

REPORT TO: CABINET 25TH APRIL 2007

AREA COMMITTEES / WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

TITLE: CPA SELF-ASSESSMENT

WHY IS IT COMING HERE? / WHAT DECISION IS REQUIRED?

We are required to submit a Self-Assessment for the CPA Corporate Assessment of the Council that will be carried out in June 2007. Cabinet are asked to agree the attached document as the basis for telling our story against the Key Lines of Enquiry set out by the Audit Commission.

IS THIS AN URGENT ACTION APPROVED BY THE CHAIR OF SCRUTINY?

NO

WHAT ARE THE KEY POINTS?

The self-assessment is a key document required for the corporate CPA assessment in June. It is our opportunity to set out our track record of achievement against the detailed criteria, the key challenges we face, how we are tackling them and to self-assess our scores. The self-assessment is part of the evidence we are required to send to the CPA team by the 14th May and it will guide their on-site exploration of the Council starting on 18th June.

It is important that we tell the story well and are self aware about areas where we need to improve further. The current version is a full working draft and still needs to be edited down and refined to ensure the evidence is properly annotated. There are still opportunities to change it and work will continue until the 30th April when the document will be sent for its final design format to make it attractive and part of the evidence bundle. As the document is still live the most up to date version will be reported to Cabinet on the 25th April together with an analysis of the suggested scores.

PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S RECOMMENDATION:

That the document be agreed as the basis of the self-assessment submission to the Audit Commission and that officers be authorised to

continue to refine it prior to the deadline of the 14th May. The final version will be circulated to all Members of the Council.

CONSULTEES AND THEIR OPINIONS

Cabinet Members and a wide range of officers and partners have contributed to the production of this document. EMG endorse the working draft.

CONTACT OFFICER AND RELEVANT PAPERS

Dave Harris Director for Corporate Services ext 1752

Setting the scene

We are proud of Kirklees the place and passionate about the Council we work for. The striking feature of Kirklees is its diversity. Created in 1974 from 11 constituent authorities, it is a place of varied topography, settlements and industrial development, with distinct communities that are a mix of traditions, cultures and religions. In the forefront of textile innovation in the industrial revolution, we have a great architectural heritage, vibrant town centres and some stunning countryside. The Council is large and complex with a long history of productive partnership working, an open and reflective culture welcoming external review and a supportive working environment. 86% of our loyal workforce are residents of the district and it is important to them that the Council has a good reputation with local people.¹ We are finely politically balanced with a cross-party commitment to make the difficult decisions, provide continuity and do our best to improve the quality of life for our communities. The current Cabinet's ambitions are for a district that is diverse, young, green and economically strong. This builds on our strengths and past achievements, for example our record of green innovation is of national significance.² We are strong on regional and partnership working and in engaging with our communities. Our key challenges include cementing our place within the regional economy, embedding change deep in a diverse organisation, getting the right balance between thematic and locality working and meeting the growing expectations of our communities.

Kirklees the place - diverse communities

We are the 7th largest Metropolitan District, the biggest not based on a major city, with a population of nearly 400,000 in an area of 408 square km.³ Huddersfield, with its growing University, is our largest town and recognised as an important employment, retail and cultural centre. We have attractive rural landscapes and settlements west and south of Huddersfield, from the slopes of the Peak District National Park, through the Colne and Holme Valleys to the rolling agricultural landscapes of Skelmanthorpe and Denby Dale. North of the River Calder our urban settlements of Dewsbury, Batley, Mirfield, and the Spenn Valley towns of Heckmondwike and Cleckheaton have distinctive historical and industrial roots, strong local identities and no natural affinity to Huddersfield. We have long struggled with a lack of local identity with the administrative area of Kirklees. Working with local people through our Area Committees we now recognise seven distinct localities (represented on our new logo) that better reflect diverse local identities. We increasingly use shared knowledge with our partners to gain intelligence about the needs and challenges of these localities and to develop locality sensitive services to meet them.

Demographics

Our comparatively young population has an average age of 37.6 years and a high birth rate at 13.5 per 1,000. Population will grow by 13.2% by 2026. This is above the regional but just below the national average. The number of households will increase by 28,000 in that time. There is little migration with other districts, with population levels affected by our birth rate and immigration

from elsewhere. The number of people of pensionable age is increasing, along with those aged 45-64 and 15-24, while the 25-44 cohort is declining. We have a growing number of older people who want to remain active and in their own homes for as long as possible but whose needs become more complex and acute as they become frailer in their later years.⁴

We have a large Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population at 14.4%, with people of Asian origin the largest group at 11% of the total population. Our BME population is also comparatively young. Children from this group account for over 28% of all school pupils, with Asian pupils accounting for nearly 21% of the total. We have improved school attainment strongly in recent years to address previous deficits and this has been acknowledged by Ofsted, although we still have further to go.

Local economy

We have a comparatively large economy in the Leeds City Region worth about £5bn. Economic growth and business start ups are above the national average but productivity and business survival rates are below. Manufacturing is still important and we have some world class niche products in precision engineering and technology. We have a growing service and knowledge based economy where the creative and media sectors are sub-regionally important. The University contributes both to the growth of the wider local economy and its skills base.

We have few large strategic development sites left within Kirklees. This challenges our ambition for a strong and sustainable local economy that we are tackling in the Local Development Framework. With a large rural area we face

issues of quality access to services and connectivity but are now seeing considerable improvements, especially with better broadband services. Our geographic location and quality environment make Kirklees a desirable place, reflected by the number of people who choose to live here and work elsewhere. We work hard to develop good sub-regional transport connections.⁵ Our built environment is marked by extremes of 19th century development, from high quality public and commercial buildings to lower quality mill housing and redundant industrial complexes. Many have been converted into quality apartments and mixed use facilities.

Our employment rate is slightly higher than average, our unemployment rate slightly lower. Unemployment ranges from over 4% in Ashbrow in Huddersfield to less than 1% in Kirkburton. We have a low rate of long term unemployment but youth unemployment is relatively high. We have relatively low basic skill levels. 40% of adults of working age have no qualifications in Dewsbury, only 23% in Denby Dale and Kirkburton. Three times as many people claim Incapacity Benefit as Job Seekers Allowance, especially in Dewsbury. Average income is above the regional but below the national average albeit growing above the latter. We are still a relatively low wage economy, with a large number of people travelling out of the district to better paid jobs, mostly to Leeds.

Social conditions

We are the 77th most deprived district of 354 in England on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. We have great disparities of wealth across the district. This partly represents an urban/rural split but there are areas of affluence in places like Lindley and Fixby in Huddersfield and pockets of rural deprivation in parts of the Colne and Holme Valleys. Nearly a quarter of households are without central heating, while 30% lack a car. Crime overall is down 18% from 2004 as a result of clear targeted partnership action. 56% of people think crime and anti-social behaviour is an issue in their area compared to 79% last year.⁶ We know that some communities do live separate and parallel lives and community cohesion is a concern to us, especially in the north.⁷

Average house prices are around two-thirds of the national average, £152,469 in South Kirklees and £126,475 in the north. Owner occupation is at 70%, council housing at 17% and RSLs 2.9%. We have invested £150M in the Decent Homes Programme. We still have inner urban areas where people on low incomes find it difficult to maintain ageing pre -1919 property. Nearly 16,000 private sector homes are 'non-decent'. Affordable decent housing is a particular concern

among Asian residents with 49% thinking this needs to improve, compared to 23% overall.

Parts of our area are amongst the least healthy in the country, with lower than average life expectancy and higher rates of infant mortality, obesity, smoking, cancer and circulatory disease. Average life expectancy at birth varies from 75 years in Dewsbury to 81 for the Holme Valley.

Kirklees – the Council

We are a multi-purpose organisation with 18,653 staff (13,811 fte). Each week we provide Home Care to 4,000 people, educate over 62,000 school children, empty nearly 162,000 bins and issue 38,000 library books. We maintain 1954 km of road, 33 parks, 285 playgrounds and 1100 km of public footpaths. In 2007/8 we have a net Revenue budget of £289M, a Capital Plan of £122M, a Housing Revenue Account of £61M and around £1.7bn worth of assets. We are a relatively low spending and generally high performing authority with a positive balance between cost and performance.⁸

Governance and standards

The Council has 69 Councillors from 23 wards with 21 Conservative, 20 Labour, 20 Liberal Democrat, 3 Green, 3 British National Party and 2 Independents. We elect in thirds and the next election is 3rd May 2007. We have a younger and more diverse Councillor profile than the average with 35% women and 17% from BME groups.⁹ Following 20 years of Labour control, no party has had an overall majority since 1999. Since then we have had a Labour minority, four parties shared, Liberal Democrat/Green minority and the current Conservative minority administrations. We have managed the transitions between these administrations very well reflecting the long standing strong partnership of trust that we have built between officers and Councillors in Kirklees.

Our current constitution, introduced in 2002, is based on the Leader and Cabinet model following the rejection of the directly elected Mayor option in a referendum. There are 8 Cabinet Portfolio holders and Cabinet meets in public every 2 weeks. We have 12 Area Committees and 5 Parish Councils. We have been in the forefront of developing the Overview and Scrutiny role and revised our approach in 2005 to operate more strategically and further improve the scrutiny of external partnerships and bodies. Our Scrutiny of the NHS proposals on reconfiguration of Hospital Services in Huddersfield was cited as work of the highest quality by the Secretary of State. We are clear that Scrutiny exists to improve the quality of decision making – getting it right first time – and Cabinet Portfolio holders share emerging key issues with Scrutiny to seek early input. In the

past 6 years we have had less than 10 call ins and are proud to have successfully kept party politics out of the scrutiny process.

We have high ethical standards with protocols for officers and Councillors based on the National Codes of Conduct. Where we have issues we deal with them directly. We are open to external challenge. We commissioned the Audit Commission to review our decision making structures in 2005 and developed a programme to ensure that our structures work effectively as a 'whole system' in an atmosphere of trust and good working relationships.¹⁰ We have clear role profiles for Councillors reflecting the different responsibilities they take and these relate both to the Members Allowances Scheme and to a nationally recognised quality development programme to skill our Councillors for the increasingly complex community leadership tasks as advocates for their diverse communities.¹¹

Structures

Organisationally we have six Directorates:

- **Children's & Young People's Service**
- **Adults and Communities**
- **Regeneration**
- **Environmental Services and Transport**
- **Finance**
- **Corporate Services**

The Chief Executive, Directors and the Director for Organisational Development form our Executive Management Group (EMG) that meets weekly.¹² Heads of Service form, with EMG, our Senior Management Group (SMG) that meets monthly. We also have an SMG+ group of over 400 managers from across the Council meeting for quarterly briefings. We have invested in leadership development for both EMG and SMG over recent years. We know workforce and succession planning are key to having the quality workforce we need for the future. Our Leadership Academy, launched last year, identifies cohorts of senior managers who have the potential to make a significant impact at senior level and proactively targets groups currently under-represented at that level.¹³ This programme is an integral part of our corporate Learning and Development Strategy.

Partnerships

We have an excellent track record over many years of attracting external resources, from City Challenge, SRB, Objective 2, PFI, right down to ISB last month. Through Yorkshire Forward, we have access to the Renaissance Market Town Programme and the West Yorkshire Investment Plan which both run to 2009. Our Building Schools for the Future programme will attract up to £400m over the next 14 years.

We have a long tradition of partnership working to deliver major regeneration schemes such as the Galpharm Stadium, Lawrence Batley Theatre, the Kingsgate Shopping Centre, the current development of Bretton Business Park in Dewsbury and into the future we have exciting plans for the Waterfront and Queensgate in Huddersfield. We are involved in service delivery partnerships, such as working with SITA to reduce waste through our waste to energy plant, Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing (KNH) our 4* ALMO to provide decent homes, our Leisure Trust, Kirklees Active Leisure (KAL) to offer better sport and leisure facilities and a range of partners at our Gateway to Care.

Most recently we have used the opportunities afforded by our Local Area Agreement (LAA) to re-structure our LSP and establish four Local Public Service Boards (LPSBs) bringing partners together to deliver services more effectively across the following shared priorities:

- **Safer, stronger communities**
- **Adults and healthier communities**
- **Children and Young People**
- **Regeneration/Sustainable Development**

Our LAA is seen by Government as a model of good practice of consultative working as it sets out our shared partnership priorities and targets for tackling the key issues facing our communities and brings together key players across sectors to commission and deliver the actions to achieve them. We are well placed for the next LAA round following the Local Government Act in exploring what place shaping means for us. The LPSBs are our vehicles for delivering our ambitions and are important channels of community leadership.¹⁴

Consultation

We were one of the first Councils to establish a citizens' panel: 'Kirklees Talkback' and we have many different ways of involving people in shaping services, both internally and externally. These include Equalities and Older People's Networks; Tenants and Residents Associations, where we are a Beacon for involvement; the 'Involving Young Citizens Equally' (IYCE) project which encourages young people to become involved in decision making; and Employee Talkback. We have good quality consultation with residents and are getting better at using the information effectively and feeding back to people more consistently what we have done with it.¹⁵

Learning and changing

We have changed considerably since our last corporate assessment. We have a sharper vision, a greater sense of place within the region and a clearer ambition. We are passionate about

delivering value for money in all that we do and have systems in place to examine costs and quality as well as the impact we have on the community and delivering our strategic objectives. Our performance management regime has improved our decision making, with better trend analysis and targeting of resources to key areas of risk helping us secure better value for money.

