

POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

7<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2005



Report of the Chief Executive

**REPORT OF THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION – ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION BILL**

**purpose of the report**

1. Members may recall, at their last meeting they requested information relating to Electoral Registration and Elections, as regards turnout and procedures to invite discussions on improvements. The question of evaluating non registration is impossible to make as no one knows the actual extent of the problem. This request for information, however, is somewhat overshadowed by the impending introduction of the Electoral Administration Bill and the huge changes being suggested.

**background**

2. The Electoral Administration Bill was introduced to Parliament on 11<sup>th</sup> October and received its second reading on 25<sup>th</sup> October. It is expected to go to Committee in the next few weeks. The full text of the Electoral Administration Bill (and in due course, the Bill's explanatory notes) can be downloaded from the following Parliament web site :

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmbills/050/2006050.htm>.

**report**

3. The Electoral Commission welcomed the introduction of the Electoral Administration Bill and are delighted that the Bill will take forward many of the recommendations they have made for modernising and improving the security and convenience of the electoral system.

4. However, they are extremely concerned that the Bill does not make provision for individual registration to replace the current household registration system. The Commission had made a series of recommendations on the electoral registration system and are disappointed and concerned that they have not been included in the Bill. They are committed to continuing to work with the Government and other political parties during the passage of the Bill to ensure that the legislation improves the security, accessibility and reliability of the electoral system.
5. The Bill will be accompanied by a package of secondary legislation, focused on security, which they expect will be announced in due course. The Government has announced that they expect this secondary legislation to be in force for the May 2006 local elections in England.
6. The Electoral Administration Bill contains a wide range of changes to election law, including measures on electoral registration, postal voting and voting fraud. It also lowers the age of candidature for political office from 21 to 18. It is expected that this legislation will become law before the local elections in May 2006. It will generally apply in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, with some variation in Northern Ireland, and with some aspects of election law being devolved matters in Scotland (particularly in relation to local elections).

#### **electoral registration and participation**

7. The Bill (which could, of course, be amended before it becomes law) includes the following proposals:
  - Introduces a framework for the Co-ordinated Online Record of Electors (CORE) which will allow national access to locally based electronic registers.
  - Enables people to register to vote after an election has been called, until eleven days before polling day.
  - Establishes a system of anonymous registration.
  - Establishes a new duty for Electoral Registration Officers to take necessary steps to ensure a comprehensive register.
  - Gives Returning Officers a new power to promote elections and providing a ring-fenced fund for publicity for elections.
  - Provides for pre-election information to be sent to all electors in the lead-up to polling day, including details about how to vote.
  - Allows parents or carers to take children into the polling station.
  - Enables election administrators to provide information about elections in a variety of languages.
  - Provides a framework to review disabled access to polling stations.

#### **postal voting and election fraud**

8. Changes which relate to concerns about election fraud, in particular which concern postal voting, include:

- Introduces a declaration of identity for postal voters, replacing the witness statement.
- Creates two new offences of supplying false information or failing to supply information to the Electoral Registration Officer at any time, and revises the offence of undue influence, so it does not have to be shown that the influence led to action being taken.
- Provides for pilots of personal identifiers (signatures and dates of birth) at registration to evaluate the security benefits of this practice.
- Introduces a marked register of postal votes received, similar to the marked register of polling station voters.
- Introduces a security mark for ballot papers, and enables the use of bar codes.
- Requires voters to sign for their ballot paper at the polling station.
- Provides for a statutory secrecy warning to accompany postal and proxy voting papers.
- Allows for accredited observers at polling stations and at other parts of the process, such as the count.
- Increases the length of time available for the police to carry out investigations into electoral fraud.

### **other changes**

9. A transcript of the Second Reading debate on the Electoral Administration Bill is now available at Hansard online:

[http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmhansrd/cm051025/debtext/51025-11.htm#51025-11\\_head1](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmhansrd/cm051025/debtext/51025-11.htm#51025-11_head1)

10. The debate was wide-ranging, with the subject of individual registration high on the agenda . Other key issues included:

- How to ensure that service men and women are registered to vote;
- How to ensure security for postal ballots;
- Whether lowering the threshold for losing deposits at elections from 5% to 2% of the vote would encourage extremist parties; and
- Whether the voting age should be lowered from 18 to 16 to reflect the other responsibilities that people take on at the age of 16.

11. There was also much debate on the subject of turnout and participation at elections, and a general acknowledgement that MPs and Parliament were key to engaging people in the parliamentary process.

12. The first Committee debate took place on the floor of the House on Tuesday 8 November, enabling any interested MP to participate, and is most likely to cover Part 2 (Registration) and Part 3 (Anti-fraud measures).

13. Harriet Harman also announced further detail on the security measures to be taken forward via secondary legislation in time for May 2006 elections. This package of secondary legislation will be separate to the Electoral Administration Bill but along with the Bill will form part of a coherent and co-ordinated response to improve

security concerns around postal voting. A full announcement on the secondary legislation will be made in due course.

14. For members' information set out below are the initiatives attempted over the last five years ago to improve Electoral Registration and subsequent turnout at Elections:-

1	Development of Web site	2000	Ongoing
2	Simplified Form A	May 2000	Ongoing
3	Items in Council magazine re registration	Oct 2000	Ongoing
4	Combined notice/claim form to 6 <sup>th</sup> forms and colleges-'Y Vote'	Oct 2000	Failure
5	Items in Council magazine re postal voting	Dec 2000	Ongoing
6	Mailshot to all attainers	Feb 2001	On Hold
7	Mailshot to all farms re automatic postal votes	Feb 2001	One off
8	Mock election for school visits	2001	One off
9	Registration info in Council Magazine	2001	Ongoing
10	Visit to local school re mock election result	Oct 2001	Oct 2001
11	Letters to houses with changes ie Searches submitted and housing list changes	2001	Ongoing
12	Inclusion of postal vote form with rolling registration form	Sep 2001	Ongoing

## POSSIBILITIES

1	Letters to all O.P. homes re postal	Monthly / Annually
2	Telephone registration	Making Enquiries
3	Different Posters in Council buildings post offices & libraries	Ongoing
4	Registration on-line	Under Consideration

## **RECOMMENDED**

1. The report be received and noted and a further report to be submitted once the Electoral Administration Bill is passed.

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### **Officer responsible for the report**

Iain Phillips  
Electoral Registration Officer

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### **Author of the report**

Terry Richardson  
Senior Administrative Officer  
Ext 320

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**POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**7<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2005**

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Report of the Chief Executive  
**HOWDEN BY-ELECTION – 27<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2005**

**purpose of the report**

1. To inform members of the following result of the Howden By-Election.

**result**

<b>Bailey John</b>	<b>Liberal Democrat</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>Smith Jay Matthew</b>	<b>The Labour Party Candidate</b>	<b>154</b>

**RECOMMENDED**

The report be received.

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**Officer responsible for the report**

Iain Phillips  
Chief Executive

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**Author of the report**

Terry Richardson  
Senior Admin Officer  
Ext 320

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**POLICY & STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**7<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2005**



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Report of the Chief Executive  
**PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (BVPI'S) 2005/06**

**purpose of the report**

1. To present to Members the 6 month performance information for the Best Value and Local Performance Indicators 2005/06. These figures have been projected for the full year where possible.

**background – best value performance indicators**

2. The performance information is presented in Annex A and shows the current figures for 2005/06 and previous performance of the Council's BVPIs over the last five years. Annex B, highlights that performance indicators for 2005/06 show 50% have improved from the previous year, 22.2% have declined in performance, 20.4% remain unchanged and 7.4% are at an optimum performance level. An analysis of performance, including an explanation of indicators with no information or where there is a large change in performance, can be found at Annex C.

**indicator performance**

3. This suggests that BVPI's continue to show a decline in performance. A summary of departmental performance can be found Annex D.

**local performance indicators 2004/05**

4. A list of local indicators, which are reported in the Best Value Performance Plan, has been provided in Annex E. Fourteen indicators have improved and eleven indicators have declined in performance, information was not available for two indicators.

**recommendation**

- i) That members consider the performance information presented in this report.

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**Officer responsible for the report**

Iain Phillips  
Chief Executive

**Author of the report**













John Docherty  
Head of Management Support  
Ext 306

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Key	Colour
Best Quartile	
Above Average	
Average	
Below Average	
Worst Quartile	





## 6 MONTH PERFORMANCE UPDATE REPORT



PI No.	CENTRAL RESOURCES	Performance					6 month update	Improved	Target	National Average	Top Quartile
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06		2005/06		
BV 2a	The level of the Equality's standard for local government to which the authority conforms	-	1	0	0	1	1		1	0.8	
BV 2b	The duty to promote race equality checklist score	-	-	-	0	0	41		-	41	55.00
BV 8	The percentages of invoices which were paid by the authority within 30 days of such invoices being received by the authority	94.7	97.6	94.7	96.3	96.9	97.2		100	93.08	96.74
BV 9	Percentage Council Tax collected	96.5	97	97.7	98.2	98.8	98.8		98	97.7	98.50
BV 10	Percentage of NNDR received	98.4	98.5	97.6	98.8	99.18	99.2		98.9	98.51	99.12
BV 11a	The percentage of top 5% of earners that are women	21.88	5.88	14.28	16.66	14.28	28		12	21.24	26.69
BV 11b	The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities	-	-	3.57	3.7	0	0		4	1.48	2.20
BV 11c	Top 5% of earners who have a disability						0			new indicator	
BV 12	The number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence	13.65	13.32	13.25	11.06	10	3.6		10	10.42	8.93
BV 14	Percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill health retirements) as a percentage of the total workforce	2.09	1.8	0.37	1.7	1.06	0.18		1	0.75	0.14
BV 15	Percentage of employees retiring on grounds of ill health as a percentage of the total workforce	1.33	0.54	0.93	0.94	0	0.35		0.6	0.42	0.00
BV 16a	Percentage of authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition	1.3	2.27	2.61	3.11	2.84	2.84		2.4	3.41	4.11
BV 16b	Percentage of economically active disabled people in the area	-	30	20.8	20.8	20.8	20.8		-	12.91	15.09



PI No.	CENTRAL RESOURCES	Performance					6 month update	Improved	Target	National Average	Top Quartile
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06		2005/06	2003/04	2003/04
BV 17a	Percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities	0.8	0.9	0.84	1.13	0.35	0.35		1	1.9	2.40
BV 17b	Percentage of economically active minority ethnic community population	-	1.3	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87		-	2.8	3.40
BV 76a	Housing Benefit Security: No. of claimants visited, per 1,000 caseload			-	180.5	234	210		204	202.73	304.00
BV 76b	Housing Benefit Security: No. of fraud investigators employed, per 1,000 caseload			-	0.18	0.21	0.24		0.2	0.39	0.48
BV 76c	Housing Benefit Security: No. of fraud investigations, per 1,000 caseload			-	21.75	20.13	25		28	49.61	61.70
BV 76d	Housing Benefit Security: No. of prosecutions and sanctions, per 1,000 caseload			-	0	0.5	3		0.8	4.39	5.83
BV 78a	Speed of processing: (a) Average time for processing new claims	26.8	101	78.23	46.4	32.49	19.19		40	40.4	31.00
BV 78b	Speed of processing: (b) Average time for processing notifications of changes of circumstances	20.1	19.5	16.45	10.68	8.73	7.47		10	11.4	7.20
BV 79a	Percentage of cases for which the calculation of the amount of benefit due was correct	88.4	97	98	99	99	98.8		98	97.55	99.00
BV 79b(i)	Percentage amount of Housing Benefit (HB) overpayments recovered during the year deemed recoverable overpayments						107.87			new indicator	
BV 79b(ii)	HB overpayments recovered as a % of the total overpayment debt outstanding including any identified during the period	82	55.9	56.17	46.4(*)	59.74	60		60	49.11	55.60
BV 79b(iii)	HB overpayments written off during the year						6.22			new indicator	
BV 157	Number of types of interactions that are enabled for electronic delivery as a percentage of the types of interactions that are legally permissible for electronic delivery	-	33	53	42	89.32	100		71	60.94	72.00
BV 179	The percentage of standard searches carried out in 10 working days	83	83	72	87	97	97.95		93	93.1	100.00




