current initiatives include a fully-funded musculoskeletal rehabilitation intervention for employees, a revised stress management policy and a counselling service. We have also embarked on a firm commitment to tackle poor performance robustly. This will include the application of our capability procedure.

We have a long-established and flexible approach to work arrangements, which has not only benefited staff but improved morale and ensured that services can be delivered more flexibility. This includes term time working, home working^{xxii}, Saturday and late openings and flexible working hours.

Our work on Single Status is near to fruition; final stages of consultation are underway and the new structure will be implemented early in the new financial year.

Equality and diversity

Diversity lies at the heart of our HR strategy. All new staff attend a corporate induction, which covers our role as an employer, the importance we give to diversity and the role and responsibility of employees in promoting this.

The council's corporate equality strategy and action plan identifies how we address equality issues as a service provider, employer and community leader. The strategy features achievement of the local government equality standard as a main driver for delivering our equality agenda. The council has achieved level 3 of the standard and is currently working towards achieving Level 4.

The council provides an annual workforce profile^{xxiii} report showing representation against targets set, including community based indicators. More regular half yearly and quarterly monitoring takes place for certain profile indicators e.g. senior management gender representation. 37% of the economically active population are from minority ethnic communities. For 2006/07 20% of our employees were from this group showing an under representation overall. We have a range of initiatives to stimulate interest in council jobs from all sectors of the community.

Project management

We use Prince 2 (P2) project management standards for all our major projects and have developed small project guidance according to P2 principles. Resource allocation to projects is the responsibility of the relevant project director. A recent Audit Commission audit^{xxiv} stated

that we are much better at ensuring appropriate time is allocated for Project Managers. We are currently developing an option appraisal and whole-life costing process that ensure only viable projects linked to corporate priorities are programmed. A new portfolio management office will provide stewardship of our project management processes.

We still have work to do to ensure project management standards are consistently applied across the whole Council.

Procurement

Reshaping our approach to procurement has led to a much more effective approach and clear benefits have been realised. Substantial savings over the last four years have benefited the capacity of the council to meet service demand. This has been achieved by effective buying using our corporate negotiations.

We use the West Midlands Common Standard for Equality in every tendering exercise. Our long standing membership of Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO), along with collaborative working with the Regional Centre of Excellence (RCE) demonstrates our commitment to partnership working in this field.

Our procurement team (CPT) runs a full procurement training programme for relevant officers, which we are now developing into a competency based scheme linked to ability to purchase. Over 1,500 officers have benefited from this training and power to achieve framework contracts. A

procurement training programme for councillors is under development. The corporate procurement team is a centre of excellence providing advice and support to the whole council.

Our contract procedure rules^{xxv}, rewritten in 2005, and our procurement toolkit are under constant review. We are currently strengthening our corporate control of procurement in order to raise compliance in line with expected standards.

We are also developing a compact^{xxvi} with the voluntary sector.

Customer care and communications

We produced a customer access strategy in 2005 and we are in the top quartile for access to buildings by disabled people (Source: Audit Commission).

Our four customer service centres provide a wealth of information on council and health services to residents. Out of hours services are supported by telephone contact centres and many transactions can be carried out on the website. By March 2006 almost 100% of our transactions were enabled for e delivery.

Following the Peer Review we are taking steps to implement the recommendation:

"In the next financial year prioritise a proactive, corporate approach to communications by investing in a well-resourced, effective, comprehensive strategy for communications in all channels. Ensure key messages can be delivered effectively throughout the

organisation and outside with partners, the public and the press. Make communication a key element of the council's approach to managing change".

We have reviewed this area using specialist communication consultants and on their advice we are recruiting to a new senior management post.

The council's website, www.leicester.gov.uk, is widely used, with an average of around 400,000 individual sessions a month. Services are grouped into generic categories, with many categories signposting services provided by partners. Search links include neighbouring county and district authorities' websites. Access to the Internet is provided in libraries free to library users with a membership.

The council has developed the Disability Information & Communication Network with partners. The network is for disabled people and provides information in an accessible format on a range of community services.

Financial strategy

Our current financial strategy was approved by the council in February. Reserves are set commensurate with risks faced and the Council has been able to resource an equal pay compensation settlement without recourse to borrowing. Our corporate and community plans were updated this year and will inform the budget strategy for 2008/09.

The national and local policy agenda creates both opportunities

and threats and we are working to get the balance right. Much is done to secure investment in the city and this amounts to many millions of pounds, especially the Building Schools for the Future programme which brings over £200M for schools building work, Highcross Quarter £350M, New Growth Point, Transport Innovation Fund and the Leicester Regeneration Company Masterplan.

The capital programme is aligned to the areas where we need to make service improvements and is set following an assessment methodology which is highly regarded by GOEM. The recent implementation of the 'whole life' investment appraisal methodology is helping to ensure this alignment.

The 2006/07 outturn report^{xxvii} shows that all departments were able to manage within their budgets as they do consistently. This was done without the need for any significant change to service plans during the year.

We are replacing our financial management system to improve efficiency in processing financial transactions and managing resources.

ICT

Following a council-wide review of ICT Services, a new central ICT service was established from April 2007, with a new organisation structure and consolidated budgets. Implementation of the improvements is close to completion.

The Audit Commission's annual letter assessing ICT^{xxviii} indicates that the council uses ICT effectively

throughout its activities and partnerships.

We have invested considerably in e-government projects over many years, through internal and external funds, and we are now realising the benefits of this investment. Telephone access was reviewed and improved, with further improvements planned.

Our internet and intranet websites were further developed and usage has increased substantially. During 2006 over 25,000 e-payment transactions, with a total value of over £3m, made through the website. Library book renewals through the internet rose from 19% to 26% during 2006. We understand the levels of Internet usage in the community and work with our partners to help improve access to ICT.

We have established a comprehensive ICT training programme for members and staff, including MS Office and ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence).