We have a robust programme management approach for the delivery of our Council Improvement Programme that is based on a comprehensive analysis of the organisation and user needs. It is proportionate and targeted where improvement is needed and has delivered significant improvements ranging from the education of our children to quality of our libraries and we have no outward facing service that could be described as weak. Our 2006/7 USPI results show some significant improvements.¹⁶

Our challenges include replacing workforce skills, meeting increasing demands for health and social care, enhancing access to services, maintaining community cohesion and ensuring we all benefit from rising regional prosperity. Under the banner of 21st Century Working we are looking at the kind of organisation we will need to be in 2020 if we are to meet rising expectations and changing service delivery demands.¹⁷

Building on our strength of partnership working we are moving towards more locality based working in the seven localities with the Police and the Primary Care Trust (PCT). We know that meeting the needs of our diverse communities requires customer excellence delivered in localities recognising different needs and based on clear risk based needs assessments. We want to bring services much closer to those who use them, involve service users more effectively, provide better co-ordinated services and be more responsive to differences in needs within and between communities. This move to locality working, whilst new in some ways, can be traced back to the very roots of Kirklees.

We are a strong and intelligent organisation with a good track record of delivering high quality services with high calibre people. We have strong processes and have brought in new people with new ideas and approaches to refresh our act. We recognise the strength of diversity. We need to make sure we continue to manage political continuity after the May elections and beyond. We must keep focusing on the clarity and understanding of the vision and the big picture and make sure creativity is not lost in process. We have to keep focus on community cohesion and the capacity of the third sector.¹⁸

Ambition

Our clear ambition is that Kirklees should be a district that is diverse, young, green and economically strong. This derives from customer needs and expectations, our past performance, national requirements and the challenges facing our communities. It is rooted in the distinct identity of each of our seven localities and in an understanding of how our quality of life is affected by the economic and social development of the Leeds City Region. Our ambition is set within the wider context in which we work and is shared with our partners. This 'Big Picture' describes how all our plans and strategies fit together to help us deliver our ambition and priorities. It is set out in an easy to follow section of our website with links to specific examples of achievement. It describes our vision for Kirklees Places, our four ambitions, how we deliver through Kirklees people and our distinctive style of working. This we all own: community, partners, Councillors and staff. We each know how our own actions contribute to achieving the whole. We take an innovative approach to partnership working, based on four Local Public Service Boards tightly focussed on connecting our vision and ambition to the commissioning and delivery of services. We achieve our ambitions most effectively when we bring the key local and national drivers together. Our Community Strategy, LPSA and LAA targets, LPSB delivery plans, Medium Term Financial Plan, Performance Framework, Corporate Improvement Programme and locality approach reinforce each other.

A sense of place – Vision of Kirklees

Our previous corporate assessment stressed that our vision did not fully address the distinctiveness of Kirklees or our place in the region. This has now changed. Our shared vision for Kirklees, adopted by the Kirklees Partnership in July 2004 following extensive consultation, offers a picture of where we want to be as a place. It is specific to the challenges and opportunities facing the places of Kirklees and shapes the Community Strategy:

"By 2020 Kirklees is recognised in West Yorkshire and beyond as an area of major success. Its strong economy is supported by an attractive, high quality environment, offering the best of rural and urban living. Creativity and learning are highly valued. Communities are proud of their past, but enjoy diversity, are outward looking and face the future with optimism. Both young and old find it a safe, healthy and supportive place, where there is a clear commitment that all should share in this success."

Roots of the Vision and Community Strategy

We revised our Community Strategy after our last corporate assessment. This was rooted in extensive consultation with Partners, Councillors and the public and evidenced in a 'State of the Borough' debate involving full Council and the Kirklees Partnership in April 2003. Four issues were consistently mentioned and reflected in the strategy adopted in 2004: the need for convenient access to jobs, shops, schools, sports facilities; ensuring people feel safe; making housing and travel affordable for those on low incomes; protecting and improving the quality of the built and natural environment. We made strong links to the LPSA, Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy, Community Cohesion Action Plan and Council - wide budgets to corporately fund innovative

schemes. Throughout 2004 and 2005 this work became closely aligned with the development of the LDF and Local Transport Plan, themselves subjects of major public consultation and related 'visioning' exercises at area-committee, sub-regional and regional level in the context of the growing focus on the Leeds City Region. Area Committees were producing their Community Action Plans during this period and the 2006-8 Community Strategy focuses around narrowing gaps within the four shared priority blocks, the LAA and delivery through the LPSBs¹⁹.

Ambition to deliver

As a Council we have brought a sharper ambition to delivering this vision²⁰. Our new administration considered the balance of challenges and opportunities summarised in the annual 'State of Kirklees' Conference in October 2006. Put alongside residents' views and their own political objectives they set out in November 2006 their ambitions for where the greatest drive should be to achieve their vision of Kirklees as a place:

- where diversity is a strength
- where young people want to be
- seen as a beacon for [green living](#)
- with a strong economy

Vision for each locality

Together with the vision, these ambitions provide the basis for an ambitious and maturing approach to locality working based around the towns and valleys with their distinctive identities and agendas that make up Kirklees. We want to achieve the same level of clarity and ambition for each of our seven localities, building on previous community visioning and planning exercises and intend to produce locality plans during 2007/8. Some early key actions to deliver the ambitions are set out in the **box on the right below**.

Aligning the strategic drivers

We have had forms of a community strategy for over a decade in Kirklees but early versions lacked sufficient edge to drive delivery amid the complexities of the partnership agendas. As a member of the Innovation Forum we played a role in developing the concept of the LPSA and LAA and we have used them to drive short term impact against the key elements of the shared priority blocks. Our LPSA1 delivery success rate was 73%, amongst the highest nationally, with for example a major reduction in domestic burglary and improved provision for domiciliary care.²¹

Shared approach to realising ambitions – the Kirklees Partnership and the LPSBs

In Kirklees “The Partnership” (the LSP) means the Partnership Board, the LPSBs and the locality structures. We recognise the need to exercise leadership wisely and not to dominate in partnership settings. The Leader chairs the Partnership Board and the Executive and relevant Cabinet Members chair the LPSBs, bringing their community leadership role and democratic legitimacy into partnership working and ensuring the Council prioritises its actions to meet the shared partnership delivery targets. The LPSB structure is echoed in Director and Cabinet Member portfolios, targets and performance monitoring to reinforce this.

The overarching Partnership Board’s role is to set the overall Community Strategy, ensure co-ordinated action, review impacts through the annual State of Kirklees event and to bring a wide range of intelligences and experiences to key issues. We underpin it through cross-agency intelligence systems e.g. the ‘Picture of Kirklees’²² Perform Database²³ and shared approaches to evaluation, the use of GIS as well as work force development and good management practice.

LPSBs are promoted nationally as a mechanism for delivering Community Strategies. We believe that delivery requires focus and so have taken an innovative line (since picked up elsewhere) in setting up four LPSBs, each connecting vision to delivery and commissioning in a specific field:

- Children and young people
- Adults and older people
- Safer and stronger communities
- Regeneration and sustainable development

The LPSBs contain the range of partners who have the ability to have an impact in each field. They include the voluntary and community sector which has 2 representatives on each LPSB, reporting back to voluntary networks linked to each theme. Our partners in the Voluntary Action

Actions to deliver the ambition

Diverse

- Locality working to enhance responsiveness and engagement
- Customer focus to respond to the needs of individuals in diverse situations, increase confidence in KMC and the rest of the public sector
- Analysis of different locality’s circumstances
- Target resources to close specific gaps
- Strengthen user surveys and feedback
- Support the Ward Councillor leadership role
- Explicit statement that all Kirklees residents are equal citizens with diverse needs and challenging racism, discrimination and victimisation
- Particular emphasis on contacts with young people
- New Equality and Diversity Enabling Framework and strengthening our employee networks
- Older people’s vision for independent living

Young

- Renew our commitment to Every Child Matters
- Use BSF to maximum effect, revitalising education with broader impact on community/green agendas
- Strengthen PCT/KMC drive on children’s health
- Programme of support for parents and carers
- Strong programme of events and sport activities for young people including the Kirklees Olympics
- Integrated approach to a learning Kirklees through children’s centres, schools, FE/SFCs and University
- Review the labour skills analysis against key economic growth sectors
- Focus on citizenship, young people’s identities, community relations issues, developing young people’s forums and a Youth Parliament

Green

- KMC striving to becoming carbon neutral
- Use smart metering to reduce energy, pursue district heating options and a drive on green travel plans
- Using LDF to establish some major green initiatives: e.g. settlement pattern that reflects green objectives, one or more carbon neutral schemes
- Pursue green agenda in renewed KMC Transport Vision
- Pursue maximum carbon efficiency in major development programmes: e.g. BSF
- Niche development of green enterprises – “Green Hub”; green skills development - a green academy; a Kirklees charter and design guide
- Guidance to householders on green initiatives, linked to Warm zone+ free insulation to 30000 homes
- Green aspect to building control/planning guidance

Economically strong

- Re-confirm our approach to the Prospectus for Investment, renaissance schemes, regeneration programmes, tourism development
- Enhance economic analysis of Kirklees/localities
- Develop a “Green Hub” for green enterprises
- Use skills need analysis against growth sectors
- Strengthen collaboration with FE and University, especially enterprise units and support for entrepreneurship
- Promote access to high speed broadband and nationally promote Kirklees towns
- Reaffirm importance of Transport Vision and LDF

Network were also involved in revising the Community Strategy and shaping the LAA.²⁴

The LPSBs started meeting in the spring of 2006. They provide a structure to bring key players together to agree shared outcomes and priorities for action. They coordinate interventions, authorise shared commissioning and monitor progress. They allow us to explore and test out the sharing and pooling of resources, breaking down barriers between services and simplifying partnership arrangements. They also build on the good partnership working that has been operating for many years in Kirklees in the areas of health, children's services and community safety.

Delivering at City Region level

Our location means the achievement of key aspects of our ambition depends on the successful development of Leeds City Region (LCR).²⁵ We have committed ourselves to providing leadership on key issues, each related to Kirklees interests, at that level. Our Leader chairs the LCR Leaders Board. Our Kirklees Transport Vision has led the way to a LCR Transport Vision. We convene the sub-regional Economic Development Partnership. We have led the West Yorkshire response to the challenges of Integration, Cohesion and Preventing Extremism. We have led the development of a successful West Yorkshire capacity development strategy.

Communicating our ambitions

Embedding our ambitions within the wider Big Picture has helped teams across the Council to tie their work into the overall endeavour. We use the Internet and Intranet, plus DVD material and internal newsletters, posters and calendars to send out a consistent message. We use locality based "Listening to You" sessions with frontline staff, team briefings and awaydays, management forums and partnership conferences to share our approach to delivery. We use open access Councillor Forums to keep whole Council engagement on Council and partnership issues in the context of a minority administration.²⁶

The paradox of rapidly improving user perceptions of services, but a static satisfaction rating with the Council as a whole, has emphasised the need for effective external communication. In response we revamped our A to Z of Services and Council Tax leaflet, re-branded the Council to provide a new corporate identity to emphasises the 'one Council' message. We launched a new and improved residents' magazine 'Kirklees Together' in February 2007 and each edition brings each strand of the ambition directly to life and alongside our media strategies provides a regular vehicle for community leadership over key issues.²⁷ The new corporate identity and logo symbolises the seven localities of Kirklees and supports our approach to

delivering locality based services focused on the customer and the diversity of their needs.

Being inclusive

Diversity is a defining characteristic of Kirklees. It is one of our ambitions that it should be one of our strengths. We have maintained a focus on community cohesion through a difficult period with the links to Dewsbury from the July 7th bombings. We tailor our services to the differing needs of our communities. We have been strong at a service level in identifying and addressing differing needs, we know we can do more to harness the knowledge and experience of our own diverse workforce to improve delivery further. Until 2006 our corporate focus was on legislative compliance and the measurement of performance, rather than understanding and learning from our outcomes. We have revised our approach to equality and diversity with a framework that links to customer service and localities, making it central to what we do and how we behave.²⁸

Equality and diversity commitment

We believe in treating everyone fairly and see the diversity of our community and workforce as a real strength. We want to build strong communities with a sense of togetherness and address disadvantage. We want everyone to be able to realise their potential and benefit from the cultural, social, economic and civic vibrancy of our district. We want to meet people's diverse needs and requirements as best we can and recognise that treating people fairly does not necessarily mean treating them as if they are the same.