\* Figure unavailable due to system errors






PI No.	CENTRAL RESOURCES	Performance					6 month update	Improved	Target	National Average	Top Quartile
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06		2005/06	2003/04	2003/04
BV 226a	Total amount spent by the Local Authority on advice and guidance services provided by external organisations						-			new indicator	
BV 226b	% of money spend on advice and guidance which was given to organisations holding the CLS Quality Mark at 'General Level' and above						-			new indicator	
BV 226c	Total amount spent on advice and guidance in the areas of housing, welfare benefits and consumer matters						-			new indicator	




PI No.	COMMUNITY SERVICES	Performance					6 month update	Improved since last year	Target	National Average	Top Quartile
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06		2005/06	2003/04	2003/04
BV 82a	Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been recycled	3.07	4.45	5.95	12.64	11.9	12.12		14	14.22	16.86
BV 82b	Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been composted	0	0	0	0	0	5.31		2	3.59	5.14
BV 84a	Number of kilograms of household waste collected per head	450.32	421.28	420.26	397.01	408.79	423.12		396	402.3	371.70
BV 84b	% change from the previous financial year in number of kgs of household waste collected per head						3.51			new indicator	
BV 86	Cost of waste collection per household	27.78	28.76	29.97	33.8	33.7	55.46		35	39.18	
BV 89	Percentage of people satisfied with cleanliness standards	65	-	-	60.3	-	n/a		-	triennial survey	
BV 90a	Percentage of people expressing satisfaction with household waste collection	52	-	-	90.1	-	n/a		-	triennial survey	
BV 90b	Percentage of people expressing satisfaction with waste recycling	89	-	-	75.3	-	n/a		-	triennial survey	
BV 91a	Percentage of residents in the authority's area which are served by a kerbside collection of recyclables	54	87.1	100	100	100	100		100	88.21	100.00








PI No.	COMMUNITY SERVICES	Performance					6 month update	Improved since last year	Target	National Average	Top Quartile
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06		2005/06	2003/04	2003/04
BV 91b	Percentage of residents in the authority's area served by kerbside collection of at least two recyclables						100			new indicator	
BV 166	Score against a checklist of enforcement best practice for environmental health/trading standards	-	37.1	63.33	83.33	93.33	93.33		100	76.52	90.00
BV 199a	The proportion of relevant land and highways having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level (%)	-	-	-	13	12	17		12	change in definition	12.00
BV 199b	The proportion of relevant land and highways from which unacceptable levels of graffiti are visible (%)									new indicator	
BV 199c	The proportion of relevant land and highways from which unacceptable levels of fly-posting are visible (%)									new indicators	
BV 199d	The year-on-year reduction in total number of incidents and increase in total number of enforcement actions taken to deal with fly-tipping									new indicator	
BV 217	Percentage of pollution control improvements to existing installations completed on time						11			new indicator	






PI No.	HOUSING	Performance					6 month update	Improved since last year	Target	National Average	Top Quartile
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06		2005/06	2003/04	2003/04
BV 63	Energy Efficiency - the average SAP rating of local authority owned dwellings	-	56	58	60.1	62.5	62.5		60	60	63
BV 66a	Local authority rent collection and arrears: proportion of rent collected	94.4	95	96.8	96.2	97.1	96.8		98.1	94.81	98.60%
BV 66b	Number of local authority tenants with more than seven weeks of rent arrears as a percentage of the total number of council tenants						3.66			new indicator	
BV 66c	Percentage of local authority tenants in arrears who have had Notices Seeking Possession served						2.53			new indicator	

PI No.	HOUSING	Performance					6 month update	Improved since last year	Target	National Average	Top Quartile
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06		2005/06	2003/04	2003/04
BV 66d	Percentage of local authority tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears						0.07			new indicator	
BV 74a	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with the overall service provided by their landlord	71	-	69	71.1	72	n/a		-	80	86%
BV 74b	Satisfaction of ethnic minority tenants (excluding white minority) with the overall service provided by their landlord						n/a			new indicator	
BV 74c	Satisfaction of non-ethnic minority local authority tenants with the overall service provided by their landlord						n/a			new indicator	
BV 75a	Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord	53	-	-	55.2	55	n/a		-	-	
BV 75b	Satisfaction of ethnic minority council housing tenants (excluding white minority) with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord						n/a			new indicator	
BV 75c	Satisfaction of non-ethnic minority council housing tenants with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord						n/a			new indicator	
BV 156	Percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people	4.8	4.8	4.2	10	30	36		20	47.77	67%
BV 164	Does the authority follow the Commission for Racial Equality's code of practice in rented housing?	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes		Yes	32	
BV 183a	The average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation of households which include dependent children or a pregnant woman and which are unintentionally homeless and in priority need			0	0	0	0		0	5.86	1.18

PI No.	HOUSING	Performance					6 month update 2005/06	Improved since last year	Target 2005/06	National Average 2003/04	Top Quartile 2003/04
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05					
BV 183b	The average length of stay in hostel accommodation of households which include dependent children or a pregnant woman and which are unintentionally homeless and in priority need			0	0	0	1		0	13.83	0
BV 184a	The proportion of LA homes which were non-decent at the beginning of the year		-	42	41.9	41.5	45		31	31	15%
BV 184b	The percentage change in proportion of non-decent LA homes in the year		-	21.4	0.23	6.4	6.4		26	9.5	26.60
BV 202	The number of people sleeping rough on a single night within the area of the local authority					-	0	2		-	
BV 203	The % change in the average number of families, which include dependent children or a pregnant woman, placed in temporary accommodation under the homelessness legislation compared with the average from the previous year.					-	0	-46.81		-	
BV 211a	The proportion of planned repairs and maintenance expenditure compared to responsive maintenance expenditure on HRA dwellings							54		new indicator	
BV 211b	Proportion of expenditure on emergency and urgent repairs compared to non-urgent repairs expenditure on HRA dwellings							4		new indicator	
BV 212	Average time taken to re-let local authority dwellings							39		new indicator	

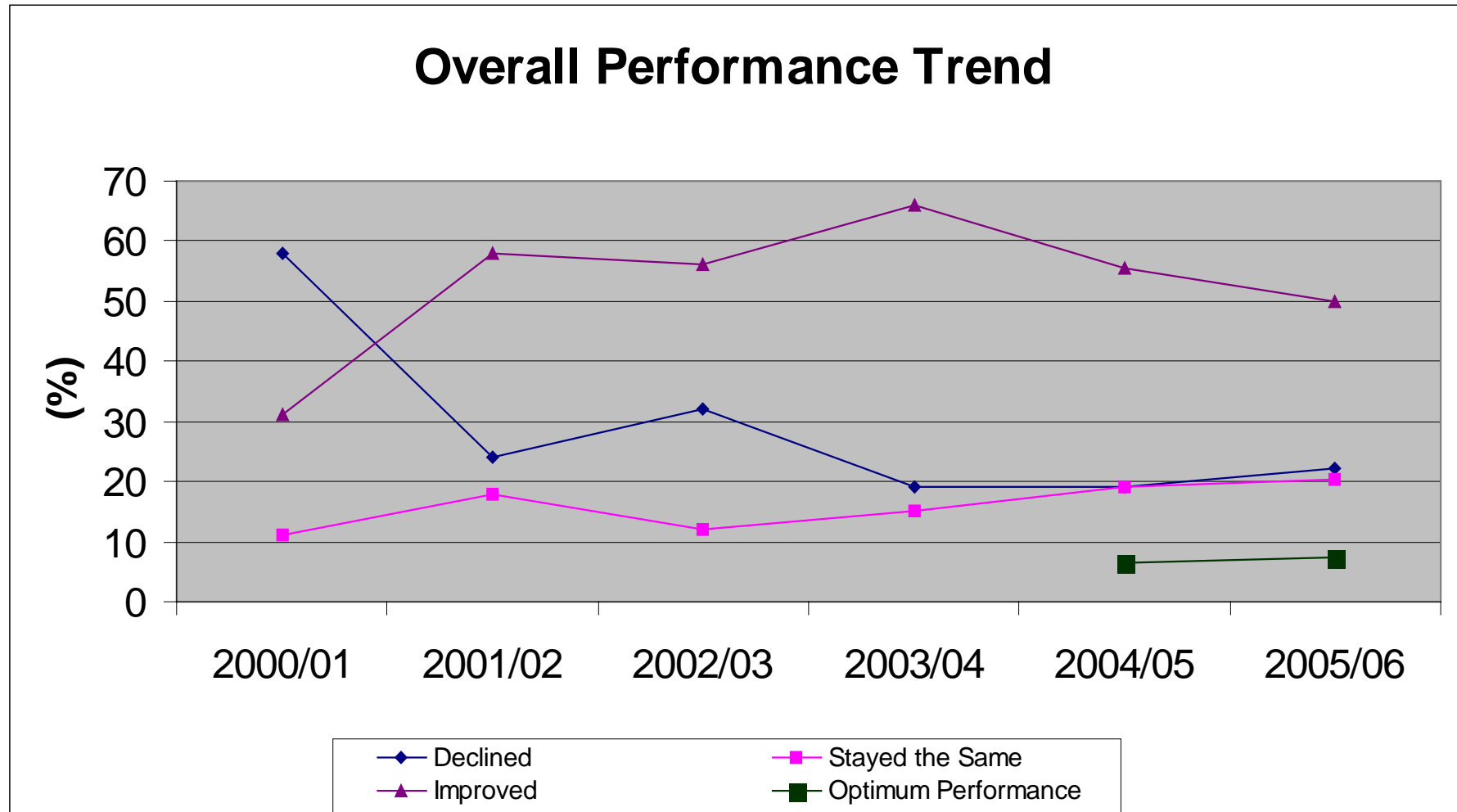
PI No.	REGENERATION	Performance					6 month update 2005/06	Improved since last year	Target 2005/06	National Average 2003/04	Top Quartile 2003/04
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05					
BV 64	Number of private sector dwellings that are returned into occupation or demolished during 2005/06 as a direct result of action by the local authority	4	10.3	0.4 (previously reported as 2)	24	56	28		5		
BV 106	Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land.	60	46	56	41.27	48.5	50		60	64.49	86.00
BV 109a	Percentage of major applications determined within 8 weeks			60	62.9	64.71	60		60	51.79	63.58

PI No.	REGENERATION	Performance					6 month update	Improved since last year	Target	National Average	Top Quartile
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06		2005/06	2003/04	2003/04
BV 109b	Percentage of minor applications determined within 8 weeks	-	-	47	78.3	56.65	67		70	61.11	71.00
BV 109c	Percentage of other applications determined within 8 weeks	-	-	74.5	90	72.74	92		80	78.77	86.00
BV 111	Percentage of applicants and those commenting on planning applications satisfied with the service received.	85	-	84	89.5	no survey	n/a		85		
BV 188	The number of decisions delegated to officers as a percentage of all decisions	-	-	82.5	91	91	93		90	85.82	91.00
BV 200a	Does the Council have a development plan (or alterations to it) that has been adopted in the last 5 years and the end date of which has not expired?	-	-	-	No	No	No		Yes	42	
BV 200b	If 200a is 'no', are there proposals on deposit for an alteration or replacement, with a published timetable for adopting those alterations or the replacement plan within three years?	-	-	-	No	Yes	Yes		Yes	40	
BV 204	% of appeals allowed against the authorities decision to refuse planning applications	-	-	-	-	43	70		-		
BV 205	Quality of service checklist	-	-	-	-	83	83		-		
BV 216a	Number of 'sites of potential concern' within the local authority area with regard to contaminated land						0			new indicator	
BV 216b	Percentage of number of sites with sufficient detailed information to decide if remediation of the land is necessary						0			new indicator	
BV 219a	Total number of conservation areas in the local authority area						20			new indicator	
BV 219b	Percentage of conservations areas in the local authority ware with an up-to-date character appraisal						1			new indicator	
BV 219c	Percentage of conservation areas with published management proposals						0			new indicator	

PI No.	MANAGEMENT SUPPORT UNIT	Performance					6 month update	Improved since last year	Target	National Average	Top Quartile
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06		2005/06	2003/04	2003/04
BV003	The percentage of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided by their authority	65	-	-	47.4	-	n/a	-	-	triennial survey	
BV004	The percentage of those making complaints satisfied with the handling of those complaints	40	-	-	32.5	-	n/a	-	-	triennial survey	
BV126	Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households (No.)	15.32	13.87	13.59	11.75	7.9	8.81		9		
BV 127a	Violent crimes per 1,00 population (No)					-	22.92				
BV127b	Robberies per 1,000 population (No.)	-	-	0.33	0.32	0.17	0.19		0.304		
BV128	Vehicle crimes per 1,000 population (No.)	13.39	10.65	15.3	12.27	12.56	13.13		8		
BV174	The number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population	0.06	0	0	3.2	0.63	1.62		0		
BV175	The percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action	-	0	0	100	100	100		100	64.28	100%
BV 225	Checklist of actions against domestic violence						81.81			new indicator	



## BVPI Performance



**Wear Valley District Council  
Best Value Performance Indicators**

**Analysis of 6 monthly performance**

Details regarding low performing indicators was reported to Management Team on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2005. This report presents performance information on all indicators.