Information about areas, communities and needs are gathered and available electronically through maps on websites, examples are City Streetz and the Leicester Shire Online Research Atlas (LSORA). Developed jointly by three different partnerships, LSORA holds over 500 datasets about local communities, accessible as thematic maps or tables, as well as professional research reports with in depth analysis. This is a web based service.

Improving access to services is part of the Customer Access Strategy

and the e-government programme. We achieved the 'required' and 'good' priority outcomes for e-government by Dec '05 and March '06 respectively. A range of online facilities are available 24 x 7 through our well used website, rated by SOCITM as 'standard'.

Consistent, rigorous and open performance management

The tough financial outlook, needs of the local community and our drive to be excellent demands a tough performance management process. Thus progress against political priorities and the transformational projects is closely monitored. Recent enhancements mean there is now much greater member input and action can be taken on performance issues at a much earlier stage.

Regular performance reports to meetings of the corporate directors' board, cabinet and scrutiny ensure systematic monitoring and review happens. Corporate directors meet on a regular basis with their cabinet leads who, along with the Chief Executive, hold the corporate directors to account. The Deputy Leader holds cabinet leads to account.

A cross partners Performance Task Group is responsible for performance management on behalf of the Partnership Executive. Monitoring performance of the partnership is currently 6 monthly but moving to quarterly 2008/09. We report to the delivery groups, then the Partnership Executive and finally GOEM.

The quarterly financial report on NRF currently; will be integrated with the

performance reporting in 2008/09 when it will all be based on the area based grant.

We are developing a stronger culture of addressing/challenging poor performance through a programme of management development & training, challenging sickness absence and improving performance trends of service PIs. We have changed the focus of our appraisal system, placing more emphasis on performance, and purchased a new performance system, which all Leicester Partnership members can access. This major investment has given us better access to performance information and stronger linkages to key priorities.

Performance information also influences resource allocation i.e. information on poor condition of some roads led to additional resource allocation to highways, reflecting the corporate priority of 'environment'.

Service plans must identify potential barriers and risks to achieving objectives and incorporate a plan to manage these risks. To support this, managers have received risk management training. Risk registers have been compiled for each department and are contained in a corporate risk management database which is reviewed and updated annually and is currently undergoing a major refresh. Actions to mitigate risks are taken in the intervening period. There are also risk based internal audit protocols. Internal audit has a clear remit to monitor risks associated with achieving corporate objectives. Risk matrices are included in all reports

seeking decisions on matters involving material risk.

Our complaints procedure is straightforward and accessible in a variety of ways and languages. We are happy to take complaints at any point and by any member of staff and this can be done verbally. We report on our handling of complaints annually to Scrutiny and our Strategic Resources Group.

Staff have access to a grievance procedure which for many is accessible on our intranet and for others can be accessed via their line manager, personnel team or from their trade union.

The council is open to external evaluation and challenge and makes effective use of opportunities to learn in this way. Recent initiatives include:

- Corporate Peer Review (2006)
- Equality Scrutiny Board
- Use of the Peoples Panel
- African Caribbean Citizens Forum
- Audit Commission/VFM reports

Whilst we have well-established structures for performance management, we know that our performance management culture needs further improvement. Two corporate groups are driving this agenda forward and all senior managers now set an example on the use of performance information. Groups come together at both strategic and operational levels to ensure improvements are made and chase through action plans.

We regularly visit other councils that have recognised expertise in particular areas such as when developing the performance management framework. We also actively disseminate our own good practice to other councils. Internally we promote best practice awards to identify and share good practice between departments.

Our Leader and a number of key officers are accredited Audit Commission peer member/officers.

Question 3: What has been achieved?

Leicester has a long history of improvement, as is shown in our key performance measures. We have achieved external recognition and gained higher satisfaction from our residents in terms of our two key priorities: education and the environment. We have:

- *Achieved year on year improvement in pupils gaining 5+ GCSEs*
- *LAC ? [What about LAC??]*
- *Turned around New College, our worst-performing secondary school*
- *Developed and commissioned a revolutionary recycling scheme with our partner, BIFFA?*
- *Achieved environment CPA level 4*

External awards include:

- *Three star council status*
- *X Beacon awards since the scheme began*
- *2009 Special Olympics*
- *Six current green flag awards*

- IIP across the council
- EMAS accreditation
- *Top transport plan*
- European City of Sport 2008

A. Sustainable communities and transport

Sustainable economy

We have **accessed** over £64 million (£42m SRB, £21m ERDF, £1.1m NRF) to deliver economic regeneration. Furthermore we believe the environmental impact of current industrial and commercial activity is sustainable; our sustainable development appraisal tool helps to ensure this.

A citywide welfare to work team, targeted at the most needy groups, is in place. Early signs are that unemployment in our deprived areas remains stable^{xxix}, whereas in other areas of the region it is rising.

We have instigated a job service partnership and a DWP project to link disadvantaged groups directly with new employment opportunities. By leading a partnership with new retailers, we are helping residents from deprived areas access new jobs in the city centre.

We stimulate business growth by:

- *Creating opportunities for developers and inward investors.*
- *Providing premises for new and growing businesses in the creative and other industries (e.g. the LCB Depot, Ross Walk Business Centre).*
- *Providing business advice and start-up grants*

We host a public procurement project that opens up tenders to local businesses, especially local Small to Medium Local Enterprises (SMEs). However, uncertainty over funding in the long time poses a risk to further improvements.

Housing market

Between 2001 and 2006 Leicester's supply of housing across all tenures met 90% of our local plan and 72% of our draft regional spatial strategy targets; annual completion rates have increased year on year since 2002/03.

We are using a housing land availability assessment to secure a five year rolling programme of housing sites. Designation as a New Growth Point^{xxx} and our partnership work with the Leicester Regeneration Company should further improve the supply. The local plan seeks 15% of new build dwellings to be built to 'lifetime homes' standards.