This commitment applies to our work as an employer, a service provider, a contractor of services and a funding body and in our community leadership role.

A strategic authority

We try and balance the clarity and consistency of our current ambitions against the challenges facing Kirklees in the longer term. We have set out our analysis in a document shared with key partners: "Kirklees Challenges – next five years".²⁹ We are not trying to shape our communities into one Kirklees but do have one strong partnership that supports our differing communities to build on their strengths and develop in ways that address their particular circumstances and place within the wider city region. We agree with the Lyons analysis that place shaping is not just about co-ordinated services with partners, important though that is, but is about taking responsibility for an area and the people who live there, promoting their interests, well being and their future. That is what we seek to do as community leaders.

Prioritisation

Aligning our financial and human resources to meet the challenges we face from national and local demands is an enduring activity. We deliver our ambitions by prioritising our corporate effort and developing the capacity of the Council and our partnerships to provide excellent services and adapt well to future changes. National targets and the shared priorities inherently focus on the right things that we need to address to improve the quality of life of the communities of Kirklees. Our ambitions and priorities are also based on a strong analysis of customer, resident and demographic data. We have invested time and thought into understanding and refining our approach to priority setting and how to communicate it. We have traditionally been strong in linking our priorities with the budget process and understanding the drivers for change, including user satisfaction. We have got better at assessing impact within the prioritisation process. We have recognised the need for a comprehensive statement of corporate priorities that are clearly understood and linked to our robust service planning process. We have a 3 year rolling Corporate Improvement Programme (CIP) focusing additional corporate attention where a service or function is under performing or facing major challenges. We continue to refine this process and are now adjusting our priorities against the new ambitions. The 2007/8 budget for example is our 'greenest' yet.

Understanding prioritisation

Staff have told us we have had too many priorities in the past³⁰. We now explain more clearly both the key issues the Council faces and the things staff need to focus on in their daily working lives. There are clear service priorities responding to needs that are addressed through our well developed service planning and budget prioritisation process³¹. We have key corporate priorities to drive our ambition and cross-cutting challenges where we need strong collective effort and resources to achieve results. These form our Corporate Improvement Programme (CIP). We are now clearer where priorities sit, who owns them, who needs to know about them and how they are communicated.³²

Where do our priorities come from?

We have a well developed and quality assured corporate consultation resource.³³ Our Kirklees Talkback Panel, tracker, user and residents surveys, focus groups, complaints, compliments and local intelligence from Councillors, Area Committees and Partners tell us the highest priorities of Kirklees residents. We do exercise judgement and leadership in analysing this intelligence. For example Libraries have never been a local priority in surveys but any attempt to close one results in ferocious opposition! Instead we have broadened the offer through developing Library and Information Centres (LICs) to turn round this perception and usage and satisfaction in the new facilities is considerably improved.³⁴ We track the findings of Scrutiny Panels, Area Committee issues and analyse performance and demographic data. Our risk assessments against CPA criteria and national legislative and regulatory developments contribute to our knowledge. Our 'State of Kirklees' annual debate

with partners follows trends, identifies new challenges and looks at the impact we are making to improve the outcomes for local people.

Evolution of our current approach

We have had the CIP for the last five years, monitor progress regularly, constantly learn from the impact we have and refine the programme accordingly. By focusing collective attention on areas of under performance and poor customer service we improved our Revenues and Benefits Service from zero to 4* performance³⁵ turned round Planning's poor PIs³⁶ and brought a performance management culture to Culture and Leisure Services³⁷. Until 2006 the CIP focused on four themes: providing high quality services; excellent customer service; improving quality of life through leadership and partnership; and developing the capacity of the organisation. Each priority had an action plan covering objectives, key actions, milestones, resource implications, linkages & responsibilities. Whilst a sound programme it was not sufficiently outcome focused. Our staff told us in the 2005 Employee Survey that we did not manage change well enough and we recognised that the major change elements of these priorities required better project and programme management. We started to address these deficiencies in the spring of 2006.

A number of things helped. Our LAA and LPSB structure helped us to focus on the impacts we wanted in key areas and linked our priorities to partnership delivery structures. The LPSB and Directorate structure was designed to bring to life and commission the actions needed to marry national and local priorities to deliver for local people. Our LAA now provides the point of reference for a broad range of priorities and targets managed through the LPSBs. We used the opportunity of our first Local Public Service

Agreement (LPSA) to focus on major improvements in areas of particular public concern, such as street cleanliness, levels of crime, road safety, educational attainment, support for young people and improving employment prospects in disadvantaged areas.

Our Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy with its focus on deprived areas has also shaped our priorities and the floor targets are now within the LAA.³⁸ Neighbourhood Renewal priorities for educational attainment, health, crime and liveability are integrated within the LPSBs' delivery programmes and include a school inclusion project, an alcohol misuse strategy and helping the voluntary and community sector to deliver more low level social care as we have progressively withdrawn the lower levels of eligibility criteria to meet budget constraints.

We included users in the development and implementation of our strategies and priorities. For example, young people had a strong input into the Kirklees Children and Young People's Plan and the Older People's Network into the LAA. It is through locality working and our user and resident perception survey work that we respond to many of the issues raised by disadvantaged and hard to reach groups. We helped our Equality and Diversity Networks to bring their knowledge and perspectives to the challenge of getting our services and change programmes right. Work with the BME network on our workforce development strategy is ongoing.³⁹

The development of a sharper set of Kirklees specific ambitions and the re-expression of the Big Picture has helped us here. The linkages between the ambition and the CIP have brought clarity to what's important to us all. We have thought harder about the linkages between the CIP, LPSB and LAA priorities, service improvement priorities and our performance management approach. We know the change and improvement programmes we need to focus on to achieve our intentions. This has led to a refinement of the CIP for 2007 - 2010.

Ambition into practice – our new Corporate Improvement Programme

We have made significant revisions to our CIP process to provide a stronger programme management approach. The CIP remains a tool for improvement but also a prioritisation of actions to deliver the new ambition. We established eight Programme Boards to manage our overall improvement programme. The programmes are:

- **Children and young people** – youth ambition, Building Schools for the Future, locality working and joint commissioning through the LPSB
- **Regeneration/sustainability** – economic ambition and regeneration through the LPSB

- **Safer, stronger, healthier communities** - health, community cohesion, voluntary sector capacity, locality working, better housing opportunities, joint commissioning for adults and health, safer stronger communities
- **Organisational Development** – Learning and Development Strategy and overall CIP programme co-ordination and performance monitoring
- **21st century working and customer excellence** – customer excellence, asset management, strategic office accommodation, flexible and mobile working, ICT and communications infrastructure
- **Performance and governance** – Diversity, HR reform and Single Status, Performance Management, Officer/Councillor relationships, Community Leadership and the Local Government Bill, external communications and marketing
- **Financial Intelligence** – Value for Money, financial capacity and use of resources, risk management
- **A green Kirklees** – green ambition and Kirklees Warmzone

The colour coded diagram opposite shows how the new ambitions are driving the CIP and where enhanced organisation capacity is contributing to delivering change. One thing is becoming clearer: the Diversity ambition runs through the whole improvement and change programme as the yellow shading indicates. We are recognising that meeting the different needs of our people and communities means delivering customer focused services in localities and that is the route to mainstreaming Diversity.

These corporate priorities and associated change programmes are significant and require good project and programme management. Our challenge is determining the appropriate places for the reporting of different initiatives, targets and priorities so we do not get overburdened with process and keep a tight focus on the things that really matter and need careful watching. The highlight and exception reporting process ensuring we maintain this focus is found in the performance management section.

Delivery

Delivery of the cross-cutting priorities of the CIP is owned collectively by EMG and often by the whole Partnership but lead roles are aligned with the Directorate and LPSB structures. Each CIP has a Director lead with personal targets to deliver the programme agreed as part of the PRD process with the Chief Executive. Cabinet Portfolio holders take the political leadership role

for each CIP. Where appropriate we also identify the key priorities which are specific to the area of operation. For instance the Children and Young People Directorate and LPSB add to their CIP responsibilities some specific priorities around improving attainment and closing gaps, achieving better outcomes for looked after children, improving children's health⁴⁰ and tackling bullying. These are current LAA targets and in the longer term Children and Young People's Plan.

We have a Project Plan for each element, based on the Council's well-established "Framework for Successful Projects" which is our customised version of the PRINCE2 methodology⁴¹. Together with dedicated Programme Managers reporting to Directors this ensures that the related change programmes are effectively managed, identified benefits realised and linkages and dependencies are followed through. The Council's Performance Plan brings the full picture together annually, providing accountability for progress and looking forward to the next year⁴².

Resource linkages

The CIP elements are a key part of the context set out in advance of our annual roll forward of the three-year Kirklees Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)⁴³. They are then reflected in three main ways: we vary the impact of the overall financial strategy so that improvement areas are resourced; we use efficiencies to redirect resources to priority areas within service and activity plans; and for some elements of the change programmes we allocate specific resources within a dedicated 3 year CIP budget provision, currently standing at £7.9M.

Our annual revenue and capital budget proposals are rigorously tested against priorities through the impact assessments each service provides as part of the budget process for all party budget challenge meetings. Priorities are extensively discussed with political groups. This includes how we propose matching resources to the CIPs and the administration's ambition which provided a lively debate in our politically balanced environment leading to a 3 party understanding on the shape of the final budget (Conservative, LibDem, and Green) agreed by full Council.

Communication and ownership

Ownership of our priorities starts with a shared perception of the contexts, needs and aspirations of Kirklees places. The State of Kirklees events provide an overall focus for this, but the detail is in the partnership discussions at the LPSBs and a wide range of workshops and awaydays, designed to set quantified information alongside direct experience to achieve a full and sharp engagement with the improvement agendas. We have revitalised the Partnership Website to

improve shared information. With this foundation in place, we use the SMG+ group of 400 managers, open sessions for all Councillors, staff meetings, staff newsletters, core briefing materials for Team Briefings, the intranet, and locality-based "listening to you" sessions for frontline staff to make sure that our focus is clear and that each team knows how its efforts contribute to the whole. We use Service Improvement Plans and PEAK (see performance management section) to maintain the focus.

'Management Matters', our regular electronic management bulletin and 'News and Views', our internal newsletter to all staff, are other means of disseminating our priorities, along with the use of lunchtime Management Forums to which partners are invited. We use our ambitions as key, colour-coded, themes in our new community newsletter: "Kirklees Together", so that a sense of ownership is shared with residents. Resident and staff feedback from the first edition has been very positive. Our developing localities approach is substantially increasing the vitality of community engagement with issues and Area Committees are applying their devolved capital and revenue budgets to match local priorities.

Implications of not being a Corporate Improvement Priority

There are no aspects of service delivery where we do not strive for high standards. The emphasis within the CIP on capacity building and managing performance across the Council reinforces our commitment to whole organisation development. Our range of sustained three and four star service scores supports our view that we can deliver to high standards on a wide front. We focus our corporate and partnership support and allocate additional resources where we believe the most intense change is required. That means that some areas of stable high performance are not corporate improvement priorities: services to older people are an example; revenues and benefits services are (now) another. In these areas the drive for value for money and continuous improvement continues through Service Improvement Plans and the rigorous application of performance management.

Impacts achieved along the way

Several projects in earlier editions of the CIP no longer feature because we have achieved the impacts we sought. Three examples:

In 2002 our highest service improvement priority was our Revenues and Benefits Service, which was beset by poor systems, poor performance against targets, poor response to service users and (not surprisingly) poor morale. The CIP focus led to changed management, increased

investment, new systems and, crucially, a whole organisation attention to supporting the service and expressing confidence in its recovery. It rapidly progressed from a failing service to one which achieved a four star rating, which it retains. It is no longer a priority for improvement, but it remains an area where we are determined to maintain the quality of service. The highest impact for service-users lies in the increased stability in the financial circumstances of those on benefits and, for some, a significant improvement in their finances through access to benefits they had not been taking up.

Similarly, the Planning Service has featured in earlier CIPs as PI performance was below acceptable levels and we were named by Government as a Standards Authority. It also received whole organisation support and now sustains performance that exceeds its targets, recognised by receipt of Planning Reward Grant.