Overall trend

Performance continues to decline. 27 indicators have improved, 12 have declined, 4 have reached an optimum performance level and 11 have stayed the same (Appendix B). There are a number of non-movers which the council has little influence over – BVPI 16b (percentage of economically active disabled people in the area), BVPI 17b (percentage of economically active minority ethnic community population) these figures will not change until the next census.

PIs showing a marked improvement:-

BVPI 11a (percentage of top 5% of earners that are women) the way this figure is calculated means that in this instance we were able to include women from the 5% threshold salary point.

BVPI 12 (sickness) the first 6 months have shown very little sickness however, it should be noted that the next 6 months are when most sickness occurs.

BVPI 78a (processing new claims) the backlog of claims which affected the figure last year has been dealt with enabling an accurate figure to be presented.

BVPI 109c (planning applications determined within 8 weeks) new staff are now in place.

PIs which are showing poor performance:-

BVPI 82a (composting) the new composting trial has proved very effective with high levels of participation. The collections have now stopped until spring 2006 so it is unlikely this figure will change.

BVPI 86 (cost of waste collection) this high figure reflects the setting up of the composting trial and the costs of some new vehicles and equipment.

BVPI 64 (private sector dwellings returned into occupation or demolished).

Our crime figures in general are showing a decline in performance however, new reporting procedures are being implemented by the police which will give more accurate data.

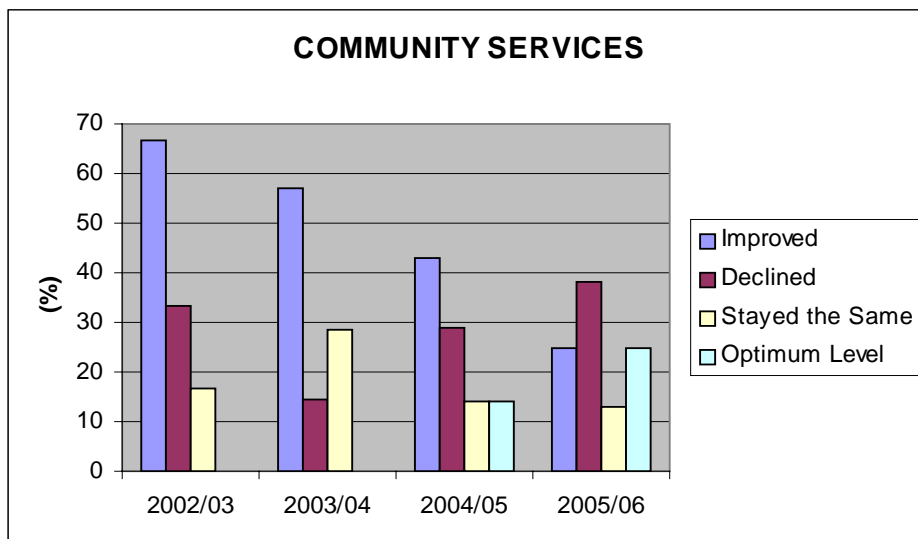
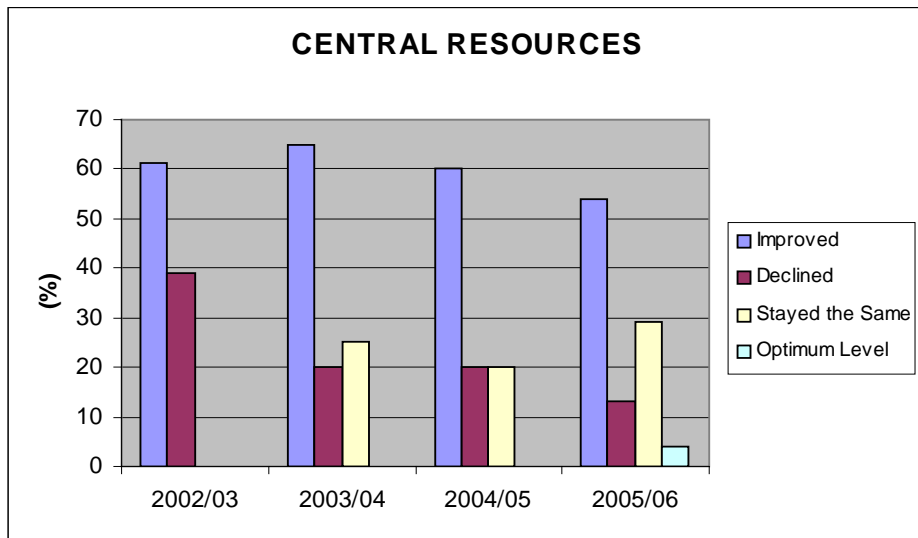
New BVPIs

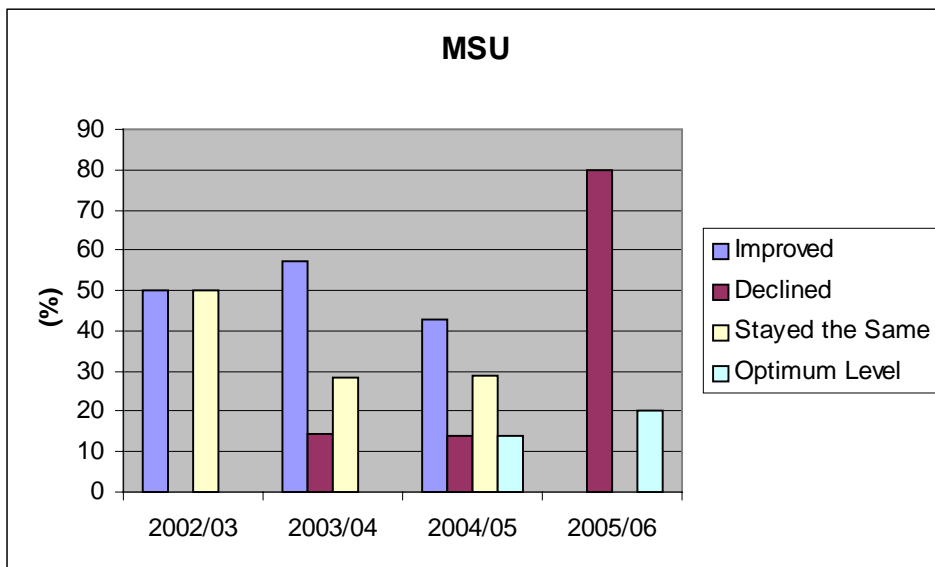
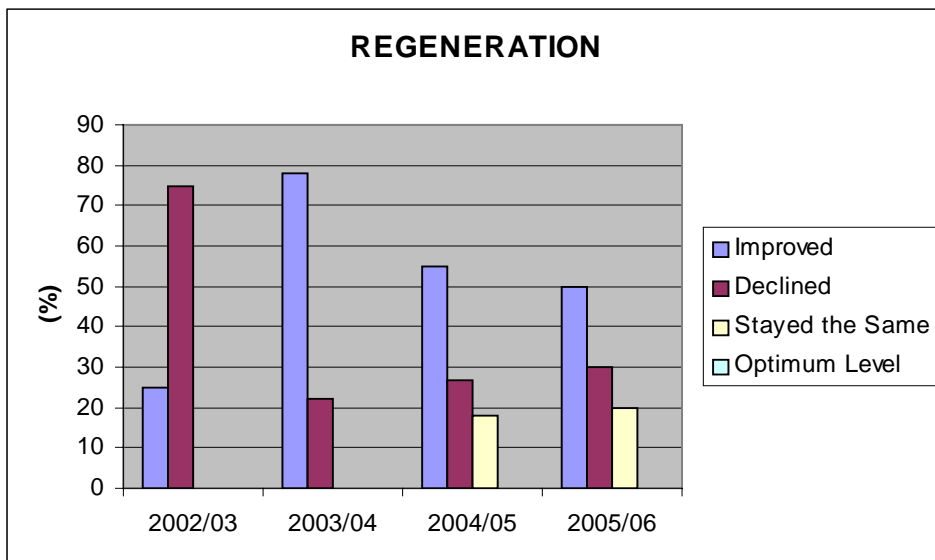
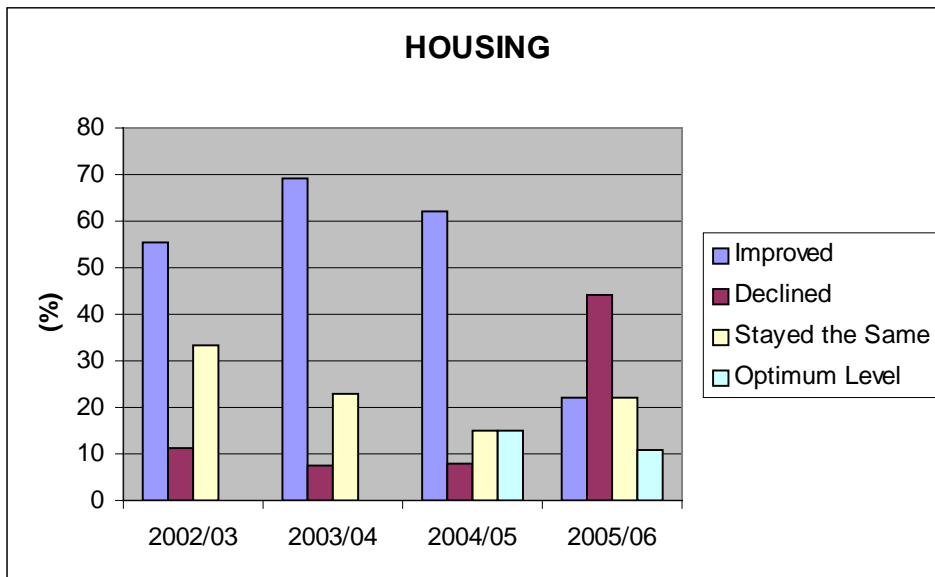
Some BVPIs in the report do not have a six-month figure. BVPI 199b,c and d are collected on a four monthly basis this regime and the areas to be inspected are dictated to us by an external source, this may lead to fluctuations in performance. We have been unable to provide any data for BVPI 226a, b and c.

BVPI 217 – For a detailed explanation on how this is calculated. Please contact Cheryl Duggan on extension 313.