Over the last five years housing supply has been mainly flats (58%), mostly with one or two bedrooms. We have been more successful in encouraging a suitable mix of house types on suburban greenfield sites than on city centre brownfield sites, where development viability is a determining factor.

Less than 15% of our total supply is affordable homes. This compares to Leicester's adopted policy of seeking 30% affordable housing. Our 2002 housing needs survey^{xxxi} showed that 45% of Leicester's total housing shortfall is for large, four+ bedroomed family homes.

Leicester is a high demand area. At the beginning of 05/06 there were 10,750 households on our housing register and during the year only 2,080 – less than one in five – got a tenancy. Demand for large family homes for affordable rent is very high and yet, because of low turnover, only 6% of lets in 05/06 were for this house type. Our void monitoring demonstrates that the only area/stock-type affected by a significant void rate is private sector city centre flats.

In terms of running costs, we have adopted local plan policies to encourage energy efficiency and renewable energy within new housing developments (L.P. & SPD). The Leicester Better Buildings Project also seeks to encourage developers to design sustainable schemes. The HLAA will address the need for housing land allocations to be in environmentally sustainable locations.

Leicester is on target to ensure that all council properties meet the decent homes standard by 2010. A private sector stock condition survey is being commissioned in 2007 to provide an accurate picture of private sector stock condition in Leicester. At 69.3 our council stock SAP rating is in the top quartile (Source: Audit Commission).

The 2006/07 Housing Tenants satisfaction survey shows a positive direction of travel towards the top quartile. We opened a tenants' advice centre in 2006 to improve the handling of enquiries in general but also in particular to respond to tenant dissatisfaction more rapidly. Regular customer monitoring has

consistently rated the service at over 85% satisfaction.

Environment

Leicester is currently undergoing unprecedented large-scale urban regeneration, with a large part of this development within the four LRC regeneration areas. All these sites have excellent access to the city centre.

Design quality is increasing dramatically within Leicester, evidenced by buildings such as our new performing arts centre and the Peepul centre. A recent planning application was approved for three tall buildings at Bede Island south, designed by renowned Manchester architect Ian Simpson. The development gained an overall CABE rating of 85% against their framework for assessment.

We are a registered Eco Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) authority and a signatory to the European 'Aalborg commitments' and the 'Nottingham declaration for climate change'. A verification report from Lloyds Register Quality Assessor stated:

"A clear and unequivocal commitment to improving the environment and the benefits that this brings to the people of Leicester was again in evidence. Major issues cited are consistent with the significant environmental effects with climate change being amongst the highest on the 'political horizon' and air quality being a national and not just local issue."

To demonstrate our commitment we have shown the film 'An Inconvenient Truth' to staff and

members of the Leicester Partnership and supported the Leicester Environment Partnership's annual event and awards ceremony. This is aimed at raising people's awareness of the issues and threats brought about by climate change.

Leicester has adopted an award-winning^{xxxii} key planning policy on climate change mitigation, which sets important targets for renewable energy provision in new developments. To reduce car travel our local plan contains measures on parking standards, ease of access to bus routes and cycling. The city council received an excellent rating in the Central Leicestershire Local Transport Plan (CLLTP) 2006/11, both overall and for air quality.

We are working hard with our PFI partner, Biffa to deliver sustainable waste management. Over the last five years household waste has dropped from 484 to 435kgms/head of population.

Our central combined heat and power scheme is being expanded, with both the University of Leicester and Leicester prison now becoming partners in the project. The scheme will lower overall costs for fuel and cut carbon emissions for the partners involved.

Management plans are in place for all our parks and open spaces. Our park maintenance team was nominated the best parkforce in England in 2006 and we currently hold six Green Flag awards. In 2006, surveys showed 95% of parks users were satisfied, an increase of 10% over three years. 58 (34%) of play areas meet the EN standard and we

anticipate this will rise to 42% by the end of 2007/08.

An investment of £750,000 has improved the city's public conveniences which was an area of low satisfaction. Complemented by additional investments in better city centre street cleanliness, this has resulted in significant improvements in both standards and public perceptions of cleanliness - satisfaction is up from 64% to 72%.

On a wider basis, we have made the street cleaning service more accountable to local communities. The amount of graffiti has increased. Our specialist graffiti removal service responds rapidly to address priority problems and our integrated approach to streetscene management hits problems hard and early.

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) /wildlife sites are the prime nature conservation sites in Leicester; we own or part-own 28. Of these:

- Seven sites (25%) have long-term and adequate management for biodiversity in place which is likely to sustain the site's value.
- Eight (29%) have some management specifically for biodiversity in place, but more needs doing.
- Thirteen (46%) sites have no specific management for biodiversity, or management is insufficient.

Transport

More people (from 33,890,912 in 2005/06 to 35,122,472 in 2006/07) are using buses to get around the city and satisfaction has increased to 74% - above top quartile.

We have increased the number of level-access bus stops from 51% in 2003/04 to 76% in 2006/07 and bus operators had increased the number of low floor buses to 71% of their fleet by April 2007. We have also improved road crossing points and dropped kerbs.

Our ongoing programme of replacing bus shelters includes timetable displays and real time 'StarTrak' information facilities on key bus routes. 'Star Trak' routes have increased from 32% in 2004 to 46% in 2007. (Star Trak is our real time bus information system.)

Programmes such as quality bus corridors and demand management measures, including residents parking schemes, park & ride and decriminalized parking enforcement, is already encouraging lower car use and increased use of public transport. We have seen an increase in bus patronage year on year, with the Leicester – Loughborough project producing a 26% increase.

Between 2001 and 2006 the number of cars entering the city centre between seven and ten o'clock in the morning reduced by 2.8% to 4,610, although peak hour traffic (eight to nine o'clock) increased by 1.9%. This is against a backdrop of 11,000 additional person trips being made into the city centre during that period. Buses' modal share rose by 0.3%, while car modal share

reduced by 3.4%. Congestion – measured in average car delay in minutes per vehicle km over 10 radial routes – reduced by 0.13 minutes between 2001 and 2006.