Our rate of overall improvement in education attainment, and our progress in closing gaps between different groups of children stalled in 2003 and 2004. We also accumulated too many schools in categories of concern. We picked the issue up rapidly, reviewed our approach using good practice from elsewhere, provided additional resources within the CIP budget and launched a high profile community leadership campaign. The last two years have shown a much stronger trend and the APA judgements now show confidence in our continuing approach.⁴⁴

Next steps

A number of our priorities over the years have reflected long-term commitments that have remained steadfast through a number of changes in administration, such as our focus on green issues, customer contact and regeneration. There has been a shared determination to do what is best for the district and see things through. This is one of the reasons why we are confident that major long-term change programmes such as Building Schools for the Future⁴⁵ and mainstreaming Diversity will succeed.

We see the strengthening localities approach in Kirklees as providing the most significant further opportunity to increase our impact. It is within the localities that we expect to gain the most intense relationship between residents' views and partnership attention to delivery. The approach builds on area-based community action plans, the local prioritisation of environment and highway investment, youth provision, attention to public spaces and regeneration and the growing success of neighbourhood policing. But we think we can go further.

We expect to sharpen the linkages between the health challenges of Kirklees and the CIP. We

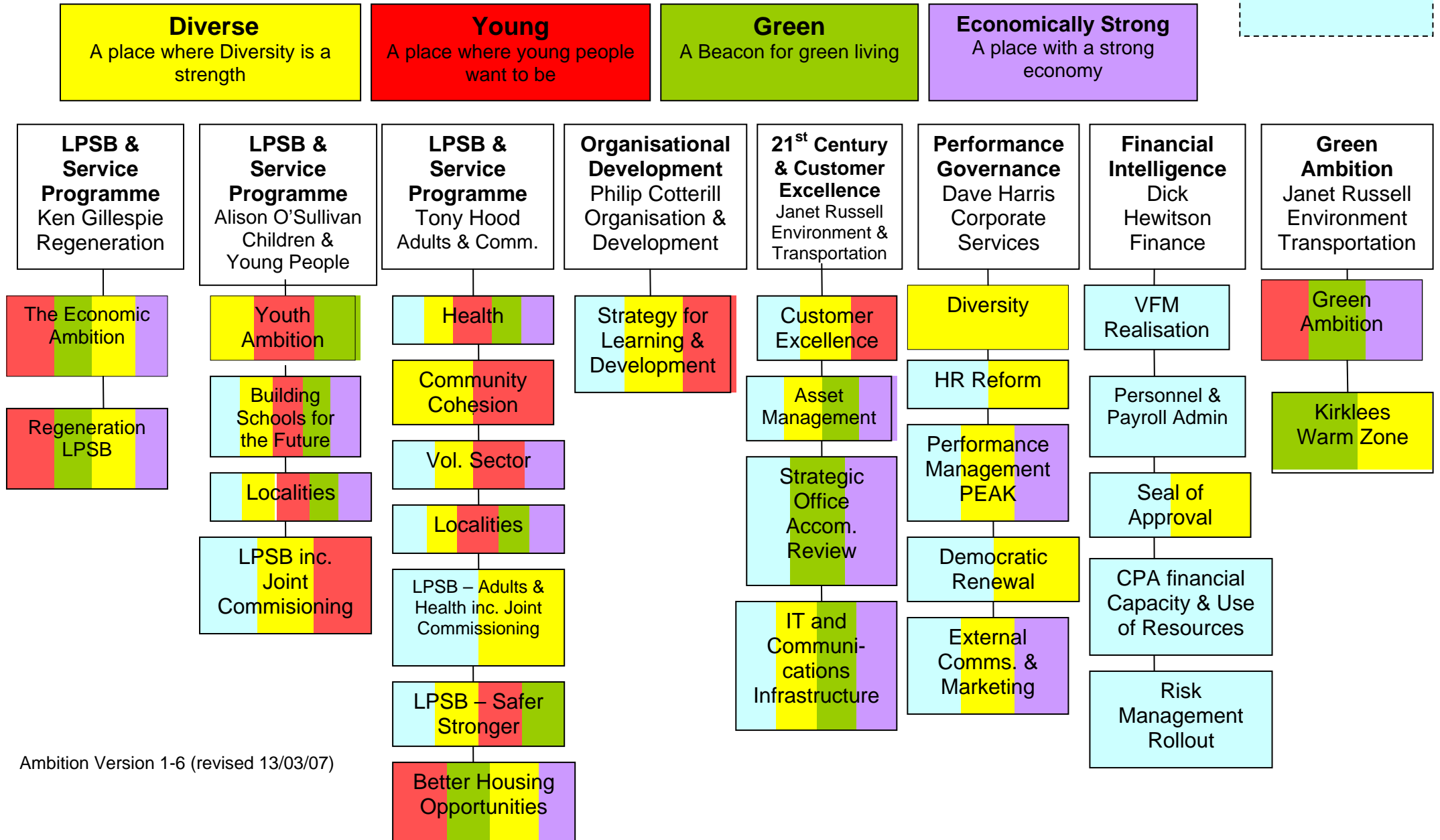
already have explicit elements in the LAA and the action plans of the LPSBs, but the 2006

consolidation of the local PCT structure into one body, our shared approach to public health with the joint appointment of the Director of Public Health together with our shared commitment to the further development of locality delivery and commissioning now provide the basis for a stronger CIP element. To drive this strongly we will complete a shared Strategic Health Needs Assessment in the autumn of 2007.

The Vision (Community Strategy)

Delivering the Ambition

Capacity



Capacity

We have a long tradition of excellent working relationships between Councillors, officers and partners based on trust, respect and common goals. We are strongly committed to community leadership and accountability, support our Councillors in their many roles, including a quality development programme. We modernised our decision making structures to make the Executive and Scrutiny model work well. We have pursued long-term initiatives despite changes in administrations and address difficult policy and resource issues where there is strong community impact. We maximise our capacity by developing our workforce for the challenges ahead, working effectively with partners, driving better procurement, drawing in external funding and using external providers where appropriate. We are a prudent Council with a strong financial base, a growing value for money culture and a continued drive for efficiencies. Our new approach to equality and diversity is about influencing people's behaviour, tackling discrimination and achieving customer focused services delivered in localities. Our 21st Century Working programme is about delivering services differently, including mobile, home and flexible working, using assets more effectively, reducing the need to travel and supported by an effective ICT infrastructure allowing us to work smarter.

Full Council

Full Council meetings balance wide debates on key policy issues with political challenge and public accountability of the Administration. Council meetings have slots for developmental discussion, often engaging partners: e.g. the Policing Plan where all Members worked with Police colleagues and shaped policing priorities for their areas. We recognise the implications for democratic accountability by investing power over mainstream delivery and commissioning in the LPSBs. We take particular care to make sure that all the major parties are represented on partnership structures and use open sessions for all 69 Councillors so that leading Members expressing a Council voice in partnership settings report developing issues and take wide soundings. The same approach keeps all Councillors in touch with City Region debates.

Cabinet

Successive Community Strategies provided a common context for minority administrations. Each has taken difficult and ambitious decisions through strong leadership, sometimes in difficult political circumstances. The closure of residential homes and developing a mixed economy of care for older people is one example. Cabinet meets fortnightly in public to make decisions and informally weekly with senior officers to discuss key strategic issues, risks and the political management of the Council. It balances business meetings with separate resource and performance sessions and periodic away days with EMG where major longer term strategies are developed. We have an integrated agenda planning process to ensure that Cabinet business is conducted well, issues are dealt with expeditiously and quality timely information informs decision making. All our agendas, reports and decisions are easily available on our

website. Our officer delegation scheme ensures routine decisions are made at the right level with Cabinet focusing on strategic and cross cutting issues and not getting bogged down in detail.

Overview and Scrutiny

Kirklees developed a Councillor led scrutiny function long before the modernisation of local government and we have nurtured it as Cabinet government, partnership working and local engagement have moved on. It has handled some high-profile scrutiny issues well. Scrutiny engages directly and informally in the overview of key issues at a formative stage so that it influences policy developments and focuses on investigatory work which will affect strategy. Recent attention to Education Academies is an example. We have continued to develop the support structure as the role has evolved, most recently by resources to allow the Community Call for Action to be tested. We use lay members on panels and external expertise where it can help work through complex issues, such as those that arose from our early PFI schemes. We have kept the party whip out of Scrutiny, it has always been chaired by an opposition Councillor and we emphasise constructive challenge and dialogue.

Devolved decision making

Community engagement and community leadership requires some appropriate local decision making. We have 12 Area Committees where Council Services and partners come together to help Councillors decide on the allocation of delegated revenue and capital budgets for local improvement schemes to pursue priorities in their Community Action Plans. We supported our Parish Councils in the pursuit of Quality Status, two having achieved this, and signed a Parish Charter with all five.

Member development, support and standards

The Council demands a lot from its Councillors. We have clear expectations set out in “role profiles” ranging from the responsibilities and accountability of being a ward Councillor and local advocate through to Cabinet Portfolio holder and Leader. They have been updated to reflect the enhanced community leadership roles in the Local Government Bill and are used by our Independent Review Panel to set Councillors’ basic and Special Responsibility Allowances.⁴⁶

We have developed a highly successful approach to Councillor development with a dedicated officer working closely with all Party Leaders and Group Business Managers. It is Councillor led and flexibly focused on the needs of the individual. Councillors have PDR sessions and tailored development packages (53 out of 69 so far). We use the many opportunities within Groups, across Groups, around special interests and across partnerships to discuss issues and develop understanding and skills. The programme uses Huddersfield University and other specialist inputs. It responds to new challenges: e.g. risk management techniques. We have used the Leadership Centre to work on LPSB capacity. We use the intranet and a Member-focussed newsletter to share key information. Our Councillor development outcomes are charter marked and have recently been commended by the Municipal Journal.⁴⁷

Our Standards Committee is about to have an independent chair. It oversees a political culture which has matured in the context of minority administrations. The ethical framework is clear and well understood. We have protocols around semi-judicial roles, Group support and political campaigning. We have had some difficult challenges, including issues of accountability and the threat of politicisation of scrutiny episodes. Where these have occurred we have moved quickly to discuss issues between senior officers and leading Councillors across the Council and have always found common ground in re-engaging with shared ethics and expectations.

Developing our people

Good people are our strongest resource. We want a skilled and motivated workforce, well managed and productive. We need to plan future succession and encourage our talent to develop and become the next generation of managers and leaders. A strategic approach to this was one of our weaker areas up to 2005. We now have an HR reform programme within the CIP to give managers greater flexibility, opportunities to exercise judgement and take responsibility for shaping their Service. We want managers to

lead, inspire and motivate their staff as this is key to achieving our ambition.⁴⁸

To ensure we have the right culture and working environment there is a learning and development strategy encompassing leadership and development, supported by induction and key skills training for all staff. Our framework approach to HR policies encourages managers to focus on the individual with consistency being around judgment rather than rules. To help employees meet the complex demands of work and home we have introduced flexible working, working at home with mobile and touch down working. Flexible, home and mobile working is popular with staff and increases productivity.⁴⁹

These opportunities are supported by a shared expectation of a well organisation, including managing performance (PEAK⁵⁰) and attention to absence management. Sickness absence has continued to decline to 11.05 from 12.25 days per FTE in the last 12 months. It is still too high and continued focus on the toolkit⁵¹ for improving attendance remains a target for all managers. We have an employee healthcare function which helps develop our managerial competences in managing people and bringing them back to work, as well as supporting referred individuals and reducing work related illness⁵².

Leadership and Management Development

The learning and development strategy encompasses all our employees. We manage our workforce through a range of council wide and service specific competencies. These are used in recruitment, growing employees’ skills and in managing individuals’ performance. As part of transforming the organisation we have raised the bar in terms of our expectations of managers. Support for managers includes our Leadership Academy (48 senior managers are currently participating, including some from partner organisations), Personal and Management Development Programmes, Service Management Programmes and internal and external coaching⁵³. We work with our internal staff networks (BME, Disabled, LGBT) to ensure that the overall approach to workforce development drives a diverse and balanced representation and where appropriate specific individuals are identified for attention through personal development programmes. Feeding into this strategy are a number of learning and development team leader and supervisor programmes. We use the intranet for a wide range of interactive learning material and short course programmes targeted at front line staff and the development of core skills. We have achieved IIP recognition, at service and corporate level, last renewed in 2006.

Single Status

We have paid compensation for Equal Pay claims for 4,400 female staff and are expecting to complete a negotiated deal on outstanding Tribunal Claims shortly. We have planned carefully and project managed well the single status and equal pay issue, have made prudent provision in the MTFP and have not had to resort to capitalisation.⁵⁴ We are embracing the opportunity of single status to make a fundamental shift in the way we manage the workforce. We seek to create an organisation that feels fair, promotes well being, enables service excellence and addresses the green agenda. To achieve this we are creating a partnership with our employees, facilitated by harmonising our terms and conditions. We have brought a more measured and businesslike approach to our relationships with the Trades Unions over the past 2 years, greatly improving mutual understanding and industrial relations. We are on course to conclude a negotiated single status settlement in September.