### BVPI Results by Department






Department	Improved	Declined	Stayed the Same	Optimum Level
Central Resources	2b, 8, 10, 11a, 12, 14, 76b, 76c, 76d, 78a, 78b, 79b(ii), 179,	15, 76a, 79a	2a, 9, 11b, 16a, 16b, 17a, 17b	157
Community Services	82a, 82b	84a, 199a, 86	166	91a, 91b
Housing	156, 164, 183a,	66a, 183b, 184a, 202	184b, 63	
Regeneration	106, 109b, 109c, 188, 200b, 204	64, 109a	200a	205
Management Support Unit		126, 127b, 128, 174		175










LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Annex E

PI No.	HOUSING	Performance					6 month update 2005/06	Improvement	Target	Target	Target
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05			2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
exBV 66c	Local authority rent collection and arrears; rent written off as not collectable as a proportion of the authority's rent roll (%)	0.82	0.78	0.7	0.09	2	0.79		1	0.5	
exBV 69	Percentage of rent lost though local authority dwellings void in the financial year	7.1	5.9	5.5	3.53	3.32	1.75		1.9	1.7	
exBV 72	Percentage of urgent repairs completed within Government time limits	68.5	73.6	79.9	97.3	98.2	98.6		99.4	99.5	
exBV 73	Average time taken to complete non-urgent responsive repairs (days)	16	18.2	19.8	12.2	11.9	19.1		11	10	
LP-H15	Current tenant arrears as a % of the rent roll						2.13				
exBV 185	Percentage of responsive (but not emergency) repairs during 2002/2003, for which the authority both made an appointment		-	64	91.9	92.1	92.8				

PI No.	MANAGEMENT SUPPORT UNIT	Performance					6 month update 2005/06	Improvement	Target	Target	Target
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05			2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
LS-SD6	Recorded crime per 1,000 population	35.89	32.5	38.1	30.42	20.56	40.58		20	20	

PI No.	REGENERATION	Performance					6 month update 2005/06	Improvement	Target	Target	Target
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05			2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
LP-ES9	Private sector housing adaptation expenditure as at 31st March 2005 as a proportion of the council's budget for the service (%)	-	-	-	105.97	109.92			100	100	
LP-ES10	Number of private sector housing adaptations complete as a proportion of enquiries received at 31st March 2005 (%)	-	-	-	56.5	70.27			70	75	
LP-R8	Percentage of industrial/economic applications determined within 8 weeks	56.4	34	46	68	65	91		80	80	
LP-R5	Percentage of household applications determined within 8 weeks	72.1	62	82.8	92	77	94		80	85	
LP-R11	Enforcement: Alleged breaches of planning control acknowledged within 3 days (%)	95.5	100	74	61	50	100		100	100	
LP-R12	Enforcement: Alleged breaches acted upon within 15 working days (%)	75.8	94	-	45	69	100		100	100	

LOCAL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

PI No.	REGENERATION	Performance					6 month update 2005/06	Improvement	Target	Target	Target
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05			2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
BV-EC2	Proportion of the working population who are unemployed and claiming benefit	-	-	-	3.4	3.1	2.9		3	2.8	
BV-EC17a	Total number of 'inward investment' enquiries dealt with per annum	-	-	-	108	107	88		120	120	
BV-EC17b	Number of re-locations and re-investments annually as result of 'inward investment'	-	-	-	6	8	0		8	10	
BV-EC17c	Number of jobs created and safeguarded from firms moving to or relocating within the area following 'inward investment'	-	-	-	281	37	0		50	60	
BV-EC19	Number of new business start-ups assisted/receiving financial assistance	-	-	-	10	8	13		14	16	
LPI 1	Percentage of workspace enquiries responded to within 3 working days	-	-	-	83	90	100		90	95	
LPI 2	Percentage of grant applications determined within 8 weeks	-	-	-	100	100	100		100	100	
LPI 3	Number of jobs created through business grants and other assistance	-	-	-	374	217	35.5		50	60	
LPI 4	Occupancy rates of WVDC (or jointly owned) factory units and workshops	-	-	-	70	85	82.5		85	90	
LPI 5	Issue at least 10 press releases annually	-	-	-	12	16	13		15	18	

PI No.	COMMUNITY SERVICES	Performance					6 month update 2005/06	Improvement	Target	Target	Target
		2000/2001	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05			2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
LP-CS11	Percentage of food premises due to be inspected that were inspected	-	-	56.7	71	32.4	47		100	100	
LP-CS12	Percentage of Health and safety premises due to be inspected that were inspected	-	-	98	51	37.1	77		100	100	
LP-CS13	Percentage of authorised premises due to be inspected that were inspected	-	-	98	11	11	62		100	100	
LP-CS25	Number of missed bins per 100,000	-	-	-	46.9	112.3	1927		30	25	
LP-CS26	Number of missed recycling bins per 100,000	-	-	-	38	42.95	258		30	25	

**POLICY & STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**7<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2005**

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Report of the Chief Executive  
**LOW PERFORMING BVPI UPDATE**

**purpose of the report**

1. To report on the status of the low performing Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's).

**background**

2. At the end of the 2004/05 Committee tasked the MSU with monitoring, on a quarterly basis, a list of BVPI's which were performing poorly. This report presents BVPI data for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter (July-Sept) for the year 2005/06.
3. Annex F tabulates the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter BVPI data in relation to our targets and previous performance. Top quartile figures are based on 2003/04, as the Audit Commission has not yet released figures for 2004/05.
4. Trends in performance are presented graphically in Annex G.
5. The overall performance trend is presented in Annex H.
6. An analysis of each indicator is presented in Annex I.

**conclusion**

7. Overall the rate of performance improvement is declining. 10 Low Performing BVPI's have improved this quarter, 1 less than the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. 3 have remained the same, 1 less than the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter and 5 have not improved 2 more than the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.

**RECOMMENDED**

- i. That members note the report.
- ii. That the MSU continues to monitor these indicators on a quarterly basis.



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**Officer responsible for the report**

Iain Phillips  
Chief Executive

**Author of Report**

John Docherty  
Head of Management Support  
Ext 306

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**2b**

The duty to promote race equality checks	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	
					Q1	Q2
Actual	-	-	0	0	0	41
Target					2	2

**11a**

The percentage of top 5% of earners that are women	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	
					Q1	Q2
Actual	5.88	14.28	16.66	14.28	14.28	28
Target	22	22	8	12	16	16

**11b**

The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	
					Q1	Q2
Actual	-	3.57	3.7	0	0	0
Target			3.57	4	4.2	4.2

**14**

Percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill health as a percentage of the total workforce)	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	
					Q1	Q2
Actual	1.8	0.37	1.7	1.06	0.17	0.18
Target	1.5	1	2	1	1	1

**16a**

Percentage of authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	
					Q1	Q2
Actual	2.27	2.61	3.11	2.84	2.49	2.84
Target	1.5	2.5	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.5

**17a**

Percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	
					Q1	Q2
Actual	0.9	0.84	1.13	0.35	0.35	0.35
Target		1	0.9	1	1	1

**76b**

Housing Benefit Security:  
No. of fraud investigators  
employed, per 1000  
caseload

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Q1	2005/06 Q2
Actual	-	-	0.18	0.21	0.23	0.24
Target				0.2	0.23	0.23

**76c**

Housing Benefit Security:  
No. of fraud investigations,  
per 1000 caseload

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Q1	2005/06 Q2
Actual	-	-	21.75	20.13	6.77	25
Target				28	24	24

**76d**

Housing Benefit Security:  
No. of prosecutions and  
sanctions, per 1000 caseload

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Q1	2005/06 Q2
Actual	-	-	0	0.5	0.23	1.28
Target				0.8	1.4	1.4

**82a**

Percentage of the total  
tonnage of household waste  
arising which has been  
recycled

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Q1	2005/06 Q2
Actual	4.45	5.95	12.64	11.76	11.79	12.12
Target	7.5	7.5	10	14	18	18

**82b**

Percentage of the total  
tonnage of household waste  
arising which has been  
composted

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Q1	2005/06 Q2
Actual	0	0	0	0	3.16	5.31
Target	0	0	0	0	3	3

**84**

KG of household waste  
collected per head

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Q1	2005/06 Q2
Actual	421.28	420.26	397.01	408.89	419.68	423.12
Target	458	425	410	396	395	395

**156**

Percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Q1	2005/06 Q2
Actual	4.8	4.2	10	30	35	36
Target	1	4.8	10	20	40	40

**184a**

The proportion of LA homes which were non decent at the beginning of the year

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Q1	2005/06 Q2
Actual	-	42	41.9	41.5	37.7	12.12
Target			33	31	26	26

**184b**

The percentage change in proportion of non decent LA homes in the year

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Q1	2005/06 Q2
Actual	-	21.4	0.23	6.4	10.2	6.4
Target			18	26	16	16

**106**

Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Q1	2005/06 Q2
Actual	46	56	41.27	48.5	58.6	50
Target	45	60	60	60	60	60

**109b**

Percentage of minor applications determined within 8 weeks

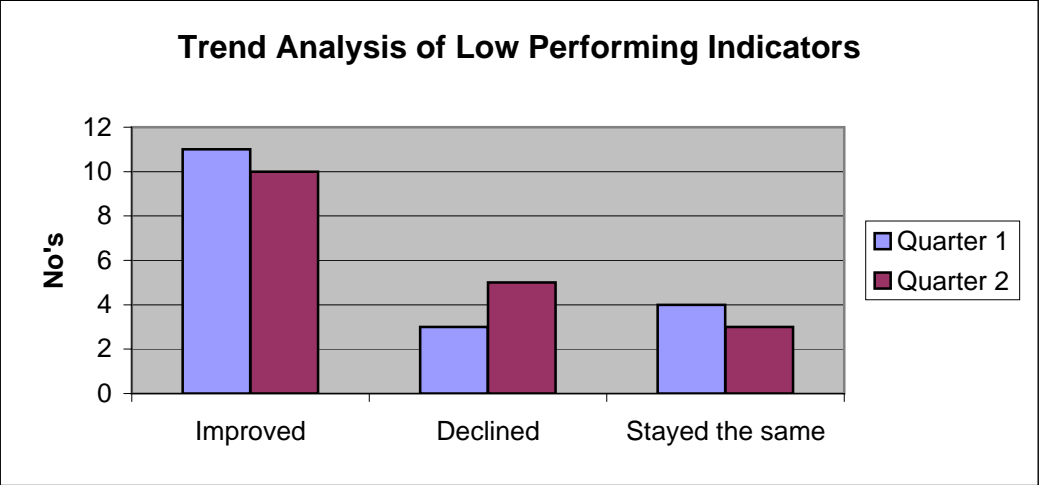
	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Q1	2005/06 Q2
Actual	-	47	78.3	57	65	67
Target	65	65	65	70	65	65

**109c**

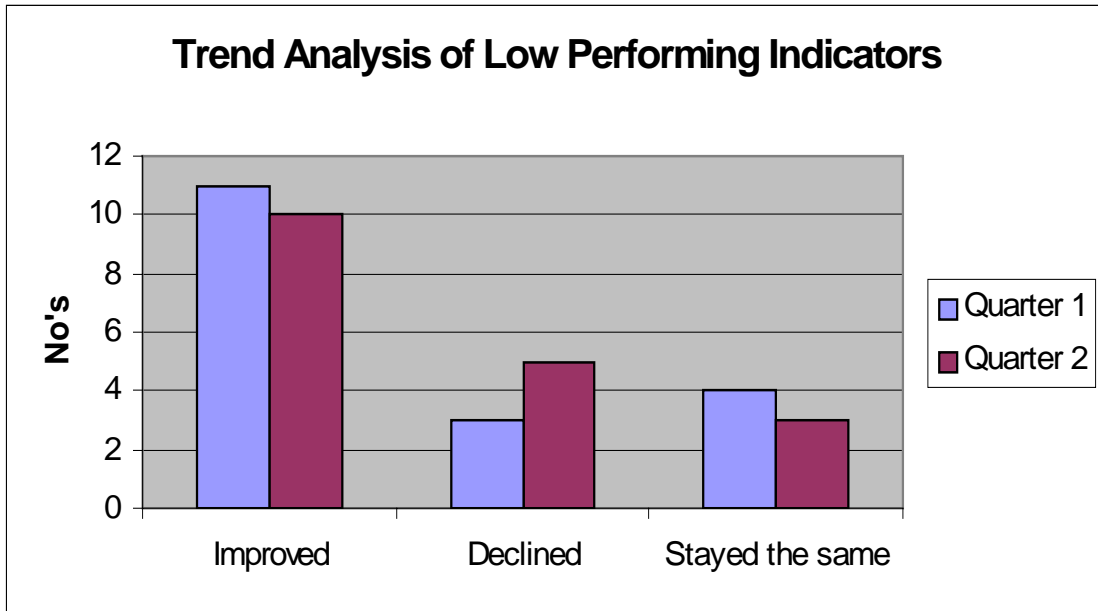
Percentage of other applications determined within 8 weeks

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Q1	2005/06 Q2
Actual	-	74.5	90	73	92	92
Target	65	80	80	80	80	80

Improved	11	10
Declined	3	5
Stayed the same	4	3
	18	18



**WEAR VALLEY DISTRICT COUNCIL  
6 MONTH ANALYSIS OF LOW PERFORMING  
BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**



LOW PERFORMING BVPI DATA – 2<sup>nd</sup> QUARTER UPDATE

***BV 2b - The duty to promote race equality checks***

This indicator has improved dramatically, although it is unclear if best quartile performance will be achieved at the end of the year.

***BV 11a - The percentage of top 5% of earners that are women***

This indicator has improved dramatically. The way in which this indicator is calculated has fallen in favour of Wear Valley District Council in this instance.

***BV 11b - The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities***

This indicator remains unchanged, however efforts to encourage people from ethnic and minority groups into senior posts has been recognised and an active campaign of advertising in appropriate journals may improve this figure over the year.

***BV 14 - Percentage of employees retiring early (excluding ill health as a percentage of the total workforce)***

This indicator shows a slight decline in performance, however this figure is likely to fluctuate constantly. The end of year target has been met and there is a real possibility that we will meet best quartile performance by the end of the year.