We ensure there is a strong link between transport and land use planning. Proposals for large-scale or travel-intensive development must be accompanied by a transport assessment and a travel plan, with De Montfort University, NSPCC and Highpoint all having produced travel plans.

A recent requirement to provide a bus service very early on in a development in Hamilton meant that around 220,000 car journeys per year were avoided. We will see the benefits of enforced planning conditions in relation to transport on developments in the next few years.

The workless often have difficulty attending interviews and maintaining good attendance at peripheral employment areas that are poorly served by bus. We offer practical support by promoting travel aid schemes – a simple £1 fee entitles an unemployed person to claim half fare bus travel for a four-week period.

B. Safer and stronger communities

Crime and fear of crime

The Safer Leicester Partnership's community safety strategy is based on a thorough crime audit. Work on delivering current crime priorities is well under way – crime and disorder activities are reducing and satisfaction is rising.

We administer around £480,000 of Home Office funding via the LAA and £600,000 of NRF funding for partners to deliver strategy targets. We also contribute considerable funding, including support for anti-social behaviour officers and burglary reduction work, improved street lighting in high crime areas and placements for young offenders.

We have signed up to the Home Office media campaign and have recently appointed a marketing and communications officer within the community safety group to develop our website and other public-friendly information.

To reduce the fear of crime, projects like Safer Routes include improved street lighting and environmental improvements. Work with ENCAMS^{xxxiii} on our environmental action plan and in parks to improve natural surveillance supports the 101 service. Multi-agency patch walks in response to locally identified priorities promote joint problem solving.

Anti social behaviour (ASB)

We take an incremental approach to tackling ASB that recognises the city's diversity. Activities include preventative work and we are a Respect Early Intervention Pathfinder. If there is a need for legal intervention, we make extensive use of Housing Act and other powers.

45% of Leicester's residents think that people not treating other people with respect and consideration is a very or fairly big problem in their local area. This compares well with the Unitary average of 52% (Source:

2006/07 Best Value Satisfaction Survey).

As far as rehabilitation is concerned, the Council was instrumental in setting up and funding the Leicester New Start Families project, an intensive support project for families who are evicted or at risk of eviction as a result of ASB.

Patterns of ASB have helped to identify our neighbourhood management areas. A MORI survey helped us to understand the fear of ASB/crime and Home Office performance data, where each police force is compared to its peers, show that for the period 2005/06 we achieved an "excellent" rating for a range of ASB related areas, including satisfaction of victims of racism, comparative satisfaction of minority ethnic groups and residents' perception of police performance.

Our own surveys show that:

- *79% of respondents said they would use the Leicester Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (LASBU) again if it were needed*
- *55% said that the LASBU's actions had led to a change in their area*
- *76% felt happy recommending the service to others*
- *71% felt satisfied with the actions of LASBU*

Successful outcomes of ASB cases are promoted through the local media and leaflets, posters and letters inform the local community of actions taken. Photos of individuals who have ASBOs or injunction orders against them are distributed to local council offices, libraries etc, asking local people to call a confidential

hotline if they witness those individuals breaking their orders.

The 101 single non-emergency telephone number has been run by Leicester City Council in partnership with Leicestershire Constabulary, since September 2006. The 24/7 service is funded by the Home Office and is being piloted by five partnerships in the country. In its first 12 months, more than 70,000 reports of anti-social behaviour were handled by the council-based call centre. Originally covering Leicester city and Rutland county, the service has been extended to cover Melton Borough Council and Harborough District Council areas.

The 101 service has delivered distinct improvements through a joint agency approach to anti-social behaviour. It has improved accessibility to council services and more than 90% of customers are satisfied with the service they receive. The sophisticated 101 system enables council services to be monitored to ensure service requests, including graffiti cleaning and noise monitoring, are carried out within agreed timescales. It also provides a comprehensive picture of anti-social behaviour and has greatly helped the council to allocate resources where they are most needed, saving time and money.

An announcement by Government has stated that funding for this is to cease. At the time of writing this self assessment it is not possible to say whether or not it will be possible to continue with this service

Drugs and alcohol

Leicester is an intensive area for the Drug Interventions Programme (DIP) and has testing on arrest in place for trigger offences. The DIP is consistently meeting its performance targets and research conducted on a cohort of 114 users of the service demonstrated a 56% reduction in re-offending.

We work with Drug & Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) officers to reduce discarded drug litter. There is a street drinking ban in place. With the DAAT we jointly fund the Anchor Centre, which provides support and outreach for street drinkers and drug users.

Targeted drug and alcohol misuse education and prevention is through the specialist posts in the Youth Offending Service (YOS), the Pupil Referral Unit, work with truants, looked after children and Health Schools. Between April 2006 and February 2007 122 young people received drug/alcohol treatment. 71 of these (58%) were case managed by either the YOS or Children Services (PRU) The Drug and Alcohol Response Team (DART) has also provided tier 1 training to our adults & housing workforce.

We contribute towards education and prevention at universal and targeted level through the Health Schools and those specialist posts already referred to above.

Housing support is available through the provision of floating support. We contribute towards treatment and community care, as well as providing access and funding to support drug users who need residential treatment. This is demonstrated through the waiting

times, retention rates and planned discharges for service users accessing residential treatment for substance misuse. The DAAT has identified actions within its annual adult drug treatment plan to improve performance against these outcomes.

Reducing accidents

The Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Road Safety Partnership was formed in 1998 to coordinate action to reduce casualties across the Leicestershire police area and achieve the 2010 national reduction targets.