Financial capacity, vfm and risk

Our priorities, performance objectives and budget context are brought together through a policy and performance led three year budget strategy. We have a very strong budget process with all-party transparency, robust challenge, with a focus on impact, risk, efficiency, value for money, people and priorities. The 07/08 budget setting process was marked by high Councillor awareness of issues differentially affecting disadvantaged communities and an appreciation of how we can maximise efficiencies.

Our budgetary process integrates capital and revenue budgets in the context of corporate and service priorities. We are strong on resource allocation, financial reporting and internal control. We have a mature approach to end of year accounting and rollover. When we have had financial challenges (Social Services client increases and single status costs are recent examples) we have moved quickly to rebalance the three year strategy. We have traditionally made prudent contingency provision for future challenges and managed our reserves wisely.

We work hard to instil a value for money culture throughout the organisation through council-wide and service self-assessments, are continuing to embed a culture of risk management and have set up an Audit Committee following external recommendation.⁵⁵ Within the MTFP process we free up resources through efficiencies (well in excess of Gershon targets)⁵⁶ and change policies to reflect new priorities (e.g. revisions to homecare eligibility criteria). We have an explicit

budget for implementing the CIP and have set funds aside to enhance our library book fund, support activities that remove schools from special measures and improve the cleanliness of the district. We can evidence the impacts.

The management of risk is central to our budget process, project management, priority setting and service planning. We launched our Risk Management Strategy in 2004⁵⁷. The Corporate Risk Register⁵⁸ includes some **XX** risks used in ensuring a sustainable MTFP. The preparation of the Register is overseen by Cabinet Members, with monitoring and action responsibilities for each risk assigned to Directors. There is corporate quarterly monitoring with additional risks being added and existing risks reassessed. More detailed Service Risk Matrices are also monitored quarterly. Risks associated with projects are identified through the Framework for Successful Projects methodology. We have used external challenge to identify the subtler issues of ensuring a vfm and risk management culture and are implementing recommendations through the Learning and Development Strategy.

ICT and e-government

Effective use of ICT and information is crucial to customer response, good commissioning and efficient working. We have maintained a strong in-house approach working with external suppliers and can demonstrate successful impacts: substantial increase in customer satisfaction, SOCITM top scores for networks and transactional website, significant efficiency savings linked to new ways of working. Our ICT costs are below average.⁵⁹ We met all 73 of our e-government priority outcomes with 896 transactions e-enabled. Planning is one of the top UK e-planning authorities⁶⁰ and we have developed a broadband network for 200 schools.

We are managing a programme to secure a new generation network designed for collaboration and information sharing rather than Service silos. It will enable flexibility in our asset base, make us better able to meet expectations of customers, support economic initiatives, help us bridge the digital divide, address green issues, locality working and reducing the need to travel.⁶¹

Kirklees Direct, our contact centre, deals with over a million calls a year, with high pick-up and satisfaction rates. Our website has an average of around 170K visits per month, has consistently been assessed as being in the top 20 most developed sites in the UK. Chatback provides a free text messaging service for 13 to 21 year olds and we run a national programme for promoting information through Digital TV.⁶² We have developed a simplified contact system for customers so they only have to give information

to us once.⁶³ Our approach to customer access is to provide a balance of electronic and face-to-face access to our services, whilst encouraging more people to use the former. This is not only on grounds of cost but reflects the fact that 80% of our customers prefer to contact us by phone.

Maximising our resources and learning from others

We use outside consultants when appropriate to help with leadership and management development and on process re-engineering exercises aimed at reducing delivery times, costs and improving services. Examples are the use of BPR consultant expertise to help reform Revenues and Benefits and the Payroll functions, external challenge for our housing PFI scheme, our procurement strategy and our asset management approach.

We have refreshed our Procurement Strategy⁶⁴ following an IDeA health check in 2005 and have introduced stronger equality policies.⁶⁵ We work closely with the Centre of Excellence in Leeds, collaborate in letting contracts and have developed a new on-line supplier and contract manager system with 22 other councils.

Improved asset management is central to our approach to 21st Century working. We want to use our asset and property portfolios more strategically, in combination with our partners, and create more customised facilities for the public and our staff. This is an area where we have struggled to make strong progress in the past. Following diagnostic work by York Consulting we have put in a designated senior lead and additional CIP resource support to set up a new Strategic Asset Management Unit. This is also focusing on the deliverability of the capital plan and its alignment to corporate priorities.⁶⁶ We now have a clearer road map for where we want to get to but recognise there is much to do.

Responding to diverse needs

Our revised approach to equality and diversity has been referred to under our ambitions and sets the tone for our approach to service delivery, employment practice, relationships with other agencies and community leadership. In particular, we want to make more use of our staff's diverse experiences and knowledge and focus our Equality Networks on a programme of developing good practice within the organisation.

We are currently engaged in a refresh of our approach to customer care⁶⁷ and this work has strong links with PEAK, the development of our equalities and diversity framework and our revised approach to external communications.

We are particularly focussed on developing the capacity of the Voluntary and Community Sector

alongside new approaches to commissioning. With the PCT we have identified a development programme, released an experienced manager to lead it and have now secured ISB⁶⁸ funding which will allow us to move apace on this.

Performance Management

Improving the performance management of our staff and service outcomes has become a priority for us over the past 5 years. Our previous Performance Management Framework (PMF) was launched in 2001 and helped us make progress in improving our attention to performance indicators, regular corporate monitoring, priority setting and links to the budget process. By 2004 we recognised it had become too bureaucratic and less effective in engaging people in the culture and delivery of improved performance. Performance Management became a CIP in 2004 and this work led to the launch of 'Performance Excellence Across Kirklees' (PEAK) in December 2005.⁶⁹ Our new approach is heavily influenced by our collaborative organisational culture and relationships with partners and the wider community. It is strongly people centred, drawing from a menu of performance tools covering project, programme, performance, risk and change management, as well as inspection, complaints, scrutiny, challenge and learning from them. We feel this better reflects the complexity of our working environment. At its heart is the simple recognition that staff need to know what is expected of them and have the tools to do the job well.

Performance Excellence Across Kirklees

We have had clear expectations of performance management arrangements for over ten years. Our earlier approach was well thought out and moved us forward. We learned that we had to put much greater effort into the human interactions which drive improved performance and not just into the mechanics of process. PEAK provides a structure more attuned to our culture of valuing and treating our staff fairly, consulting and keeping them informed and ensuring they are well trained and supported. It is linked to delivering our priorities and proportionate to the level of job and the skills required to do it well.

We focus strongly on understanding our customers and communities and the actions required in achieving outcomes. We emphasise the quality of the conversation with staff around performance and development needs and provide the tools for managers to manage. PEAK covers our personal review and development (PRD) process, competencies, equality and diversity, service performance planning, quality and accessibility of performance data and our budget and priority setting cycle. The Equality and Diversity Strategy links to PEAK, including learning materials on behaviours, impact statements, legal requirements and the role of the equality networks in monitoring performance.

We make the link from the Big Picture and ambition through to service, team and individual plans and priorities to make clear everyone's contribution and how they can improve future performance and impact. We have ensured that PEAK is applied across the Council with support and e-learning packages on good service planning, communication skills, coaching, having the difficult conversations and giving productive feedback. Managers welcome this and there is a high recognition of PEAK and its importance across the Council. The number of staff receiving PRDs has gone up and so has their quality.⁷⁰

We have an embedding Peak Project within the CIP with work packages to develop further the understanding of roles and responsibilities, strengthen standards for performance management, the better use of customer information and competency based recruitment.

Performance and project delivery

We link project management and delivery to the PEAK regime. Our Framework for Successful Projects was derived from PRINCE2 and launched in 2004 with a package of training support, a tailored implementation plan for each service and service champions. Project management disciplines are now widely adhered to across the council and we use them well in areas of high risk and multiple dependencies, such as Building Schools for the Future and major Regeneration schemes. Our challenge is to ensure a sense of proportion, maintaining the mental disciplines of these approaches while avoiding being distracted by too much process.

Underpinning performance database

We launched our PI database, PERFORM, in 2005 working with Bradford Council.⁷¹ PERFORM is available to staff and Members via the intranet and access has been extended to partner agencies to support LPSB monitoring. Overview and Scrutiny Members receive detailed information on a list of key PIs they have selected. PERFORM is easy to use, drives awareness of a performance culture and generates quarterly monitoring reports for Director and Member challenge. PERFORM has helped us improve data quality including better target setting to help drive improvement. We received a very positive assessment of our Data Quality from the Audit Commission last year and are looking at how we can improve this further.

Incorporating knowledge of local circumstances and residents' views

We are strongly focussed on understanding our patch as an essential prerequisite to improving performance, place shaping and developing our ambitions in our different localities. The 'Picture of Kirklees' partnership conference in October 2006 was a successful vehicle for increasing wider understanding of the issues we all face. This is part of a more proactive approach to communicating research and demographic intelligence, building on many years of solid work with partners in this area. We have gathered considerable intelligence on user satisfaction levels through our 'Talkback' citizens' panel, tracker surveys of key satisfaction data and the development our ACE (Accessing Consultation and Engagement) Database.

The database is a key element of the Council's Research and Consultation Strategy, which was revised and re-launched in 2006.⁷² The purpose of the framework is to ensure that consultation is appropriate, meaningful and carried out to a high standard. We received a highly favourable assessment of our methods from MORI in 2005 and have made further improvements since.

We recognise the importance of using satisfaction data to improve services and track outcomes. For example, we explored public awareness of Town Centre Wardens in Huddersfield and Dewsbury in 2002 and 2004. As the first survey highlighted low levels of awareness of the scheme, we made the Wardens more conspicuous on the street by increasing patrols and wearing brighter uniforms. The second survey confirmed the success of these initiatives, but also highlighted areas for improvement, particularly the need to inform people of the role of a Warden. In response we increased our publicity of the Warden scheme, focusing on their role. Another consultation from 2004 asked "hard to reach groups" about their perceptions and experiences of the Council's approach to communication, correspondence and customer care. This has resulted in the promotion of community language interpretation services at key access points and text messaging and email services as alternative ways of communicating with hearing impaired residents.

We developed a new approach to dealing with complaints in 2005/6 with a dedicated Corporate Customer Standards officer supporting a newly established network of complaints officers within services.⁷³ We had previously been criticised by the Ombudsman for not resolving complaints at a stage beyond Head of Service level and too many went for formal adjudication. The new procedure addresses this criticism. It also helps us monitor complaints data and analyse trends to

shape service changes. We have made information about the complaints system more accessible and set out standards for complaint handling. We are resolving more complaints quickly and informally. The Ombudsman now feels there is firm evidence that our complaints handling process is becoming more effective.⁷⁴

Corporate focus on key issues

In the past we have used a systematic approach to managing performance involving a quarterly trawl of all our PIs with commentary by Service Heads on the PIs that were not meeting the targets and the action being taken to get back on track. PIs not being met were subject to peer challenge by Directors and then by a Cabinet Member Group. Whilst this meant that each PI was reviewed every quarter, we were not prioritising the PIs causing management concern and giving them a stronger management focus.

We now have a performance cycle where PIs are managed by exception, reporting is normally quarterly but more frequently if high risk and we place more emphasis on analysis and not just the numbers. We have defined a set of high focus PIs where missing performance targets is a major risk and keep corporate attention on them.

As we implemented the 2006 CIP programme we began to join up knowledge about how we were performing with the successes and challenges resulting from our improvement programme. We track the impact this activity is having on our customers and the current positions of our revenue and capital budgets. This is reported by each Director through a service report card to EMG, the CIT meetings, Cabinet and all party quarterly performance meetings.⁷⁵

We have included PEAK material in Councillor Development programmes so they know the role they play in the management and monitoring of our performance. Directors regularly meet with Portfolio Holders to discuss performance, the impact that the PIs are having on customers and actions being taken to get the PIs back on track.

Partnership and performance

The LAA is a core performance document for the Council and our partners as it covers the outcomes we wish to achieve and the Best Value, LPSA and local performance indicators that we monitor. The LPSBs are supported with business plans and meet bi-monthly to assess progress, with the Kirklees Partnership focused on synergies between themes and reviewing impact, particularly on those priority areas where we need to 'close the gap'. The LSP Executive, chaired by the Leader, has a key role in holding

key performance issues, ensuring that cross-cutting issues are picked up across the LPSBs.