***BV 16a - Percentage of authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition***

Performance has improved on this indicator and the end of year target has been met.

***BV 17a - Percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities***

Performance in this indicator has remained unchanged from last year's figure. Despite this district having such a small minority and ethnic community we are encouraging more people from ethnic and minority groups to apply for positions within the authority. Hopefully this figure will increase over the next 6 months.

***BV 76b - Housing Benefit Security: No. of fraud investigators employed, per 1000 caseload***

This indicator has improved again this quarter and the 2005/06 target has been met. However the current level of performance must be maintained over the next 6 months.

LOW PERFORMING BVPI DATA – 2<sup>nd</sup> QUARTER UPDATE

***BV 76c - Housing Benefit Security: No. of fraud investigations, per 1000 caseload***

Performance has improved again this quarter and the target for 2005/06 has been met. Again, the current level of performance must be maintained over the next 6 months.

***BV 76d - Housing Benefit Security: No. of prosecutions and sanctions, per 1000 caseload***

This indicator has shown a marked improvement this quarter and with continued action will meet the end of year target.

***BV 82a - Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which has been recycled***

Performance on this indicator continues to improve, however, there is a long way to go to meet the end of year target.

***BV 82b - Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which has been composted***

The green waste composting scheme has meant that this figure has now improved from zero to 5.31% and the target has been met. However, the green waste collection has been suspended until the spring. It is anticipated that best quartile performance will be achieved for this indicator.

***BV 84 - KG of household waste collected per head***

Performance for this indicator has declined again with more waste being collected per head. Research has shown that this is a national trend. There is more waste being collected per head now than ever before (since our records started).

***BV 156 - Percentage of authority buildings open to the public in which all public areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people***

This figure continues to increase. It is anticipated that we will meet our end of year target.

***BV 184a - The proportion of LA homes which were non decent at the beginning of the year***

Performance for this indicator has declined with an increase in the number of non-decent homes this quarter. It should be noted that this target is considered unrealistic due to the impact of the ALMO.



LOW PERFORMING BVPI DATA – 2<sup>nd</sup> QUARTER UPDATE

***BV 184b*** - *The percentage change in proportion of non decent LA homes in the year*

The percentage change in the proportion of non-decent homes has fallen to the end of year 2004/05 figure. This indicator will not reach the target that has been set. It should be noted that this target is considered unrealistic due to the impact of the ALMO.

***BV 106*** - *Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land*

This indicator has declined this quarter and may not meet the target set.

***BV 109b*** - *Percentage of minor applications determined within 8 weeks*

The percentage of applications determined within 8 weeks has improved to 67% which currently exceeds the 2005/06 target that has been set.

***BV 109c*** - *Percentage of other applications determined within 8 weeks*

This indicator has not improved this quarter but will still meet the target set and will return to best quartile performance.

**POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**7<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2005**



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Report of the Chief Executive

**SUMMARY OF AREAS IDENTIFIED FOR IMPROVEMENT BY EXTERNAL ASSESSORS**

**purpose of the report**

1. To present for discussion and comment a summary of the principal areas for improvement that have been identified in a series of recent inspections undertaken by external assessors.

**background**

2. At a recent CMT meeting the Head of Management Support was tasked with developing a framework for collating the principal areas for improvement that had been identified from a series of recent inspections of the Council and its departments.
3. The purpose of the exercise was to develop a methodology that would allow us to identify the areas for improvement that were consistently being identified in these reports and to highlight those that were of a corporate nature.
4. Individual departments have now completed the summaries and they are attached as Annex J to this report.
5. The various reports have highlighted a number of recurring themes that have been identified as areas needing further attention if we are to continue to progress our improvement agenda. These include:
  - Develop a Human Resources strategy
  - Member training and development
  - Staff training and development
  - Performance management

- Risk management
- Project management
- Consultation/customer engagement
- Customer service/satisfaction
- Developing as a learning organisation
- Relationships with the VCS
- Equalities and diversity

6. Committee are requested to consider the identified areas for concern and to discuss actions that might be taken to address shortfalls to further develop the progress that we have made to date in our improvement programme.

**recommendation**

- i. That Committee consider the content of this report and discuss ways in which actions might be taken to address the identified issues.

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**Officer responsible for the report**

Iain Phillips  
Chief Executive

**Author of the report**

John Docherty  
Head of Management Support  
Ext 306

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**RECENT FEEDBACK – CORPORATE ISSUES SUMMARY  
MSU  
PEER REVIEW, CPA AND DIRECTION OF TRAVEL STATEMENT**

AREAS FOR COMMENT	CORPORATE?	COMMENTS
<b>PEER REVIEW 2003</b>		
Consultation – especially with hard to reach groups.	Y	Consultation
Level of penetration of commitment to performance management	Y	Performance Management - Still a problem with performance appearing to have reached a plateau and Balanced Scorecards not yet implemented.
No HR strategy	Y	HR -Work in progress
Officer/member relationships	Y	HR/OD - Still not working as effectively as it should
Customer input into service development and delivery	Y	Customer Service/Satisfaction
Development and publishing of service standards.	Y	Performance Management - Would need to be part of corporate Performance Management arrangements
Risk awareness is not well understood across the organisation	Y	Risk Management
Project management skills are weak	Y	Project Management
Sickness absence figures are too high	Y	HR - Has improved since report
Customer satisfaction is too low	Y	Customer Service/Satisfaction - Report has gone to CMT to begin discussion re improvement

**RECENT FEEDBACK – CORPORATE ISSUES SUMMARY  
MSU  
PEER REVIEW, CPA AND DIRECTION OF TRAVEL STATEMENT**

<b>AREAS FOR COMMENT</b>	<b>CORPORATE?</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Procurement needs a corporate approach and investment	Y	Procurement - Resource in place but more work needed to get a corporate approach
Need to involve the voluntary and community sector more	Y	VCS
Need to develop systems to allow us to become a 'learning organisation'.	Y	OD - No central ownership of this issue could be a problem

**Annex A**

**RECENT FEEDBACK – CORPORATE ISSUES SUMMARY  
MSU  
PEER REVIEW, CPA AND DIRECTION OF TRAVEL STATEMENT**

<b>AREAS FOR COMMENT</b>	<b>CORPORATE?</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>CPA INSPECTION 2003</b>		
Objectives too broad	Y	Performance Management - Council plan still has too many activities within it and we need to do more work to get better definition around what should be the strategic priorities for the Council.
Budget decisions are adjusting spending across priorities but not between low and high priority areas	Y	Financial Management
Work to improve BVPIs not related to council objectives	Y	Performance Management - Failure to implement Balanced Scorecards means this is still the case
Member capacity for strategic thinking and policy development	Y	OD - Some work has been done but more needed
Middle management engagement with and understanding of new ways of working	Y	HR/OD -No corporate approach has been developed to tackle this key area
Weak human resource management	Y	HR - Work is ongoing
Underdeveloped partnership working with the voluntary and community sector	Y	VCS
The performance management framework is not yet fully implemented	Y	Performance Management - Still the case

**RECENT FEEDBACK – CORPORATE ISSUES SUMMARY  
MSU  
PEER REVIEW, CPA AND DIRECTION OF TRAVEL STATEMENT**

<b>AREAS FOR COMMENT</b>	<b>CORPORATE?</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Council not clear what outcomes are being achieved	Y	Performance Management - We still do not have enough outcome-based local PIs developed. (Balanced Scorecard implementation should address this)
Overall satisfaction with council low	Y	Customer Service/Satisfaction - Report has gone to CMT to begin discussion re improvement



**RECENT FEEDBACK – CORPORATE ISSUES SUMMARY  
MSU  
PEER REVIEW, CPA AND DIRECTION OF TRAVEL STATEMENT**

<b>AREAS FOR COMMENT</b>	<b>CORPORATE?</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<b>DIR'N OF TRAVEL STATEMENT 2004</b>		
Strengthening the links to outcomes that the council is trying to achieve for its citizens	Y	Performance Management - PMF and Balanced Scorecards need revitalising to address this issue effectively.
Clarify future plans for leisure in delivering the council's objectives	Y	Health agenda and future budgetary outcomes affected by this area
Develop and implement a robust human relations strategy including workforce and member development	Y	HR/OD -Work is in progress
Continue to address poor and mixed performance, including addressing diversity issues and e-government	Y	Diversity, E-Government and performance issues

**RECENT FEEDBACK – CORPORATE ISSUES SUMMARY  
CENTRAL RESOURCES**

<b>AREAS FOR COMMENT</b>	<b>CORPORATE?</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
1. I.T. Security – Audit Commission report	No	Identifies the need for additional resources to improve security
2. Lack of Internal Audit computer audit expertise – Audit Commission report	No	Identify a general lack of computer audit expertise within the Authority
3. Equalities – Audit Commission letter	Yes	
4. Grant Funding – Audit Commission letter	Yes	Ensure spending is in line with priorities
5. Human Resources – Audit Commission letter	Yes	Analysis of workloads/skills requirements/capacity
6. Service Planning – Audit Commission letter	Yes	Set out non priorities
7. Partnership Working – Audit Commission letter	Yes	Record of all partnerships/control/risks/future commitments
8. Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery – Audit Commission letter	Yes	Not just I.T. but link to Emergency Planning and Risk Management

**RECENT FEEDBACK – CORPORATE ISSUES SUMMARY  
COMMUNITY SERVICES  
REVIEW OF CEMETERIES POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

<b>AREAS FOR COMMENT</b>	<b>CORPORATE?</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
1 At least one full time staff committed to cemeteries fulfilling role of registrar.	N	
2 Policy produced on transfer of burial rights.	N	
3 Graves to be up to four deep.	N	
4 Continuous memorial inspection.	N	
5 Produce management plan for each cemetery.	N	
6 Staff training.	N	
7 Membership of ICCM.	N	

**RECENT FEEDBACK – CORPORATE ISSUES SUMMARY  
COMMUNITY SERVICES  
APSE REVIEW OF STREET CLEANSING (NOVEMBER 2002) INSPECTION**

AREAS FOR COMMENT	CORPORATE?	COMMENTS
1 The street cleansing service should be transferred from the Housing Department to Community Services Department.	Y	Carried out as part of Council restructure.
2 The client-contractor functions should be merged into single unit.	Y	Carried out as part of Council restructure.
3 Effective quality systems should be developed	N	
4 Working methods assessed.	N	
5 Investigate integrating street cleansing with grounds maintenance.	N	
6 Consider merging of refuse collection and street cleansing on expiry of refuse contract.	Y	Contract brought in house.

**RECENT FEEDBACK – CORPORATE ISSUES SUMMARY  
COMMUNITY SERVICES  
LEISURE BEST VALUE INSPECTION**

	<b>AREAS FOR COMMENT</b>	<b>CORPORATE?</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
1	Review target date for implementation of proposed CFM at Bishop Auckland.	Y	
2	Receive regular updates on the planning and preparation of the proposed CFM and closely consider the long term financial implications.	Y	Replaced with intention to work with Bishop Auckland College and St. John's School.
3	Reduce current facility costs in line with Council's financial budgets.	N	
4	Ensure feasibility study for Bishop Auckland involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strong customer representation</li> <li>▪ Young people</li> <li>▪ Local staff</li> <li>▪ Private and voluntary sector</li> </ul>	N	
5	Build on good training practice.	N	
6	Monitor pricing policy	N	
7	Ensure IT purchase takes account of Bishop Auckland Town Hall and all facilities.	N	

**RECENT FEEDBACK – CORPORATE ISSUES SUMMARY  
COMMUNITY SERVICES  
GROUNDS MAINTENANCE RE-INSPECTION (APRIL 2003)**

	<b>AREAS FOR COMMENT</b>	<b>CORPORATE?</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
1	Use output specifications and publish what stakeholders can expect.	N	
2	Complete and publish bereavement service standards.	N	
3	Review arrangements in cemeteries for disabled.	N	
4	Review security at sports and recreation grounds to reduce vandalism.	N	
5	Consult local community on priorities for landscaping.	N	Unless as part of corporate consultation process.
6	Ensure partnership board provides information and strategies on how the service contributes to Council strategies.	N	
7	Develop performance indicators.	N	Unless as part of corporate process.
8	Improve arrangements for the collection of data and research	N	