- *1994-98 average was 127 killed or seriously injured (KSI)*
- *We exceeded our 2005 milestone of 101 KSI's with a 46% reduction – down to 69 KSIs*
- *Between the 1994-98 baseline and 2005 the number of child KSIs declined by 71% to 8*
- *Between the 1994-98 baseline (1,389) and 2005 the number of slight injuries declined by 9% to 1,266*

There was a drop in KSIs for all classes including motorcyclists (-25%), cyclists (-8%), and pedestrians (-29%).

Achievements include the introduction of safety camera enforcement from 1st April 2002 – at camera sites the number of people killed and seriously injured has reduced by 62%, with the number of slight injuries reduced by 28%.

Casualty data show that we need to concentrate resources on motorcyclists and young drivers. Produced with the Leicestershire

and Rutland county councils, our motorcycle action plan is being used to reduce the likelihood of motor cyclists being injured.

Other highlights include:

- *Ten 20mph zones in the city and a further three being introduced*
- *About 40% of LEA schools have approved travel plans*
- *The Warning Zone, where year 5 & 6 children learn about road, fire and other aspects of safety, opened in November 2006.*
- *More widespread use of vehicle activated signs also address these issues.*

A high incidence of pedestrian and cyclist casualties led us to develop a safer routes strategy in 2001. Our area-wide approach to reducing road danger through safer routes schemes was based on accidents involving child pedestrians and cyclists. It followed our successful 'Feet First' scheme, implemented in Highfields in 1995, which reduced the number of child pedestrian casualties in the area by 80%, while increasing the numbers walking to school by 5%.

Response to emergency situations

Working with other organisations we have produced integrated multi-agency plans. There is a programme of multi-agency training, with plans including a communications strategy. Our major emergency and emergency centres plans set out our individual roles and responsibilities in support of the multi-agency plans. In addition we have a permanent control room, which enables us to have a more efficient and effective response and allows us to carry out

regular training of those who will manage the Local Authority's response to an emergency. It also enables us to carry out regular exercises to test our plans and policies and ensure those responding to emergencies are comfortable and confident in their roles.

Local media contribute directly to our emergency work through membership of a multi-agency communications group. We have created emergency vaults around the city which contain equipment so that emergencies can be handled effectively.

The Local Resilience Forum (LRF) has produced a community risk register which identifies potential risks or hazards within our LRF area and informs priorities. Specific hot spots have been identified, such as the Control of Major Accident Hazard (COMAH) Regulations 1999 sites, and separate plans cover these. Through collaboration with the PCTs we can identify vulnerable people in a specific area and a data sharing protocol has been written and adopted by all agencies within the LRF.

We regularly engage with community leaders, including VISTA (society for the blind), Action Deafness, Mosaic (represents disabled, both physical and mental) and community and faith leaders. This ensures we understand their needs during an emergency and that these are written into the plans. These groups are encouraged to take part in exercises. We are fully engaged and work closely with the voluntary sector. They are part of our LRF planning and attend the project

group meetings to ensure the plans produced properly reflect what activities the voluntary sector would carry out in the situation being planned for. They are also part of our training and exercising programmes, engaging fully by both attending the multi-agency training sessions and being involved in the multi-agency exercises, both live and table-top, to ensure the plans are tested and gaps/issues highlighted are addressed.

Building Stronger Communities

We have a national reputation for our work on building stronger communities. Our community cohesion strategy and the more specific faiths and new arrivals strategies ensure we have a clear picture of the demographics of Leicester. Other analyses of the issues are contained in our reports on Somali focus groups and on migrant workers in Leicester, our assessment of asylum seekers and failed asylum seekers and awareness of significant numbers of 'hidden migrants'.

Leicester is a founding partner of the Institute of Community Cohesion and part of the East Midlands Community Cohesion Network. In 2003/04 we were awarded Beacon Status and became a community cohesion pathfinder for the period 2003/5. We were invited to participate in the Migration: Sharing Good Practice group set up by the Department for Communities and Local Government in 2006.

Our strategy is taken forward through our community cohesion project team; the community

cohesion theme underpins all four blocks of the LAA. We have:

- *A political lead for community cohesion and equality*
- *Run a half day senior managers' forum on community cohesion*
- *A community cohesion dissemination programme open to all staff.*
- *A Leicester multi-cultural advisory group and a multi-agency forum on asylum seekers and refugees*
- *An equality and diversity partnership,*
- *A council of faiths*

We have achieved Level 3 of the equality standard for local government and regularly undertake equality impact assessments of our key service functions and policies.

We have established an external equality stakeholder scrutiny group (ERIC) composed of representatives from various voluntary groups that specialises in equality issues. The group examines our equality practice and comments on its delivery – in keeping with the responsibilities under race equality and disability equality legislation.

We have an extensive community consultation programme that includes:

- *Training in consultation*
- *A consultation bulletin*
- *Best value and residents' surveys*
- *The Leicester Somali Forum*

We promote a representative workforce. Corporately, managing diversity is a core element of our

managers' competency framework and we support staff with English as a second language. We have a programme of surgeries and workshops to encourage BME groups into teaching, to highlight work experience opportunities and to support young women into construction. Professional development places are guaranteed to BME staff in social care positions to support their career progression.

C. Healthier communities

Public Health

The multi-agency Healthy Leicester campaign offers health promotion information to people to show what they can do to improve their health and what support they can get. A broader aim is to embed public health concerns into the broader work of the city. In 2006/7 Healthy Leicester backed several key campaigns (smoke-free homes, awareness-raising for employers, New Year fitness) and launched a website that attracted several thousand hits.

Leicester's health inequalities are also addressed in the LAA, which incorporates the floor target action plan. This provides short-term actions that will deliver long-term improvements in health and life expectancy for the people of the city most disadvantaged by health inequalities. The Director of Public Health's 2005 annual review was based upon the themes of the Choosing Health white paper and prioritised smoking, diet/obesity/exercise and alcohol amongst other lifestyle issues.