Performance information is shared between partners through PERFORM, while private, voluntary and community sector representatives are involved in shaping the LPSBs' priorities and work programmes. Our Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy has been firmly located into all four LAA blocks and this has enhanced our understanding of its potential in reconfiguring mainstream services in our different localities. Having the same delivery localities as the Police and PCT helps our delivery and understanding of performance in these areas. We are developing a shared intelligence core, initially focussed on developing locality information and relevant PIs.

Evolution and continuous improvement

We know how important it is to know how effective PEAK is throughout the Council. Internal Audit is now evaluating the impact of PEAK regime to ensure that we can show that through effective performance management we deliver to our customers, our performance management processes are robust and effective and that a performance management culture is embedded across the organisation. We use both internal and external challenge to help us improve. We have used SOLACE Enterprises to assess our improvement potential across PEAK, locality working and the LPSBs.⁷⁶ We had an IDEA Peer Review of Planning Services in 2005 and recently teamed up with Leicestershire County Council to provide mutual challenge and learning in areas like developing children's services, customer care and LAAs.

We use benchmarking where it can help drive service improvement. A good example is our participation with SOCITM which has kept us at the forefront of top performance in our ICT provision in terms of cost, quality, flexibility innovation and customer satisfaction.

We have consistently addressed any issues raised in our Annual Audit Letter and taken action to tackle performance issues highlighted in inspections. For instance, a re-inspection of our Adult Learning Service found marked improvement with many areas good and equality of opportunity outstanding. We have also shown a willingness to engage in joint research and learning activities e.g. participating in the Audit Commission's study, 'School Success and Failure – the Community Dimension' and been awarded Beacon status three times. We have also endeavoured to involve our residents and customers in the planning and development of services. We have a strong track record of involving children in training and recruiting staff and shaping policy and the recipients of social

care in the services they receive, while one of our Beacons was for tenant involvement recognising the national standing of our Tenants Partnership.

Impacts

Our increasing attention on managing our staff well, deploying budgets to priority areas and maintaining a focus on performance has resulted in a number of high performing areas: scoring 4s on Social Care, the Environment and Revenues and Benefits, a very strong 3 on Use of Resources, a strong 3 on Housing and Education and a high 2 on Culture and Leisure. Educational attainment has improved significantly and we have addressed problems with falling schools. We have also seen significant improvements in previously weak areas like planning application and benefit processing times, where we have maintained our improvement trajectory. Satisfaction levels with services have also improved, particularly in terms of cleanliness, bus services, waste collection and disposal, parks, open spaces and libraries. Recent annual audit letters have noted significant improvement in the proportion of our targets that we hit.

Within each service area we are constantly looking at how to improve delivery or respond to new national requirements. Our homelessness support service has recently been reconfigured following rising numbers in bed and breakfast to focus on prevention with the opening of our new Options Service. Homelessness acceptances have fallen. In social care we have changed the mix of private and public provision to ensure that we get value for money modern care. All this involves working closely with staff that have to manage change whilst still providing services to the public. We provide additional staff resources and expertise to support services to deliver.

Where next?

- Further embed PEAK deep into the organisation
- Ensure there is clarity of understanding around the different improvement tools we use
- Feedback more strongly on how we are using customer intelligence to re-shape services
- Stay focused on people and avoid unnecessary process

Sustainable communities & transport

Our Economic Strategy 'Prospectus for Investment', launched in May 2006, highlights our ambitions for growing a strong economy.⁷⁷ It builds on our strengths and diverse character and recognises our place in the wider region. There is an emphasis on improving 'connectivity', both physical and digital, and helping to shape the economy beyond Kirklees. It provides the context for the renaissance of our towns and localities and sets out clear investment opportunities for the distinct economic parts of the district: North Kirklees, Huddersfield and South Kirklees. LPSB focus is respectively on addressing industrial change and linking to the northern transport corridor; building on the success of the University and creative industries and developing tourism and related activities. Our residents tell us they want good access to jobs and facilities, affordable housing and travel and quality protected environments. Two thirds of them think the Council is working towards making the area cleaner, greener and a better place to live.⁷⁸ We will maintain and improve the quality of life in sustainable settings as we concentrate on securing decent, affordable homes, job creation in growth sectors, better infrastructure and the promotion of 'green' living.

Working together

We have a long history of working sub-regionally. Our prosperity is linked to a successful Leeds economy, we are strong advocates for the Leeds City Region⁷⁹ and our Leader chairs the City Region Leaders Board. We are lead players in the West Yorkshire Economic Partnership and in delivering the West Yorkshire Economic Investment Plan. We helped drive the City Region Development Programme (CRDP) focusing on major infrastructure investment with skills and connectivity as key priorities. We see this as an opportunity to raise the profile of key institutions and businesses important to Kirklees, exploit our strategic position, gain investment in key projects, and enhance Kirklees as a place to live and work.

We have a systematic approach to ensuring our services work together. In 2005 we established the Sustainable Investment Programme Board that drives our Strong Economy and Green CIP programmes and key cross-cutting strategies, projects and initiatives. A similarly cross - service Board leads work on our LDF and both are underpinned by the work of our Policy Co-ordination Group of senior policy officers.

Local Development Framework (LDF)

Our Unitary Development Plan, (approved in 1996) has been a successful in delivering investment. We have determined over 50,000 planning applications over this period with a low rate of successful appeals. We have protected green belt and quality environments and we intend our new LDF to continue our green and sustainable work.

We have undertaken extensive consultation on the LDF, particularly around options for locating 22,000 new homes in the district by 2021 which is a matter of strong public and political debate. Our LDF Core Strategy is key to delivering our other strategies and will set out how the localities in North Kirklees can benefit from the investment opportunities of being close to Leeds and good

transport connections in providing jobs, physical renewal, environmental enhancement and high quality local facilities. We will promote the well-being of individuals by providing locations for educational, health and leisure activities as well as housing and employment. It will set out how Huddersfield will develop into a City in all but name, building on current demand from all forms of investment (retail, housing, leisure and employment), our growing and accomplished University, and our cultural and creative heritage. For our rural areas it will continue environmental and heritage protection and encourage new employment opportunities from attracting visitors and maximising the benefits of new technology, reducing the need to travel and developing local enterprise that is competitive in a global market.

We are building in policies to support more renewable energy, low carbon developments, locating homes and employment close to one another, sustainable transport links and promoting high quality design. We have undertaken an Urban Capacity Study to understand the constraints and opportunities in our urban areas to provide for new investment and to get our new allocations right. Our detailed Open Space Survey ensures we link our planning policies to promoting environmental enhancement, biodiversity and recreational opportunities to encourage personal well-being.

Connecting up

1 in 10 of our residents find it difficult to travel to education, training, work and leisure activities. At peak times road congestion is getting worse with the M62 to Leeds often stationary and Trans Pennine rail services over crowded. We work with the bus and train operators in our area to provide attractive alternatives to the car.⁸⁰ We contributed strongly to the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan (ranked "Good" by DfT). We have helped improve public transport information and local bus services and carried out a wide range of highway schemes to improve safety, reduce congestion and

improve accessibility. We work with bus operators to keep yellow line restrictions and bus lanes free of parked cars to improve traffic flow. This has led to improved journey times, punctuality and reliability for bus users. We have some innovative schemes: "Yournextbus" uses GPS satellite technology to track the bus location and is the largest real-time bus information service outside Greater London. Passengers use the text service to find out when their next bus is due. The service sent its one millionth message in February.

We are installing electronic visual displays at key bus stops and shelters. We have installed new illuminated shelters to improve security, improved 600 bus stops to DDA standards and provided improved timetables. Bus operators have invested £16 million in new accessible buses with CCTV to improve accessibility comfort and security.

The Huddersfield Free Town Bus (FTB) links the main shopping areas, the markets, Huddersfield University and the train and bus stations. The service is very popular with people with mobility difficulties, parents with small children/buggies, students and visitors to the town. People travel into Huddersfield by train and bus knowing that they can easily transfer to the FTB and access the main attractions/destinations within the town centre.

Huddersfield Railway station carries the second largest number of passengers in West Yorkshire and peak period rail patronage has increased by 43% since 2000. It is now possible to get on a bus in Holmfirth, buy a combined rail ticket to Leeds or Manchester and get off outside the railway station making a quick and convenient transfer. We have increased commuter parking charges by 42% this year to encourage people to use more sustainable modes of transport. Satisfaction with public transport information has risen by 16% in the last three years to 61% and with local bus services by 8% to 56%, bucking the national trend.

Enhancing employment and skills capacity

We have a substantial track record of providing broadly based job-creation, business and entrepreneurship activity developed through previous City Challenge and Single Regeneration Budget programmes. We work with partners to grow businesses and jobs using private sector, Yorkshire Forward and European funding. We directly provide over 14,000 sq m of managed workspace for 160 varied local businesses and their 700 employees. We are bringing more creative industries into the area in partnership with the Creative Industries Development Agency and Media Centre. We have led the development of Huddersfield's Media Centre, now the base for more than 70 new technology businesses, employing over 300 people. Phase 3 opens in May

with 52 more units. We have identified barriers to employment with our LPSB partners and our innovative EU funded EQUAL Programme secured £4m and has tested and promoted new ways of combating discrimination in the labour market. This experience is helping engage workless people in the labour market and close skills gaps. Our Key Account Management ensures we support key businesses to flourish, whilst our Business Broker scheme supports corporate social responsibility and embed businesses within our communities.

We link residents to employment opportunities by equipping them with construction skills to secure employment.⁸² Pathways into Construction last year secured £1.3M to enhance its successful Building Craft Occupation programme providing plumbing, electrical and building craft skills to NVQ level 2 for local unemployed people. The project is successful with 85% of trainees gaining qualifications and 80% securing employment. Over 180 local residents have completed the training and moved into full-time permanent employment.

In 2005 we started a apprenticeship scheme to address a serious skills shortage in our Building Control service. We developed the West Yorkshire Apprentice-ship Alliance and with funding from IDEa a 'skills pathway model' that can be adopted by any authority in the UK. The RICS and the Association of Building Engineers endorsed the curriculum and Council Building Control Services promote it as good practice nationally.

We recognise the need to reducing the burden of regulation for local business. We have a Single Business Account offering one point of access to all Council services which allows searches for available land and property across the district. We provide on-line facilities for both planning and building regulation services; our Visitor Portal helps boost local visitor attractions and business development. The Council was a Beacon for Regulatory services in partnership with West Yorkshire Trading Standards in 2001/02. We provide a one stop regulatory advice service for small businesses to help them to find a simple route through the complexities of regulation. This work has been enhanced as part of our LPSA and now provides advice and support to employees and businesses affected by ill health. We are part of a national Better Health at Work project being evaluated by the Health and Safety Executive and DWP and the only project being delivered by a local authority. During the 2 years it has been running the project has given 454 individuals or companies job specific health, safety and wellbeing information, received GP referrals for 60 clients who have work related health problems, the majority of whom have remained in employment.

We are leading a feasibility study on behalf of the 5 West Yorkshire Councils exploring the benefits and

business case for public sector intervention in developing high speed next generation broadband on a universally available model to transform public sector and business competitiveness with major impacts on value for money, learning and innovation, and the need to travel.

Regenerating our towns and villages

The Council has a long tradition of intervening in the local economy, building confidence and securing investment. Responding to the major textile and chemical industry decline of the 1970s and 80s, the Council created a full joint venture partnership with Henry Boot Ltd which saw the development of houses, offices and the major (Huddersfield) Kingsgate Shopping Centre. It also worked in a joint venture partnership with Huddersfield Town Football Club and Huddersfield Rugby League Club to pioneer the first modern community stadium in the post Taylor report era. The new stadium opened in 1994 and was completed in 1998. It proved to be the talisman for confidence in Huddersfield and a key catalyst for regeneration in surrounding areas.

We have bold, imaginative and exciting regeneration schemes right across the district working with private sector partners and Yorkshire Forward.⁸³ In Huddersfield we are undertaking feasibility work on the Queensgate Revival scheme that will see a major retail-led redevelopment in the prime shopping area, with a department store, other shop units, a refurbished market hall, a new library and art gallery, apartments, hotel and car parking. A new mixed-use scheme is proposed at the Waterfront Quarter on the edge of the town centre including resiting of the Huddersfield Technical College. A public square next to the canal will be the centre-piece for apartments, offices and leisure facilities. The Town Centre - Stadium Corridor is the focus of activity to attract new leisure-based opportunities by the Galpharm Stadium, where we are working with Kirklees Stadium Development Ltd and Cibitas Investments. The area falls within the Kirklees Strategic Economic Zone (KSEZ) where, with land owners, we are helping to release land for offices, industry and warehousing. Supporting these and other developments is a programme of public realm improvements progressed with Yorkshire Forward.