**RECENT FEEDBACK – CORPORATE ISSUES SUMMARY  
COMMUNITY SERVICES  
BEST VALUE RE-INSPECTION OF REFUSE**

AREAS FOR COMMENT	CORPORATE?	COMMENTS
1 Give customers accurate assessment of when jobs will be carried out.	N	
2 Look to recycle bulky waste.	N	
3 Access need of residents, e.g., (a) Examine frequency and collection methods for different households and geographical locations. (b) Review bulk refuse for cost effectiveness.	N	
4 Extend job request procedure to:- (a) Provide performance data (b) Carry out customer satisfaction surveys.	Y	If part of corporate surveys.
5 Update recycling plan.		
6 Produce waste strategy.		
7 Produce a waste plan for the Council.		
8 Ensure future service procurement allows flexibility in service delivery.	Y	Procurement policy required.
9 Continue to work with other Councils in the county.	N	

**RECENT FEEDBACK – CORPORATE ISSUES SUMMARY  
REGENERATION  
PLANNING BEST VALUE INSPECTION 2005.**

AREAS FOR COMMENT	CORPORATE?	COMMENTS
1. There are identified barriers to accessing the service	Y	Comment relates to office location and hours of operation, in area with poor access to transport for many people.
2.		
3. There is little awareness or use of protocols for councillors.	Y	Partially remedied by new Planning Protocol and member training.
4.		
3. Lack of Community Plan to provide framework of key objectives, owned politically and in the community.	Y	Community Plan now available for consultation.
5. Little local political debate to resolve the conflict between local priorities (population growth) and the regional spatial strategy.	Y	Debate at LSP level and involvement in RSS consultation process has developed 'district' position.
6.		
5. Service measures its progress well at the individual project level and through performance indicators, but it is unable to identify its overall impact on the district.	Y	Is there the need to develop annual statement for district ('corporate barometer') or will annual monitoring of Community Plan satisfy this need?
6. The diverse needs of the user community are not sufficiently well considered.	Y	The availability of documents in other formats, languages etc is being publicised more and greater analysis of customer survey information will assess the experience of the service by different sections of the community.



**POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**7<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2005**

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Report of the Chief Executive  
**ASBESTOS POLICY AND GUIDE**

**purpose of the report**

1. To submit to the the proposed Asbestos Policy and Guide that was presented to and discussed at the Safety Panel meeting held 28<sup>th</sup> July 2005 and the Corporate Management Team meeting held 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2005.

**introduction**

2. The Asbestos Policy and Guide form part of the Council's Health and Safety Management system, its use within the Council will assist in ensuring the continued wellbeing of employees and service users.
3. This information can also be of importance for the identification of trends, development of risk control strategies and identification of budgetary needs.

**background**

4. The information attached at Annex K to this report has previously been discussed at Corporate Management Team and Safety Panel.
5. The Policy and Guidance has been developed in line with current Health and Safety Executive publications and will support previously agreed policy such as Risk Assessment.

**financial implications**

6. The financial implications have been considered and until departments implement policy and carry out the necessary risk assessments in accordance with previously approved policy regarding risk assessment no financial implications can be determined.
7. No training budget is available for training in safe working and handling of asbestos; this is to be addressed in the budgetary process once information is available from departments.

## **human resources/ information technology**

8. Human resource and IT implications have been considered and as in 7 above no further information is available.

## **legal implications**

9. The policy and guidance attached at Annex K will fulfil legal requirements under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and Guidance produced by the Health and Safety Executive.

## **conclusions**

10. In order to fulfil our legal responsibilities we now need to introduce a formal policy and guidance for dealing with asbestos throughout all areas of the Council.

## **Recommended**

1. That the Asbestos Policy and Guide attached at Annex K is approved.

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**Officer responsible for the report**

Iain Phillips  
Chief Executive

**Author of the report**

Denver Meade  
Health and Safety Officer  
Ext 416

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**WEAR VALLEY DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**ASBESTOS POLICY AND GUIDE**

<b>Approving Committee</b>	
<b>Date Approved</b>	
<b>Responsible for Policy</b>	<b>Management Support</b>
<b>Introduced</b>	<b>July 2005</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>July 2006</b>
<b>Responsible for Review</b>	<b>Health and Safety Officer</b>

# Wear Valley District Council

## Asbestos Policy and Guide.

### Introduction.

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 imposes duties on employers, Wear Valley District Council (the Council), to protect their employees, and so far as is reasonably practicable, anyone else (whether or not they are at work) on their premises who may be exposed to asbestos.

However, employers do not have to provide health records or medical surveillance to anyone who is not an employee and the requirements relating to monitoring, information, training and dealing with accidents do not apply to non employees unless those persons are at the work premises.

### Definitions: Control of Asbestos .

Regulation 2 contains a full list of definitions; key definitions are given below:

- Action Level: means cumulative exposures to asbestos measured by an approved method over a continuous 12 week period as follows:
  - (i) exposure solely to chrysotile – 72 fibre-hours per millilitre of air
  - (ii) exposure to other types of asbestos , including asbestos mixtures and chrysotile mixtures – 48 fibre-hours per millilitres of air
  - (iii) separate exposures to both types of asbestos a proportionate number of fibre-hours per millilitre of air.
- Asbestos: means crocidolite, amosite, chrysotile, fibrous actinolite, fibrous anthophyllite or fibrous tremolite or any mixtures containing these.
- Control limit: means a concentration of asbestos in the air when measured or calculated by an approved method as follows:
  - (i) Chrysotile:
    - 0.3 fibres per millilitre of air averaged over a continuous 4 hour period
    - 0.9 fibres per millilitre of air averaged over a continuous 10 minute period.
  - (ii) other types of asbestos, including asbestos mixtures and chrysotile mixtures:
    - 0.2 fibres per millilitre of air averaged over a continuous 4 hour period

0.6 fibres per millilitre of air averaged over a continuous 10 minute period.

- Relevant Doctor: means an appointed Doctor or an employment medical advisor.

### **Policy.**

The Council will by virtue of the Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002, and specifically with regard Regulation 4 of the above Regulations:

- Appoint an officer or officers to be the duty holder for any maintenance or repair work to be undertaken on premises or any part of a premise to which they have control.
- Every person shall co-operate with the duty holder(s) so far as is necessary to enable the duty holder(s) to comply with his duties under this Regulation.
- In order that the duty holder(s) can manage the risk from asbestos in premises, the duty holder(s) shall ensure that a suitable and sufficient assessment is carried out as to whether asbestos is or is liable to be present in the premises.
- In making an assessment such steps as are reasonable shall be taken and the condition of any asbestos which is, or has been assumed to be present in the premises shall be considered.
- The duty holder(s) shall ensure that account is taken of building plans or other relevant information, such as the age of the premises, and that an inspection is made of those parts of the premises that are reasonably accessible.
- The duty holder(s) shall ensure assessments are reviewed if there is reason to suspect that the assessment is no longer valid or there has been a significant change to the premises to which the assessment relates.
- The duty holder(s) shall ensure that the conclusions and any review of the assessment are recorded.
- Where an assessment shows that asbestos is or is liable to be present in any part of the premises the duty holder(s) shall ensure that a determination of the risk from that asbestos is made. A written plan identifying those parts of the premises is prepared and the measures taken for managing the risk are specified in the written plan.

- The written plan for managing the risk shall include measures for monitoring the condition of any asbestos or material containing asbestos, ensuring any asbestos or any such substance is properly maintained or where necessary safely removed and information regarding the location and condition of any asbestos or any such substance is:
  - (i) Provided to every person that is liable to disturb it.
  - (ii) Is made available to emergency services.
- The plan is reviewed and revised at regular intervals and forthwith if:
  - (i) There is reason to suspect the plan is no longer valid.
  - (ii) There has been a significant change in the premises to which the plan relates.
- The measures specified in the plan are implemented.
- The measures taken to implement the plan are recorded.

**Guidance.**

**Managing asbestos in premises.**

The duty holder must ensure that a suitable and sufficient assessment is undertaken to determine whether asbestos is, or is suspected of being on the premises. The assessment should take into account the likely condition of any such asbestos, and its conclusions and subsequent reviews must be recorded. In addition, the duty holder must also consider building plans, other relevant information and the age of the premises and inspect reasonably accessible parts of the premises

Where asbestos is identified or suspected the duty holder must:

- Determine the risk from the asbestos
- Prepare a written plan identifying the areas of the premises concerned and the measures necessary for managing the asbestos risk
- Implement the measures in the plan
- Record the measures taken to implement the plan

These measures should include adequate means for:

- Monitoring the condition of any asbestos or suspected asbestos
- Maintaining or removing the asbestos
- Providing information identifying the location and condition of identified asbestos to any person likely to disturb it and making this information available to emergency services.

The assessment and written plan must be reviewed if they become invalid or there have been significant changes to the premises.

The duty holder is defined as any person who has a maintenance/repair obligation in respect of Wear Valley District Council properties, if these persons are not identifiable then anyone who has control over such premises.

### **Identifying asbestos types and assessments.**

Where employees are liable to be exposed to asbestos employers must identify the type of asbestos involved or make an assumption that the asbestos is not solely chrysotile before the work starts.

Similarly, employers must make a suitable and sufficient assessment of any health risks to employees or other persons affected by the work activity and take steps to meet the provisions of the Regulations – these steps must also be implemented. Any significant findings should be recorded as soon as practicable and /or after any significant changes, or if the results of any air monitoring indicate it is necessary. If the assessment indicates that the asbestos exposure will be above the “action level” a copy of the significant findings must be retained at the assessed premises for the duration of the assessed work.

The risk assessment should:

- Identify the type of asbestos
- Determine the degree and nature of exposure
- Take into account the effectiveness of control measures and the results of air monitoring and medical surveillance
- Identify the measures necessary to prevent or reduce asbestos exposure to the lowest level reasonably practicable
- Include any other information necessary to finish the assessment.

### **Plans of work.**

Employers must prepare a written plan of work, prior to any asbestos work starting, containing details of how the asbestos work will be undertaken. The asbestos work undertaken should be in accordance with the plan so far as is reasonably practicable.

The plan should include information on the:

- Nature and duration of the work
- Location of the place where the asbestos work is undertaken
- Methods for handling asbestos
- Characteristics of any equipment used for protecting and decontaminating workers under-taking the work and or for protecting anyone else in the vicinity of the asbestos work
- Control measures necessary to prevent or reduce exposure

- A copy of the plan must be kept at the premises where the asbestos work is undertaken for the duration of the work.

### **Notification of asbestos work**

Before undertaking asbestos work for the first time, employers must notify the enforcing authority in writing. The notification must be made 14 days prior to the work starting. Any changes to the work particulars submitted, including the work ceasing, must also be notified. Details of the information required are contained in Schedule 1 to the Regulations.

### **Information instruction and training**

Employees liable to be exposed to asbestos or who supervise asbestos work or who undertake work in connection with their employer's duties under these Regulations, must be given adequate information, instruction and training to ensure their own, other employees and other persons safety if they are liable to be exposed.

Such information, instruction and training must be given at regular intervals, be appropriate to the level and nature of exposure identified in the assessment and if necessary adapted to take account of the significant changes.

It must include:

- The significant findings of the risk assessment
- Associated health risks
- Necessary precautions
- Relevant "control limits" and "action levels".

### **Prevention and reduction of exposure.**

Where reasonably practicable, employers must prevent employee exposure to asbestos. If exposure cannot be prevented it must be reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable (without the use of respiratory protective equipment) and the number of employees likely to be exposed reduced to as low as reasonably practicable.

In cases where asbestos is used in, or produced by, a work process, the amount of asbestos and/or materials containing asbestos must be reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

Where asbestos exposure is associated with a manufacturing or with installation of a product, substitution of the asbestos with a less hazardous alternative should be undertaken where practicable. Where substitution is not practicable the following hierarchy to avoid or reduce exposure applies:



- The design and use of appropriate work processes, systems, engineering controls and suitable work equipment/materials to avoid or minimise asbestos release
- Control exposure at source, by adequate ventilation and appropriate organisational measures

If existing identified control measures cannot reduce exposure below the “control limit” so far as is reasonably practicable, then suitable respiratory protective equipment, in addition to the existing control measures must be provided to employees. If the inhaled concentration of asbestos exceeds the “control limit” employers must take immediate action.

Respiratory protective equipment must be of an “approved” type and conform to an “approved” standard while any personal protective equipment must meet the requirements of the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992.

### **Use and maintenance of control measures.**

Employers must ensure any control measures or facilities provided in compliance with these Regulations are properly used or applied so far as is reasonably practicable. In addition, employees must make full and proper use of anything provided by their employers under these Regulations, including returning items to designated storage accommodation and reporting defects.