Leicester's Public Health Partnership Executive Group contains representation from the council, the Leicester City Primary Care Trust (LCPCT) and the third sector. A performance management sub-group is responsible for coordinating the monitoring of the NRF/floor target action plan and the outcomes of the broader LAA. It is too early to say whether the community's health is improving as a result.

Many strategies and initiatives exist that work to improve access to services and support that promote healthy lifestyles and increased wellbeing for all sectors of the community in Leicester, including a Free 60+ initiative to all sports services, Fit and Active Buddies/Fit and Active Families (FAB/FAF) – offering individualised support to promote physical activity and positive lifestyle change and our older persons strategy work, which aims to create a joined-up strategy for the promotion of good health, independence and wellbeing across sectors.

Neighbourhood management is focussed on the five most deprived areas of the city and includes actions to deliver healthier communities. Data on the health of the communities is being collated to inform specific neighbourhood plans. The aim is to close the health inequality gap between these neighbourhoods and the rest of Leicester.

Smoking

We worked with LCPCT to implement the 2007 public smoking ban. Our approach is facilitative,

promoting the benefits of stopping smoking and associated services.

In January 2007, we introduced a revised smoking policy covering all council sites and in March 2007 the policy was awarded the gold level National Clean Air Award.

Diet/obesity/exercise

Our promotion of healthy lifestyles is a strength in school inspection reports. Of 110 schools, 100 are registered on the healthier schools programme and 56 have 'Healthy School' status. There is increased participation in school sports and more pupils eat fresh fruit.

Each year [since when/over what period?] our sports and leisure centres have shown a 1% increase in participation. Working with colleagues from across the council, our sports services division has removed barriers to participation, particularly for those hard-to-reach groups, by reducing cost, providing high-quality childcare and ensuring good transport links. The total number of sports visits in 2006/7 was 2,196,333 – 70,000 above target. Of this total 13% were older people (2005/6 = 8%).

We organize a diverse range of activities on parks, playing fields and open spaces throughout Leicester. There are 65 football pitches and 17 cricket wickets for both junior and senior play at 20 different venues.

Housing and decent homes

We have declared three home improvement areas (HIAs) and have a dedicated decent homes group. Ill, frail and vulnerable people are supported in bringing their homes up

to the decent standards. We expect to reach our stretch target of 940 homes of vulnerable people made decent by March 2008. Information on decent homes and the homes of the vulnerable is systematically recorded and internal floating support services provide housing-related support to vulnerable people across all tenures.

Our housing capital programme for the next four years will target the 8,168 non-decent council properties at the end of 2006. By the end of our 2007/08 windows & doors programme, no property should fail the decency standard because of these elements.

Our home energy team monitors energy efficiency and fuel poverty in households across the city. Improvements in the private sector during 2006/07 included a range of energy efficiency measures to reduce cost and improve warmth including helping 52 households (suffering from ill health) assisted under the Health through Warmth initiative.

Improvements in council dwellings in 2006/07 included the replacement of 1,200 boilers, double glazed windows with low emissivity glass to 1,700 homes and heat recovery ventilation fans fitted to 1,303 homes.

Encouraging people to apply for Housing Benefits has increased the HB caseload from 35,358 in Feb 2005 to 36,568 in February 2007 – a 3.4% increase.

There is a 10.9% increase in numbers of household receiving Council Tax Benefit due to residents being vulnerable or having special needs.

Promoting health for homeless people

A partnership approach at our Dawn Centre addresses the holistic needs of the street homeless, including access to accommodation, health education and employment. The aim is to increase the life expectancy of the city's street homeless population. All hostel residents have a support plan that addresses the holistic needs of homeless people, access to GP, treatment, mental health, welfare benefits advice, support to find permanent accommodation, training education, budgeting, etc. Workshops advise on how to stop smoking, safe sex and harm reduction techniques in substance use. A drug outreach worker supports the street homeless.

Key facts:

2136 meals a year served in hostels, with emphasis on healthy diets

20% of hostel population (1,721 admissions in 2006/7) took part in sports/recreational activities

30% of hostel population attended activity on access to employment, training, educational, personal and social development

Overall, the street homeless population of the city has fallen from 25 to 6 in 2006/7, and 56% of the hostel population have found alternative accommodation. Life expectancy of the street homeless population has risen from 37 to 45 in the same period.

Our children's centres are working to reduce the percentage of children in reception year who are obese

and we weigh and measure all reception and year 6 children.

Healthier children and young people

Our children's plan acknowledges the need to integrate children's services if we are to prioritise the promotion of mental and physical health and wellbeing for all children.

We have strong local partnerships aimed at promoting health services for children and young people, including the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), a teenage pregnancy strategy, EYDCP, schools partnerships, Children's and Adults Mental Health Services (CAMHS) JSG, LSCB, Bridges and a group dealing with the health of children in care. The LIST project in New Parks is pioneering a model of locality-based multi-agency working, with an early intervention approach.

Leicester's eleven Surestart children centres are based in areas of high deprivation within 'pram pushing' distance catchment areas. They are currently reaching 10,184 children aged 0-5 years and their parents. They work with the LCPCT and local hospitals to help ensure health visitors, midwives and school nurses have a joined up approach. Our family centres have been integrated into the children centre networks also to promote a joined up approach.

The Teenage Pregnancy & Partnership Board is responsible for ensuring that all local areas prioritise hotspot areas and vulnerable groups. Leicester's under-18 conception rate fell 16% between 1998 and 2005 – a higher decline than the national average.

However, according to the latest data for 2005, the under-18 conception rate has increased from the previous year. The current rate is 54.3 per 1000 and the forward trajectory indicates that the 2010 target of a reduction to a rate of 29.1 may not be achieved. So we have now developed indicators around reducing rates of teenage conception, with particular emphasis on the most deprived wards and teenage conception hotspots.