In Dewsbury and we are co-ordinating a master planning exercise for the town centre to complement future work with Yorkshire Forward and the Dewsbury Housing Market Renewal Area. Dewsbury Retail is a major development proposal for a large section of the town centre by Stayton Dewsbury Ltd, which will combine new build and conversion of historic properties to create shops, apartments, hotel, leisure and offices. We are assisting Dewsbury College to consolidate its

accommodation on one site in Dewsbury whilst retaining its presence in Batley. Other priorities in North Kirklees include developing employment sites at Walkley Lane in Heckmondwike and improving derelict and under-used buildings by Bradford Road/Hick Lane junction in Batley.

Marsden and Slaithwaite are included in Yorkshire Forward's flagship Renaissance Market Town Programme to tackle industrial decline and exploit their huge potential. Projects include a national sustainable construction training centre and a Green Business Incubator.⁸⁴ We have a small towns' improvement programme delivering environmental and property improvements.⁸⁵

Strengthening the social fabric

We have brought 91% of our council homes up to the 'decent' standard from 32% in 2003/4, investing over £140M. Over 40% of the labour used on the programme has been from within Kirklees and around 18 trainees have been taken on each year. Apart from some sheltered housing and high rise blocks the main programme was completed in summer 2006. We increased the energy efficiency (SAP) rating of our homes from 53 in 2003/4 to 66. now. Empty council homes have fallen to just 400 (1.6%) of the stock. The 'Excellent Homes for Life' PFI initiative for 550 affordable homes for young people and older people with care needs is worth £100m in subsidy.

We face a significant affordable housing shortage, calculated at over 1400 per annum which we are tackling with a vigorous use of Section 106 agreements on private housing developments as well as the affordable housing programme where we contribute our land to make schemes work.⁸⁶ We have an empty homes officer who is bringing homes back into use. We are at the forefront of embedding high ecological standards into new build housing e.g. the award winning scheme built by our partners Yorkshire Housing at Primrose Hill, Newsome and within the design specification of our Excellent Homes for Life.

Ensuring sustainability

We have had a green track record since 1988 when we were the first Council to publish a State of the Environment report. We remain a leading environmental authority winning many national and international awards for environmental projects and Environmental Management. In 1998 we were the first Council to adopt the Eco-Management and Audit System (EMAS) resulting in reduced utility and transport bills, waste reduction and greater awareness of our environmental impact.⁸⁷ We lead the national EMAS network which now includes 160 public sector organisations including central government departments and provide consultancy to other agencies with government support to extend the scheme across the UK. We were proud runners up in the 2006 European EMAS awards.

Whilst we have been a big promoter of renewable energy in both housing and our own buildings we know there is more to do and are now piloting smart metering in Council buildings to allow better energy management and will be looking to alter the energy profile in office accommodation reviews.⁸⁸

We have had an innovation fund to support small environmental projects for 15 years and this year will be looking to finding land for a cardboard recycling scheme that will support sturgeon and prawn farms and will be looking at how to harvest our own woodland for biomass feedstock.

Over the years we have taken many measures to encourage people to recycle and compost more, including low cost home composters and BRING recycling facilities in schools. Our approach has been to consult, pilot, monitor, feedback and try and influence behaviour. In response to public demand we have expanded our home glass recycling scheme from an initial 5,000 properties in 2004/05 to 44,000 today. This approach has run parallel with both large and small technological investments. Facilities to recycle small batteries were introduced at all our Household Waste and Recycling Centres in 2004, while new separation systems at our Materials Recycling Facility have lifted the recycling rate to 87% of input.⁸⁹

We are exceeding our 21% recycling and composting target and only land fill 27% of household waste, making us one of the UK's top performers. There is strong public support for recycling in Kirklees and last year we reviewed our approach as a basis for further improvement. This led to a recycling plan involving alternating weekly grey and green bin collections, enhanced free garden waste and glass collections and a new free woody waste collection service. We launched alternate bin collections as a pilot in June 2006 following consultation, with feedback to residents as the trial successfully progressed. Our USPI results support our progress with 81% satisfied with waste collection, 67% with recycling facilities and 82% with waste disposal.

Since the early 1990s we have been a leader on environmental and energy conservation issues. Most recently we received a number of national awards for our renewables work, while the public supports us leading in this area. The work has implications beyond controlling emissions. The 'Warm Zone' programme helps households, especially those with fuel poverty, conserve energy, reduce costs and keep warm.⁹¹ Plans also include mentoring Housing Associations in sustainable energy; investigating a district heating scheme for Huddersfield, with a potential saving of 275,000 tonnes of CO₂ over 25 years and a Sustainable Construction Skills Training Centre.

We have no declared Air Quality Management Areas but hot spots are kept under continual review and action will be taken if national trigger points are exceeded. We are monitoring the M62 corridor in advance of proposed widening works and will feed results into the Highways Agency.

Some renewable energy outcomes

- Set up Renewable Energy Fund attracting £4m of EU, government and private investment into Kirklees. A Sustainability Fund has also been set up for emissions reduction initiatives in council projects.
- One of the largest local authority solar energy projects in the UK (Suncities) has meant that six care homes, two schools and around 500 homes across Kirklees have had solar electricity panels and solar hot water panels installed. Kirklees now generates 4.9% of the UK's solar electricity. (Ashton Award). These panels can provide around 20% of tenants' electricity needs and 50-60% of their hot water, helping to bring down the cost of bills and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Demonstration wind turbine projects on Council buildings, including the first two 6kW wind turbines installed on the roof of a council building in the UK, and two 15kW wind turbines at the Deighton Centre.
- 10 schools per year participate in the Climate Champions project including one which installed their own 15kW wind turbine.
- 220 solar electricity panels and 48m² of solar thermal panels on Civic Centre III.
- A policy to incorporate 30% renewable energy into the design of all new Council developments procured by 2010/11.
- Developed a 'Toolkit' to provide engineers and architects with guidance for making sure that renewable energy is integrated into building design.⁹⁰
- Achieved corporate target of reducing emissions by 30% from a 1990 baseline and are working towards our next target of a further 30% reduction by 2020.

We have focused on maintaining attractive living environments, clean streets and town centres and enhancing the quality and experience of public parks and open spaces for the past 5 years. This is explored further in the Safer Stronger section. Investment in parks, including wardens and new modern safe playgrounds has resulted in park user satisfaction going up to 69% from 60% in 2001.

We have a strong focus on bio-diversity and are creating a green network to link up open spaces using existing routes like river corridors and canal paths.⁹² Bio-diversity is built into our planning processes and relevant training programmes and we offer small grants to voluntary groups, as well as larger ones to services for projects to enhance the natural environment. This work has helped maintain locally endangered species like the Marsh Helleborine and the Great Crested Newt.

Safer, stronger communities

Recognising the diversity of our communities and helping them respond to local issues lies at the heart of our long standing work to build safer, stronger communities. We established a Community Safety Partnership back in 1994 and this took a stronger strategic role with a wider membership in response to the responsibilities in the Crime and Disorder Act. Our service plans reflect our Section 17 responsibilities. Doing things that help people feel safer and become more involved in shaping their locality is central to achieving our ambitions here. We help local people to have a greater influence over the delivery of local services, support voluntary and community activity and bring different communities together to help to increase their understanding of each other. We strive to narrow the gap between our most disadvantaged communities and the rest of Kirklees, through improved partnership working at all levels. Working through the LPSB we are helping to build stronger communities, improve people's living environments, reduce the crimes and anti-social behaviour that worry local people and provide personal support for those at risk.

Building Safer Communities

The LPSB holds the statutory responsibilities of the CDRP and the DAT Board, developing an integrated approach to drugs and community safety project commissioning, including the shared use of Basic Command Unit funds. Six shared LAA priorities focus joint working: criminal damage, community cohesion, prevention work with families, reducing re-offending, community engagement and accident prevention. We have longstanding working relationships with Police colleagues and have supported the increase in Police resources, jointly funding 68 PCSOs in Kirklees with an agreed ward deployment. A key strength is our joint planning, neighbourhood tasking, risk assessment and intelligence gathering on a continuous basis.

We have a strong record in reducing crime. We identified domestic burglary as a major problem we met our stretched LPSA1 targets for reducing it. The Target Hardening Project is in its third year and is proactively improving home security in vulnerable areas and helping prevent burglaries. Overall crime levels are down 18.8 % compared to 2003/04.⁹³ In the last 12 months crime has fallen in every locality with the greatest reductions in the worst areas – by 26% in Huddersfield South, 19% in Dewsbury and 17% in Batley. Concentrated multi agency interventions by Neighbourhood Policing and Neighbourhood Management Groups working with ward Councillors and the media has helped us to tackle local issues more effectively. The Kirklees Policing Plan 2007/8 reflects the seven localities' priorities for reducing crime that Inspector led Neighbourhood Policing Teams working with Councillors, agencies and local communities will drive hard in the coming year.⁹⁴

There is still much to do and violent crime caused us concern last year. The Tackling Violent Crime multi-agency delivery plan has introduced Alcohol Reduction Zones, Taxi Marshalls and the Best Bar None Scheme, all of which have helped to reduce the number of violent crime incidents.

Operations to clean up areas, support local people, arrest known offenders and proactively tackle anti social behaviour and local concerns has resulted in 56% of residents now think crime and ASB is a problem in their area compared to 79% last year and the fear of crime is falling.

Crime rates have fallen in NRF areas over the last 5 years but narrowing the gap has been patchy. In the Dewsbury West Pathfinder Area there has been a 21% fall since 2003/04 and national recognition for the multi agency model they have developed, including Community Safety Officers. This is being rolled out across all 7 localities. In the Fartown NR area the gap has narrowed across three of the 4 floor target areas: Domestic Burglary, Robbery, Vehicle Crime and Overall Recorded Crime. As this is one of the highest crime areas in Kirklees this is a significant achievement. Other areas like Fieldhead in Batley have fared less well where crime levels have remained relatively constant over the last 5 years, despite the downward trend across Kirklees. Stretch targets to reduce overall crime and narrow the gap across all NR areas have been built into the Local Area Agreement.

Anti-social behaviour

Our ASB Unit is recognised as a source of local good practice by the Government for work in tackling anti-social behaviour through early intervention, enforcement and rehabilitation. The number of referrals to the Unit has increased by 150% with far earlier interventions put in place. We dealt with 372 additional cases of anti-social behaviour last year, bringing the number of live cases to 800. We issued 34 additional ASBOs and established a new Partnership Surveillance Service which has assisted with 25 successful prosecutions ranging from fly-tipping, incidents of ASB and prolific drug dealing. Kirklees became a RESPECT area which has attracted £250K over 2 years to specifically target families who need support to reduce the impact of their behaviour on

neighbourhoods. This includes parenting support, training and diversionary activities. We do use all possible legislation: ASBO's, Parenting Orders and Support Orders to provide clear boundaries.

Drugs and alcohol

We have a successful partnership with Health, Police and the voluntary sector for treating drug users and have exceeded targets in access to treatment, with low rates of repeat usage. The Kirklees Drug Intervention Programme Team is recognised as a regional leader in the field by GOYH and provides positive support to those within the programme. This has helped towards a reducing overall crime. Working with the PCT and the criminal justice system the Drugs Intervention Programme helps to support individuals to access specific programmes of treatment and care with the emphasis on self sufficient independent living. This approach allows individuals to reduce offending behaviour as well as drug and alcohol dependency.

We have a developed programme of responding to alcohol misuse with a wide programme to limit alcohol fuelled night time violence, contributing to reduced levels of violent crime particularly in town centres and health related programmes to raise awareness of the harm of alcohol. NR is funding cross cutting interventions to tackle alcohol misuse. The Domestic Violence Support Team works with victims and their families to prevent repeat incidents and enforce against persistent offenders. Linking to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Group the team works with other agencies to ensure the appropriate level of support is available to people who need it most.

Emergency Planning

The Council's Emergency Planning Team has a proven track record of working with internal and external partners to deliver a co-ordinated response to emergencies and communicate effectively with members of the public. We are actively involved with the Local Resilience Forum and agencies across the region to develop standard ways of working and resource sharing. The Council's Emergency Plan is updated twice yearly. It is tested by regular exercises and real emergencies such as the severe weather events in January 2007 and a major gas utility failure in Marsden last year. The Council has started business continuity planning in all services on a risk assessed basis and where plans have been developed we are running exercises to test them. We work with local businesses to promote business continuity planning.