Employers must maintain control measures in an efficient and clean state, in efficient working order and in good repair. Thorough examinations and tests, undertaken by a competent person at suitable intervals, must be carried out on any exhaust ventilation or respiratory protective equipment (other than disposable respiratory equipment) provided under these Regulations.

A suitable record of such thorough examinations and tests, including any associated equipment repairs, must be kept available for five years from the examination/test date.

### **Provision and cleaning of protective clothing.**

Where significant quantities of asbestos are liable to be deposited on employee’s clothes’ employers must provide adequate and suitable protective clothing. Such clothing provided must be either disposed of as “asbestos waste” or adequately cleaned at suitable intervals.

The cleaning of protective clothing contaminated by asbestos may be carried out at the work premises, provided the premises has suitable cleaning facilities, or in suitably equipped laundries.

### **Accident, incident and emergency arrangements.**

Employers must have prepared procedures, including regularly tested safety drills for the protecting their employees’ health in the event of an asbestos accident, incident or emergency. In addition there must be arrangements for

warning of such accidents so that remedial action can be taken. Details of any such procedures must be made available to emergency services.

In the event of an emergency involving the unplanned release of asbestos, employers must take immediate steps to:

- Minimise the effects of the event
- Return the situation to normal
- Inform any employees who may be affected
- Restrict access to affected areas to essential personnel only and provide them with any necessary respiratory protective equipment, personal protective equipment and specialist safety equipment until the situation has returned to normal

This does not apply where risk assessment identifies only slight risk.

### **Preventing or reducing spread.**

The spread of asbestos from any asbestos workplace must be prevented or if that is not reasonably practicable then it must be reduced to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

### **Cleanliness.**

Any premises, parts of premises or equipment used in connection with asbestos work must be kept clean, and after the work has finished, must be thoroughly cleaned.

### **Designated areas.**

Certain areas must be designated “asbestos areas” or “respirator zone” where employee exposures would exceed the “action level” (for whole time working exposures) or “control limit” respectively. Such areas/zones must be clearly and separately defined and marked by notices indicating that the area is an “asbestos area and /or “respirator zone”. In the case of “respirator zones” notices must warn employees that exposure may exceed the “control limit” and that respiratory protective equipment must be worn.

Smoking, eating, drinking are prohibited in these circumstances.

### **Air monitoring.**

Where employee exposure to asbestos is likely to exceed the “action level” or there is no other evaluation method to demonstrate the exposure is prevented or reduced, then exposure must be monitored by measuring asbestos fibres in the air.

The monitoring must be at regular intervals and if any changes occur that affect the exposure. Records of any, or if monitoring is not required a record of that decision and any reasoning, must be kept.

Records or suitable summaries of any monitoring must be kept for:

- 40 years if the exposure requires a health record to be kept
  - 5 years in other cases
- from the date of the last entry.

On reasonable notice being given employees may access their personal monitoring records.

Copies of monitoring records must be given to the Health and Safety Executive if required.

Air monitoring or sampling must comply with the relevant provisions of ISO 17025 and those carrying out the monitoring or sampling must be accredited by an appropriate body.

### **Health records and medical surveillance.**

Where employee exposure is above the “action level” employers must maintain health records containing the approved particulars for 40 years from the date of the last entry, and ensure employees undertake medical surveillance by a relevant doctor.

The medical surveillance must include a medical examination not more than two years before the start of the exposure and at intervals of not more than two years (or a shorter period if required by a relevant doctor) during the exposure period.

The medical examinations must include:

- An examination of the chest
- Be at the employers expense
- Be carried out during work time
- If carried out at the employer’s premises, suitable facilities must be made available.
- The doctor must issue a certificate for each examination stating the employee has been examined and the date.
- These certificates or copies must be retained by the employer for 40 years from the issue date
- They must be made available to the relevant doctor for purposes of their duties under these Regulations
- Employees must attend such medical examinations as required and provide any reasonable information required by the relevant doctor

On reasonable notice being given employees may access their personal health records.

Copies of health records must be given to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) if required.

The HSE must be notified if any business ceases and health records made available to them.

Where employees have an identifiable disease or adverse health effect resulting, in the relevant doctor's opinion, from exposure to asbestos, their employer must:

- Arrange for a suitable person to inform the employer
- Provide information and advice on further medical surveillance
- Review the assessment of any control measures, taking into account advice from the HSE or relevant doctor
- Consider the provision of alternative work where there is no risk of additional asbestos exposure, again taking advice from the relevant doctor.
- Review the health of all other employees who have been similarly exposed, including medical/chest examinations if recommended by the relevant doctor or HSE

### **Washing and changing facilities**

Employees exposed to asbestos must be provided with adequate:

- Washing and changing facilities
- Separate storage facilities for protective clothing worn at work, personal clothing not worn at work and for any respiratory protective equipment provided.

### **Storage, distribution and labelling of raw asbestos and asbestos waste.**

Raw asbestos or waste containing asbestos must be stored, received into or despatched from or distributed within (except in totally enclosed distribution system) any workplace in sealed clearly marked containers. Raw asbestos must be labelled in accordance with Schedule 2 and waste containing asbestos in accordance with relevant dangerous goods labelling or in defined cases Schedule 2.

### **Supply of products containing asbestos.**

No article or substance containing asbestos may be supplied for use at work unless it is labelled in accordance with Schedule 2.

Where the asbestos is contained within a product component, the component must be labelled in accordance with Schedule 2 unless the component is of a size that makes it impossible to affix a label in which case neither the component nor the product need be labelled.

### **Asbestos (Licensing) Regulations 1983**

These Regulations, as amended, provide that an employer or self-employed person who undertakes work with asbestos insulation, asbestos coating or

asbestos insulating board may only do so in accordance with a licence issued by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). The HSE may refuse to issue a licence or impose conditions in any licence it does issue.

Work with asbestos insulation, asbestos insulation board or asbestos coating means work in which asbestos insulating board, asbestos insulation or asbestos coating is removed, repaired or disturbed and includes such work in any related supervisory or ancillary capacity.

The provision does not apply where any person who carries out work with asbestos insulation, asbestos insulating board, or asbestos coating does not spend more than a total of one hour on such work in any seven consecutive days and the total spent on such work by all the persons working on that work does not exceed two hours.

Further, a licence is not necessary when the employer or self employed carries out work in premises of which he or she is the occupier and has notified the enforcing authority 14 days in advance.

The Approved Code of Practice L28 *Work With Asbestos Insulation, Asbestos Coating and Asbestos Insulating Board (4th Edition 2002)* is also relevant.

### **Asbestos (Prohibitions) Regulations 1992.**

These Regulations, as variously amended, define “amphibole asbestos” as crocidolite, amosite, actinolite, fibrous anthophyllite, fibrous tremolite and any mixture containing any of these.

Asbestos is defined as chrysotile and amphibole asbestos and any mixture of these.

The asbestos prohibitions relate to:

- The import of crude, fibre, flake, powder or waste amphibole asbestos and any product to which chrysotile asbestos has intentionally been added
- The import of crude, fibre, flake, powder or waste chrysotile asbestos, and any product to which chrysotile asbestos has been intentionally added – the prohibitions on chrysotile asbestos are subject to the exemptions detailed in the Schedule to the Regulations
- The supply of amphibole asbestos (other than for disposal) or any product to which amphibole asbestos has been intentionally added
- The use of amphibole asbestos or products containing intentionally added amphibole asbestos in the manufacture and repair of any other product
- The use of any product to which amphibole asbestos has been intentionally added, except where products containing crocidolite or amosite were in use prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 1986, or where products containing amphibole asbestos other than cocidolite or amosite were in use prior to 1<sup>st</sup> January 1993, or any activity associated with the disposal of such products
- Asbestos spraying

- Subject to the exemptions specified in the Schedule to the Regulations, the supply and use of chrysotile asbestos, or any product to which chrysotile asbestos has been intentionally added, unless the product was in use prior to 24<sup>th</sup> November 1999
- The use of asbestos cement, ie mixtures of cement and chrysotile which has a density >1 tonne per m<sup>3</sup> when dry
- The use of any board, panel or tile or any part of which, that has been painted with a paint containing chrysotile, or that has been covered with a decorative textured plaster containing chrysotile – unless the board, panels, or tiles were already part of the premises or plant prior to 24<sup>th</sup> November 1999

These prohibitions do not apply to activities connected with the disposal of chrysotile asbestos.

## **Publications and Guidance.**

The following are available from HSE Books:

- EH 47 Provision, Use and Maintenance of Hygiene Facilities for Work with Asbestos Insulation, Asbestos Coating and Asbestos Insulating Board
- EH 50 Training Operatives and Supervisors for Work with Asbestos Insulation and Coatings
- EH 51 Enclosures Provided for Work with Asbestos
- EH 57 Problems of Asbestos Removal at High Temperatures
- Hsg/189/1 Controlled Asbestos Stripping Techniques for Work Requiring a Licence
- HSG189/2 Working with Asbestos Cement
- HSG 210 Asbestos Essentials Task Manual
- HSG 213 Introduction to Asbestos Essentials
- HSG 227 a Comprehensive Guide to Managing Asbestos in Premises
- HSG 248 Asbestos: The Analysts' Guide for Sampling, Analysis and Clearance Procedures
- INDG 187 Asbestos Dust: The Hidden Killer, Are You at Risk?
- INDG 188 Asbestos Alert for Building Maintenance, Repair and Refurbishment Workers- Be aware of Asbestos the Hidden Killer
- INDG 223 A Short Guide to Managing Asbestos in Premises
- INDG255 Asbestos Dust Kills – Keep Your Mask on: Guidance for Employees on Wearing Respiratory Protective Equipment for Work with Asbestos
- INDG 288 Selection of Suitable Respiratory Protective Equipment for Work with Asbestos
- L11 A Guide to the Asbestos (Licensing) Regulations 1983
- L27 Work with Asbestos Which Does Not Normally Require a Licence
- L28 Work With Asbestos Insulation, Asbestos Coating and Asbestos Insulation Board: ACOP
- L127 The Management of Asbestos in non-domestic Premises: ACOP.







**POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**7<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2005**

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Report of the Chief Executive

**SIMALTO MODELLING 2006 - BUDGET CONSULTATION**

**purpose of report**

1. This report outlines the headline findings and methodology of the 2006 SIMALTO exercise, undertaken to identify the opinions of local residents as to Wear Valley District Council's (WVDC) spending priorities.

**background**

2. In August – September 2005 an in-depth consultation on the Council's spending priorities and council tax levels took place with residents throughout the district. The aim was to identify residents' service funding priorities in order to inform the Council's 2006 budget setting decision-making process.
3. This public consultation made use of the SIMALTO modelling process, endorsed by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and used by a growing number of local authorities. It is acknowledged to be an effective, robust technique for identifying local priorities for spending and council tax levels.
4. This is the third year in which WVDC has used SIMALTO to research public opinion on emerging budget options. External consultants, Research for Today, were commissioned to undertake the consultation.
5. Through the use of SIMALTO, the following issues regarding the allocation of council tax between various council services in 2006 have been addressed:
  - Which current service levels should be reduced in order to cause least 'distress' among residents?
  - Which improvements on other services, if any, should take priority?
  - Would residents be willing to pay more council tax, beyond an expected annual inflation increase, to lessen any reduction, or fund improvements in service benefits?

## **method**

6. The 2006 SIMALTO survey involved a random, representative sample of 306 Wear Valley residents, representatively split by age, gender, and location. Trained facilitators conducted 50 minute interviews with residents in their own homes. A list of the 25 services, and a brief overview of the SIMALTO method, is set out in Annex L.
7. The SIMALTO technique uses a matrix supplied by WVDC that identifies 25 service areas, for which the level of provision could be altered as a result of the budget setting process. Participants are asked to allocate and prioritise possible improvements across services.

## **general findings**

8. A brief summary of the main findings of the SIMALTO exercise is set out below. The detailed breakdown of findings can be found in the full consultants' report (Copies of the full report can be obtained from the Performance Improvement Manager in the MSU EXT: 313 ).
9. To maintain the current rates of service, council tax is expected to need to rise by inflation, but the research suggests that, overall, WVDC residents appear to be willing to pay even more than inflation for service improvement.
10. When made aware of the impact their chosen improvement scenarios would have to council tax rates:
  - 72% of residents chose to accept an additional increase of £5 a year or more on their council tax bill to achieve their allocation of improved service provision;
  - In total only 16% of residents chose the largest reduction in tax offered (£10 per year) by accepting the trade-off of a significant overall lowering of service standards.