A reintegration team provides support and assistance to all statutory school-age pregnant young women and young parents, a specialist multi-agency team provides support and advice for young parents and pregnant teenagers aged 19 and under whilst another project aims to improve the learning provision available to pregnant young women and young parents.

The teenage pregnancy housing advisory group has improved co-ordination and communication between local services, a couples pilot at the GAP project is extremely successful and plans are being explored to extend this service for young families. The STAR (Supporting Tenants and Residents) team provides planned housing related support to young parents and families.

Take up of direct payments to families with disabled children is increasing. The parents of 21 children are now receiving direct payments to purchase flexible care.

We have a multi-agency substance misuse training programme. Our

children's & young people department works closely with DAAT and DART networks and DAAT funds a substance misuse project officer post within the council who offers support and training to staff.

Mental Health

A new model for adult mental health day services based on principles of social inclusion and recovery is currently being implemented. It addresses issues of access for certain under-represented groups and measures to increase take-up of direct payments amongst people with mental health difficulties. Our local mental health charter is based on this model.

The voluntary project **LAMP** now hosts information developed by our Mental Health Promotion Group (MHPG) on its website (www.lampdirect.org.uk).

Information about common mental health problems is available through our 'Books on Prescription' scheme and a commissioner's checklist for mental health promotion offers information on service provision and appropriate signposting.

Free training on mental health is delivered across agencies to raise awareness and challenge stigma. This has included free training on suicide prevention.

The MHPG report on wellbeing contains recommendations for LSP action and links with LAA leads to look at implications for community strategies.

There is increased service user involvement in service planning, delivery, audit and training,

including a user-led audit group and facilitated forums on inpatient wards.

Local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) provide universal prevention and early intervention, especially around behavioural problems. The services are well established and serve our communities well.

The council and partner local authorities fund therapy posts for children and young people with more complex mental ill health needs in the CAMHS young peoples team for looked-after children and adopted children and young people. The CAMH Service for children and young people with learning disabilities and additional mental health problems scores highly compared to other areas in the country^{xxxiv}. The CAMHS **JSG** has introduced a local annual evaluation framework for all CAMH services and related services.

D. Older People

By bringing together adult and housing services within a single service department we have been able to align housing and older people issues much more effectively. Our Older People (OP) champion is the cabinet lead for adults and older people.

The previous OP champion (Cllr Gill) drove forward city wide OP Roadshows in March. These engaged a wide range of OP across the City, supported by questionnaires. These have resulted in a consultation summary being produced for use by all agencies to

aid planning of services. The council has directly responded to the issues raised by moving forward with a programme of assistive technology during 2007, which older people and their carers indicated would be positive in helping them to manage their needs at home.

The current OP champion (Cllr Corrall) has promoted a vision for Extra Care housing within the Council, leading to Cabinet support to develop such a vision being given in Sept 07. This will directly enhance the lives of many OP who would otherwise be facing residential care into the future. Extra care promotes their independence by enabling the retention of a home (rented or purchased), enabling couples to reside together who may otherwise have been separated and supporting needs on an individual basis.

A long-standing multi-agency partnership group acts as our strategic implementation board and stakeholder forum. It engages the full range of statutory, health and third sector representatives, including older people and carers. There are strong links between strategic and executive management boards, with older people active within the strategic board.

Along with our partners, we completed a comprehensive needs analysis for Leicester's older people strategy in 2005 that has informed our strategic direction in this area. The analysis was updated recently as part of our bid to become a DoH pilot for a whole systems demonstrator site.

Our service-led consultations – for example, for our older people's housing strategy and our home care users survey – have enabled us to improve services and our older people strategic partnership arrangements were recently revised to strengthen engagement and implementation.

This year Leicester became one of only 13 local authorities nationally to be selected as a pilot for individual budgets, which will offer people needing care and support more choice and control over the social care services they need.

Our older people strategy reflects dimensions of independence, much of which is incorporated into specific actions within the 'promoting independence' strand. We are supporting people to live independently by, for example:

- *Increasing direct payment numbers and setting up an individual budget pilot website.*
- *Joint development of our older people's housing strategy*
- *Working closely with Supporting People on ExtraCare and assistive technology*
- *Developing new contracts for ExtraCare to deliver personal and housing related services within a single contract.*
- *Encouraging Supporting People to influence the Housing Corporation regarding older people priorities.*

A recent visit by the national support team for health inequalities has recognised our work on improving homes – especially regarding health

and warmth – as excellent and innovative.

Simple assistive technology is in place with a project underway to deliver to national performance standards on telecare. Work is in partnership with health and others and has delivered a number of telehealth units as part of the project. We have pooled budget arrangement to deliver equipment via single integrated equipment store with the Red Cross.

Leicester is growing fastest regionally for benefits uptake levels. We have LPSA stretch targets in place on benefit take up and our LINKAGE forum addresses benefit and finance issues. We are developing a link to community safety that has featured in roadshows and our pilot 101 service. A community legal advice centre consolidates advice services in city.

Hospital-to-home delays attributable to social care since implementation of reimbursements has hugely decreased and is now negligible. Strong cross-agency partnership is through a transfer of care group which monitors and takes action – resulting in the lowest level of delays in quarter 4 of 06/07 (all reasons including health) since 2004/5; this reflects an overall downward trend.

Agencies are sharing data to identify claimants and multi-agency validation processes to maximise resources.

Meaningful Engagement

We believe our engagement of older people is a success story. Examples include our forum for older

people, an 'Our Health' conference and recent older people's roadshows.

Work is currently underway to bring together consultation processes with health colleagues and we are developing an older people-led consultation group with Help the Aged as our partners. There is strong evidence that older people feel their views are taken into account^{xxxv}.

Older people and carers participate on an equal basis with officers on contract/tender panels for relevant services such as home care and meals services. Other hard-to-reach groups (for example, older people's mental health carers and care home residents) are positively involved in service planning.

We have created opportunities for young people in work experience/young apprentice schemes and for them to explore and study older people services at school.

Range of services

A good range of services – often co-located and integrated – was noted in our joint older people's inspection in January 2005. These included intermediate care, specialist services and hospital social work.

We also have a range of shared initiatives – for example, social worker input to the community matron team to manage long term conditions, a joint out-of-hours response service being developed with health and housing, implementation of e-SAP and aligned intermediate care services.

We are developing links with GP clusters through practice-based commissioning.

There is strong use of local providers across the third sector to meet the wellbeing needs and to reflect diversity of older people – for example voluntary sector contracts for statutory services.

We offer a wide range of activity in community centres, linked to adult learning and there is a free swimming initiative

E. Children & Young People

Overall, the **assessment of the C&YP plan** demonstrates that the well-being of many children and young people in Leicester is good and getting better. There are some real strengths in the city's provision for children, young people and families which are contributing to this.

Accomplishments include:

- *Fast-developing and robust arrangements for joint working between the council and key partners from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors*
- *Joint investment in improving service infrastructure, delivery and impact*
- *A shared vision of integrated services and cross-agency support for initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people as well as addressing their concerns*
- *A shared commitment to equality and community cohesion*
- *Excellent safeguarding practice and procedures*

- *Developing the involvement of children and young people in influencing service provision*
- *Improvements in provision for looked-after children, children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and children from BME communities*
- *Encouraging trends in key outcomes, including breastfeeding, educational attainment and the percentage of young people who are NEET*

The capacity for improvement in Leicester is good. Services have a shared ambition to maintain existing high standards of practice, and also to transform services to increase impact and make better use of all available resources.

To ensure that the well-being of Leicester's children and young people improves further, and that unacceptable gaps in outcomes are narrowed, services are being developed in line with clear principles and priorities:

- *Preventing poor health, harm, neglect, abuse, underachievement at school and in later life and involvement in criminal activity*
- *Personalisation of provision and practice*
- *Participation of children and young people – and their families – in decision-making and positive activities.*

We have adopted a forward-looking leadership style, key features of which include:

- *More pooling of resources and needs-based, joint commissioning of services*
- *Input from children and young people*
- *Closer involvement of schools in strategic planning*
- *Development of an integrated workforce with common, core skills*
- *Use of ICT to support more efficient identification, recording and communication of the needs of individual children, young people and their families.*

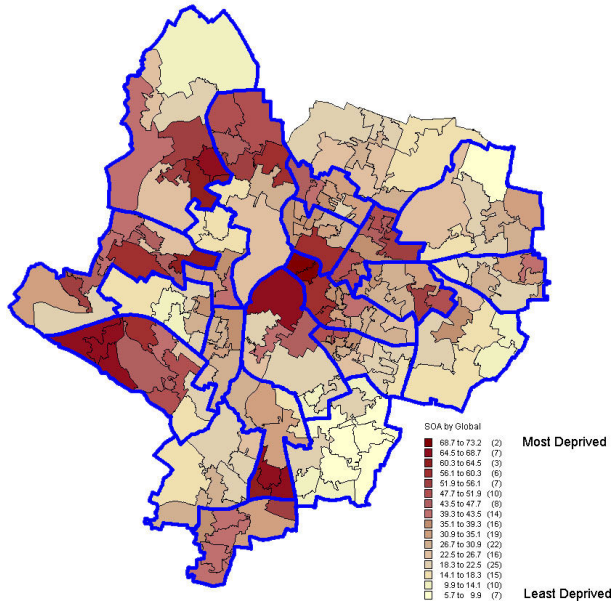
Finally, service management and development is promoting and reinforcing some core values across the workforce, reflecting the city's commitment to the UN convention on the rights of the child:

- *Listening to and respecting children and young people and the differences between them*
 - *Working together in the best interests of the children and young people in our care*
 - *Being reflective practitioners, sharing knowledge to drive improvements in outcomes*
-

Conclusion

To include that the Council has come a long way in a relatively short time in terms of building capacity, service improvement etc. A couple of examples of key highlights There is still a lot to do, but we are well placed to deliver now in terms of systems, processes and partnership working.

Leicester City: Indices of Deprivation 2004 by Lower Super Output Area



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- i Three Cities....
 - ii Leicester's Local Area Agreement 2006-09
 - iii XXXX Darra Singh
 - iv Quarterly Monitoring Report....
 - v Hindu, Muslim.....etc
 - vi Community cohesion report 2006
 - vii Community cohesion report 2006
 - viii Benefits includes: Jobseeker, Incapacity, Lone Parent, & Other
 - ix Refer to doc....
 - x The Strategy for Leicester - 2006
 - xi List awards.....
 - xii Peer review report - 2006
 - xiii Definition needed
 - xiv See chart of MORI results - 2005
 - xv Your space - The Children's Society, The Diocese of Leicester and Leicester City Council - April 2007
 - xvi Diversity of Leicester, Feb 2006
 - xvii Neighbourhood management plans
 - xviii GOEM report on Leicester's LAA
 - xix The Strategy for Leicester - 2006
 - xx Report to CDB February 2007
 - xxi Source: CIPFA Statistics 2006/07, 2007/08.
 - xxii Revenues and benefits
 - xxiii Annual workforce profile
 - xxiv Report of the District Audit XXXX
 - xxv The Contract Procedure Rules
 - xxvi Leicester's voluntary sector compact
 - xxvii Annual outturn report
 - xxviii Audit Commission's annual letter
 - xxix Based on ONS data from NOMIS, Claimant counts in top 5% most deprived wards in Leicester, May 2005 to March 2007
 - xxx New Growth point - Government Housing Initiative

 - xxxii Leicester Environment Partnership green awards 2007
 - xxxiii ENCAMS – Environmental CAMpaignS, the national environmental charity www.encams.org
 - xxxiv Source?
 - xxxv Source?