11. SIMALTO models the results of all residents' service priority allocations against five council tax scenarios.

12. Given responses from residents, SIMALTO then predicts the most preferred combination of service reductions and improvements for each of these five alternative budget scenarios, what SIMALTO terms 'optimum consensus budgets' (see Annex M for these results).

### resident satisfaction

13. The table below sets out resident satisfaction given the potential implementation of each of the 5 modelled budget allocations:

Scenario	Very Unhappy	Slightly Unhappy	Un-Certain	Quite Pleased	Very Pleased	Extremely Pleased
Bonus 21 (-£300k)	5%	12%	21%	44%	18%	1%
Bonus 32 (-£100k)	2%	4%	14%	51%	27%	1%
Bonus 43 (+100k)	1%	2%	7%	46%	40%	4%
Bonus 54 (+300k)	1%	1%	3%	36%	46%	13%
As now	<b>9%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>2%</b>

- Potential dissatisfaction declines steadily as a tax scenario of the current level of tax is reached, and reduces further beyond that.
- 26% of residents were to be 'very' or 'slightly unhappy' with the 'as now' scenario.
- Generally residents' satisfaction is predicted to increase, as better service improvements become possible due to greater council tax increases. However the elderly residents were less keen on those budget allocations involving the largest increased taxes.

### resident budget allocation preference

14. SIMALTO modelling also allows us to ascertain the relative popularity of the 5 alternative optimum consensus budgets, as highlighted in table 2 by grouped area and age of resident:

Scenario:	Bonus 21	Bonus 32	Bonus 43	Bonus 54
Budget equivalent:	-£300k	-£100k	+£100k	+£300k
Tax Impact:	-£15/year	-£5/year	+£5/year	+£15/year
<b>Total</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>43%</b>
Under 40	13%	10%	24%	53%
40-60	14%	13%	33%	40%
Over 60	23%	14%	28%	35%
Bishop Auckland	13%	17%	31%	38%
Crook	19%	3%	20%	57%
Rural	19%	14%	35%	32%

- Overall 72% chose additional budget allocations above the cost equivalent of current council services;
- SIMALTO calculations predict that the overall consensus preference is around the inflation % plus £3 per annum tax increase level;
- SIMALTO predicts that both older residents of WVDC are less keen on those budget allocations involving the largest increased taxes:
  - Across the three district areas, all appear more likely to approve of increased taxes for improved service levels (Bishop Auckland, 69% and Crook 77% and 67% in rural Wear Valley);
  - SIMALTO predicts that the younger age bands will show greater preference for improved services through tax hikes (77% of under 40s and 73% of 40-60s preferring tax rises to pay for service enhancement, compared to a lesser 63% of over 60s).

### service related findings

15. Given residents responses it is also possible to predict areas where reductions to service levels will be tolerated, where improvements to services will cause the most satisfaction, and also identifies those services where reductions would cause the most dissatisfaction among residents. Annex N shows the full results of respondents spending their allocated points on improving the 25 services.

#### 16. Reductions Causing Least Displeasure

- Grounds maintenance –Reduce from 15 grass cuts to 9
- Leisure Centres – 25% price increase
- Recreation grounds –slightly less maintenance

- Bishop Auckland - no more investment

17. Enhancements Causing Most Satisfaction

- Street cleaning - increase at specific times
- Drugs/Disorder – Additional funding
- Anti Social Behaviour – Extra funding to include private sector tenants
- Handyman service - 1 person for disabled and older people

18. Services which should NOT be reduced

- Young Persons Activities
- Waste/recycling
- Apprenticeships
- Concessionary Travel

19. It is important to note here that maintaining the current level of service provision will not negatively effect resident satisfaction levels.

**conclusions**

20. A number of limitations of the SIMALTO process should be noted. Residents comments are inevitably biased by their own personal circumstances and experiences. In the experience of the consultants it is likely that the first priorities a person makes are for personal and/or family benefit, with later priorities tending to be for the more 'general good'. Moreover if residents have not made use of a particular service (e.g. money advice) their ability to offer an informed opinion as to whether service should be enhanced or cut will be limited.

21. In addition while the sample of over 300 residents means that the exercise can be said to generally reflect the entire WVDC administrative area, given the stratification of the sample across the Wear Valley district, some residents will have attached a different level of importance to certain services depending on where they live (e.g. street wardens).

22. Due to such limitations, inherent in any market research of this type, the results do not challenge the responsibilities or discretion of elected members to decide council budget policy. SIMALTO modelling should best be viewed as one of the range of management tools available to allow both members and officers to make confident, informed budget decisions. The results of the SIMALTO exercise should empower the Council, offering an extremely important input from the 'silent majority' into the decision making process.

23. Based on this model, to improve customer satisfaction would require an increase of 3% on Council Tax. On this basis it might be prudent to consider funding some public funding preferences from other funding streams.

**recommendations:**

- i. That members note the content of this report.

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**Officer responsible for the report**

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### Summary of the SIMALTO method and list of council services under consideration

The SIMALTO survey involved a random, representative sample of 306 Wear Valley residents, with trained facilitators conducting 50-minute interviews with residents in their own homes. Ward maps were used to ensure that the number of interviews conducted was proportional to the ward's population.

The sample was also representatively split by age, gender and ethnicity:

	<b>Bishop Auckland</b>	<b>Crook</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Total</b>		
<b>Interviewed</b>	156	93	57	306		
<b>Sex</b>	<b>Male</b>	48%	<b>Female</b>	52%		
<b>Age</b>	<b>18-40</b>	34%	<b>41-59</b>	36%	<b>60+</b>	30%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>White British</b>	98%	<b>Other</b>	2%		

The SIMALTO technique used a matrix that identified 25 service areas provided by WVDC, for which the level of provision could be altered as a result of the budget setting process.

1	Grounds Maintenance
2	Level of subsidy for Leisure Centres
3	Level of investment in Leisure Centres
4	Activities for Young People
5	Young Peoples Health Development
6	Improved Support Services for Young People
7	Street Cleansing
8	Waste Management/Recycling
9	Recreation Grounds
10	Money Advice
11	Anti Social Behaviour Team
12	Neighbourhood Drug and Youth Disorder
13	Domestic Violence Team
14	Bishop Auckland Improvements
15	Investment in Business Support
16	Modern Apprenticeships
17	Local transport
18	Access to Services by Disadvantaged People
19	Involving Community in Decision Making
20	Educational Attainment
21	Communities Working Together
22	Handyman Service for Disabled/Older People
23	Cardiac Lifesavers
24	Extension of Careline to Include Telemedicine
25	Surestart in Tow Law

## SIMALTO Model: Residents' 5 Optimum Consensus Budget Allocations

Investment Scenario SIMALTO Points	-£200k 27	-£100k 32	As now 37	+£100k 42	+£200k 47
<b>Predicted Council Tax, +inflation</b>	-£10	-£5	As now	+£5	+£10
1 Grounds maintenance	9 cuts	9 cuts	12 cuts	12 cuts	12 cuts
2 Leisure centre prices	+25%	+25%	+25%	+10%	+10%
3 Leisure investment	Less	As now	As now	As now	As now
4 Young activities	As now	As now	Free	As now	Free
5 Young people health	As now	As now	As now	As now	As now
6 Young people support	As now	As now	As now	As now	Funding
7 Street cleaning	+ Key days	+ Key days	+ Key days	+ Key days	+ Key days
8 Waste management	As now	As now	As now	As now	As now
9 Recreation grounds	Less	Less	As now	As now	As now
10 Money advice	As now	As now	As now	As now	As now
11 A S B	Additional	+ private	+ private	+ private	+ private
12 Drugs / disorder	Additional	Additional	Additional	Additional	Additional
13 Domestic violence	As now	As now	As now	As now	As now
14 Bishop Auckland	No more	No more	No more	As now	As now
15 Business support	Stop	As now	As now	As now	As now
16 Apprenticeships	As now	As now	+7	+7	+7
17 Local transport	As now	As now	As now	As now	As now
18 Disadvantaged people	As now	As now	As now	As now	Devise plan
19 Consultation	As now	As now	As now	As now	As now
20 Community education	As now	As now	As now	As now	As now
21 Community working	As now	As now	As now	As now	As now
22 Handyman	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1
23 Cardiac lifesaver	As now	As now	10	As now	10
24 Careline	As now	As now	As now	As now	As now
25 Surestart	As now	As now	As now	As now	As now

The dark grey shaded options indicate where the current service level has been 'improved', and the light grey shading indicates savings in service level.

As the budget increases from a spend of 37 points to one of 48 points so the service level on each attribute usually improves or stays the same.



## Service improvement priorities

<b>Chart 1</b>	<b>After 1<sup>st</sup> Bonus</b>	<b>After 2<sup>nd</sup> Bonus</b>	<b>After 3<sup>rd</sup> Bonus</b>	<b>After 4<sup>th</sup> Bonus</b>
7 Street cleaning	54	69	79	87
8 Waste / recycling	42	57	66	73
11 A S B	39	52	68	76
16 Skills apprenticeships	31	52	65	76
4 Young people	30	42	58	69
22 Handyman	27	45	58	67
12 Drugs / disorder	26	42	55	67
17 Concessionary travel	26	38	47	64
14 Bishop Auckland	24	34	40	48
9 Recreation grounds	24	39	55	70
15 Business support	22	36	46	58
3 Leisure investment	21	33	45	57
23 Cardiac lifesavers	20	32	42	54
1 Grounds maintenance	18	26	41	51
2 Leisure subsidy	14	22	29	39
6 Young support	13	24	35	48
5 Young health	11	20	25	36
13 Domestic violence	11	17	26	37
18 Disadvantaged persons	11	19	31	43
21 Communications	7	15	25	36
24 Careline	7	15	25	35
19 Consultation	7	14	20	27
20 Adult education	5	9	15	22
25 Surestart	4	8	12	16
10 Money advice	3	7	13	18



## **POLICY AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**7<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2005**

### Report of the LSP Manager **COMMUNITY PLAN**

#### **purpose of the report**

1. To ask the views of the committee on the draft report and gain support for final publication of the revised plan.

#### **introduction**

2. The LSP and in particular the District Council has a statutory obligation to publish a community plan to ensure the needs of local people are met. The guidance states that the plan should concentrate on key priorities, look at the longer term and develop actions and targets to ensure those needs are met.
3. The plan forms the overarching strategy for all partners and links to other plans including in particular the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy. It is an agreed vision for a district and explains what the key issues are and at ways partner agencies can work together to deliver improvements. The plan will involve partners in the public sector, voluntary sector and private sector working together with local communities.
4. The community plan will be reflected in the business plans of other organisations and future funding will in a number of cases follow the community plan priorities. The plan deliberately concentrates on a few key priorities to ensure that the capacity is there within local organisations and communities to deliver. It is important to note that the Community Plan is reviewed annually as policies and needs change over time.

#### **community plan**

5. Wear Valley has had a number of draft community plans that have been used to develop the Council Plan, which is the Council's delivery plan that contributes to the delivery of the overarching Community Plan.
6. The thematic groups of the LSP have been involved in the development of this final draft and these include key partners including in all cases the District Council. The priorities have been set with reference to the evidence of deprivation and data relating to those priorities including the Index of Multiple Deprivation and Community Appraisals.

7. Members have all been asked to comment and many have taken this opportunity. The Community and partner agencies have also been consulted through a number of drop-in sessions throughout the district, articles in Matters, the Community Conference and a mail-out to about 200 people from a range of organisations. The draft Community Plan has also been on the Council's website for three months as part of the consultation process.

## **conclusion**

8. Response to the consultation has been favourable in terms of content and few changes are anticipated although the environment chapter will change and a revised draft is attached to this report. Some changes have been requested to layout of the document and the pictures used and these will be addressed when the final version is published in December.
9. The Community Plan is a key document linked to CPA and Local Area Agreements and we need to ensure that we have a finalised version as soon as possible to meet our statutory obligations.

## **RECOMMENDED**

1. That the Committee agree the draft community plan, attached at Annex P, with amended environment section and changes based on consultation responses.
2. That the Council adopts the final plan as the key strategy document supported by the Council Plan and future Local Development Framework.
3. That the Committee is kept informed of progress against action plan.

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**Officer responsible for the report**

**Author of the report**

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