Accidents

Using the spur of our LPSA1 targets for reducing accidents, road casualties have been reduced and road safety improved through significant improvements at 30 locations and the completion of 300 minor traffic projects.⁹⁵ We have trained 2,500 drivers in responsible driving, improved 15 safe routes to schools, implemented 25 school travel plans and given pedestrian and cycle training to 2,500 children. We have conducted a programme of school visits to address the lack of seatbelt wearing on the school run and are more rigorously enforcing parking restrictions outside school gates. Despite improvements we have seen a worrying upturn in killed and seriously injured adults over the past 2 years. The majority of these are in the 17- 29 age group and we are working with the Driving Standards Agency to see how we can target their poor driving standards.

We work closely with the Fire Authority, running joint programmes of fitting free smoke and CO detectors in vulnerable houses. All Council homes have had these fitted for the past 10 years.

Building Stronger Communities

Recognising the rising tensions and challenges facing some of our communities and the more recent political and media attention on us, maintaining and strengthening community cohesion has been our priority for some time. Community relations remain stable despite the Dewsbury link to the London bombings and the 2006 racist murder of a taxi driver in Huddersfield by white youths (subsequently convicted).

We have a national reputation for work on community cohesion including good reactive networks with the police, schools, communities and other agencies, cross community contact and dialogue to break down barriers across communities.⁹⁶ Strong intelligence and communications linked to regular impact meetings has been well tested in response to growing tensions. We recognise the influence of new migrant workers and asylum seekers moving into some localities. We manage our asylum contract properties well (one of lowest empty rates in the region at 8%) and acknowledge the growing issue of East European workers with accommodation and other service needs.

While 70% of people in Kirklees say they get on well together in their area, this varies considerably with a quarter thinking there is a problem of racism and hate incidents in their area particularly in north Kirklees. We distribute myth busting information, provide training and development for front line staff, have set up networks for countering rumours, a programme of

school twinning and use a community cohesion proofing tool to assess implications of our work.

For some years we have undertaken innovative working between and across communities to gain further understanding of tensions, promoting cross community sports and social events in high risk communities. We have engaged over 1500 people in more than 30 events, activities and debates which are building a shared sense of belonging and common identity. Good examples are the 'I belong to Dewsbury' campaign and networks to promote community understanding.

Around 90 of our 151 primary schools are made up of pupils from one ethnic group and regarded as mono-cultural. The schools twinning programme has enabled pupils to work and learn together, develop positive relationships and increase understanding and trust.⁹⁷ We have used sport to bring young people from different areas together including a cultural festival of cricket.⁹⁸ Recognising that many people live parallel lives with no knowledge of others' faith or background we set up seven Interfaith centres across Kirklees (see box). We commissioned the Institute of Community Cohesion to review our progress and the levels of risk we still face and are refreshing our Community Cohesion Action Plan in response.

Inter Faith Centres Project

With financial support from the Home Office 7 Inter Faith Centres were set up across Kirklees with Buddhist, Sikh, Hindu, Muslim and Christian centres established and a successful launch in July 2005, with satellite centres planned for less prominent faiths. The aim is to increase awareness of faiths and the importance that religion plays in many people's lives. Learning packages were produced for schools and guides for each of the faith communities. A web site was developed and over 90 schools visited the centres in the first year. There is now greater understanding being developed across different faiths and within communities. Following the London bombings the faith communities very quickly got together to issue a joint statement to the press and held a number of meetings to support local groups.⁹⁹

Consultation and engagement

Over half of our residents feel they are involved in their community and regularly join in organised activities, with 1 in 5 feeling they can influence decisions in their local area, a figure higher in neighbourhood renewal areas. Most residents feel that community activities have got better or remained the same over the past 3 years and two thirds say there is an accessible and well used community facility within their local area.¹⁰⁰ Voter turnout in the local elections in 2006 was 42.9%, the highest since 1994 with the exception of the

all out all-postal ballot in 2004. We have active involvement of the voluntary and community sector – particularly through our Local Public Service Boards and the Local Strategic Partnership. We have also developed a local Compact and are in the process of developing an overall strategic approach to partnership working with the voluntary and community sector.

Services and Councillors also engage with the communities in many ways using a range of networks and methods. Through the work of the Area Committees over 13,000 local people have contributed their perspectives on a range of key issues and helped to shape services and activities in their area.¹⁰¹ Through effective consultation, the Area Committees have engaged local communities in developing and delivering over 300 local projects and allocated over £2.4M of their delegated budgets to do so. Good models exist through Neighbourhood Renewal Steering Groups where local people input into determining applications for grants in their community. Residents in neighbourhood renewal areas are actively involved in deciding how to spend £800k of People's Purse grant funding and over 180 community and voluntary groups have benefited. In rural areas, where communities are more disparate, we have found it effective to use themed activity to engage people. In the Colne Valley we consulted older people on a multi-agency delivery plan by running a series of complementary events, providing transport and visiting care homes.

Recent examples of engaging BME communities include work around International Women's Day, bringing together over 1200 women and children from different backgrounds, cultures and ethnic groups to celebrate. We identified limited access to leisure activity for Muslim Women that led to the award winning "Sitara" programme which offers a wide range of tailored events at Batley Baths. The over representation of young black people diagnosed with mental health problems has led to a Positive Action Training scheme to encourage more workers from BME communities into the mental health service.

Almost 500 NR area residents have joined a credit union and, with NRF support, Castle and Minster are now at the forefront of national developments to address financial exclusion and reduce the level of unmanageable debt.

Last year we also successfully delivered 103 days of events, including specialist markets, the Carnival and Mela, school galas, Christmas Ice Rinks, adding vibrancy and vitality to our towns, celebrating our diversity culminating in the

spectacular Festival of Light in St Georges Square in November with over 20,000 people.

Community facilities

We also recognise that community facilities play a critical role in any community – and have developed a corporate wide policy and strategy to develop both the facilities the council own and manage, but also to support voluntary and community ownership and involvement. We manage a wide range of community buildings, with over 300,000 people per annum accessing these facilities for a range of activities, especially young people.¹⁰² We subsidise use for voluntary and community groups to enable them to use the centres and involve users in the management and development of the buildings and programmes in them. We have a portfolio of buildings and facilities in each locality which is currently being played into the locality plans. We have developed a framework for voluntary managed community buildings and fed into the White Paper considerations on the strategy for voluntary owned and managed assets and facilities.

The Council's presence in local communities is a focus for accessible services with our partners. It is also an opportunity for active involvement from the community in using space and facilities. We recognised in 2003 that we had no presence in some communities. Following 2 pilots in Birstall and Skelmanthorpe we have developed a programme of Library and Information Centres to roll out across Kirklees that are already increasing usage by over 25% compared to a traditional library.¹⁰³ The LICs programme is fully integrated with regeneration initiatives as is the district wide programme to improve sports facilities with Kirklees Active Leisure. A comparison of usage of Dewsbury sports centre in February 05 and following refurbishment in February 06 showing an increase of over 30%.

Environmental Quality

We know how important it is to have pride in where you live to build places with strong identity and good community relations. We have prioritised the improvement of public spaces by proactively removing graffiti in town and village centres, cleaning up major routes into Kirklees and providing extra street sweeping in town centres at weekends. We remove abandoned vehicles within 4 days, collect pieces of gum, undertake replanting schemes and issue fixed penalty notices for litter from cars. We provide a weekend out-of-hours noise nuisance service and use community rangers who find and deal with problems such as graffiti, litter, dog dirt and syringes. We have improved people's use and enjoyment of parks through, capital investment,

promotional work and increasing our staff presence in them. Satisfaction levels with cleanliness and parks and open spaces have risen by 12% and 4% respectively since 2003-04.

Healthier communities

We have had a preventative health agenda, a strong scrutiny focus and engaged in joint planning and commissioning for many years. Working with our then three PCTs, we were a lead authority in developing the shared health priority between central and local government and piloted the self-assessment framework for healthier communities. Our overarching aims are to improve health overall and reduce health inequalities. Our focus is on ensuring our children get the best start for a healthy life; helping our growing elderly population to live active, independent and fulfilling lives; reduce work related health problems, improving employment for people with disabilities and encouraging a better work life balance. We put a strong emphasis on promotional and educational work, recognising that in many cases people need to change their own behaviour to improve their health. In other ways we have a more direct influence by improving access to services and the quality of the environment. Our pace has sometimes been affected by frequent health service reconfigurations, though we have not allowed this to deflect us. We have worked closely with our NHS colleagues for many years and now with one PCT in Kirklees, with a jointly appointed Director of Public Health, have the basis to make even more progress.

Strategic partnership focus

Our community strategy and LAA set out our ambitions to improve health and reduce inequalities. We focus on removing barriers to good health, enabling people to have a decent home, income, job, social networks, health and social care. Recognising that individuals lifestyles have a major impact on health, we concentrate on creating environments and providing support which enable people to be physically active, have a good diet, drink sensibly, stop smoking or reduce their exposure to tobacco smoke, not misuse drugs and manage their own health.¹⁰⁴

Our understanding of the health issues facing our communities is based on a long history of collaboration between the Council, PCTs and other partners. This has included 2 major population surveys of health and lifestyle issues – ‘Current Living in Kirklees’, a regular health survey of all Year 9 students and the LAA tracker survey. These have informed the Directors’ of Public Health annual reports with district wide and locality analysis. We have agreed a framework for undertaking our first Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and work has begun to collate and analyse the relevant data. The analysis will be presented at a ‘Health Summit’ involving all the major stakeholders in the summer and enable us to use the outcomes to inform commissioning and planning from autumn 2007. Moves to locality working align our area boundaries with the PCT who have locality managers working with service locality leads to improve co-ordination.

The Adults and Healthier Communities LPSB recognises clear linkages on the cross cutting themes of housing, social care, worklessness and alcohol misuse. Priority work is around infant mortality, obesity, alcohol misuse, incapacity and work related ill-health, private sector housing conditions and fuel poverty and there are project plans for addressing each. It has developed with

significant input from older people themselves a ‘Vision for Older People’. Similar work has started for mental well-being to identify what the Council and its partners can do to enable people to maintain and improve their mental health rather than how we care for people who already have serious mental health problems. We have established cross - Directorate arrangements to work with the Director of Public Health to oversee the delivery and promotion of the Health Improvement Programme across the Council.

Improving health

We are making good progress against LPSA/LAA targets, our headline health inequality targets are also on course, with the gap between the district and Neighbourhood Renewal areas decreasing. The very high infant mortality rates in some parts of the district are a major cause for concern. Our life expectancy is slightly below the national average but has increased by 1.5 yrs for men and 1.6 yrs for women since 1997. There is still a gap of 3 years between our NR areas and the district as a whole. NRF programmes target those areas.

Our teenage conception rate is now 43.3 and it has fallen by 11% between 1998 and 2005. It is well below the regional rate (47.7) and has fallen faster over the same period. We have a green/amber rating from the Teenage Pregnancy Unit.

The main causes of death are heart disease and cancers. The premature mortality rates for both have fallen significantly across the district over the last few years (158 to 98 for heart disease, 136 to 120 for cancer since 1997), and the gap between the rate in our NR areas and the district as a whole has remained constant for cancer, the gap reducing by 15% for heart disease.

The Council recognises that its main role is in tackling the factors that lead to health problems. Four out of 5 people are happy with their access to GP and Community Pharmacy Services but

less than half are happy with access to support to become more active and improve mental-well being. There is great awareness and interest in healthy lifestyles, particularly diet and physical activity amongst young people and a desire for public bodies to support action in these areas.

The lack of access to NHS dentists is becoming a major issue and there is currently a scrutiny panel looking at this and the wider issues relating to oral health. This is one of our major health challenges, especially for children in North Kirklees.

Improving health of children and families

We have integrated services supporting children, mothers and families, while raising educational attainment and enhancing self-esteem amongst young people. We regularly undertake a young people's health survey and this informs commissioning. School sports partnerships are in place in every pyramid. Over 80% of our schools are working towards the Healthy Schools standard and we are national leaders in developing the 'Healthy College Standard'. Specific programmes are in place for overweight and obese children following our involvement in the national pilot. We are on track to achieve the LPSA targets for healthier school meals and increased physical activity. Spending on fresh fruit and vegetables in school meals has increased from 18.5% in 05/06 to 22% in 06/07.

We tackle the root causes of infant mortality by reducing the homelessness of pregnant women and alleviating poverty through benefits take-up and advice services. This is a major problem in Dewsbury and we are working with the PCT to identify what more can be done to tackle this significant inequality. We perform well against the key indicators for immunisation, access to GPs and dental health for our Looked After Children.

We deliver maternity services and parenting programmes to mothers and families through our Children's Centres. In North Kirklees where rates for breast feeding are below the national average we have implemented ante-natal visiting by the Supporting Families Team, Drop in Baby Clinics, Family Health Educators and peer support. The Butterfly multi-agency programme provides training support for parents and schools with very young children with challenging social and emotional difficulties. Parents' evaluation for the 95 children involved is overwhelmingly positive. The Portage programme helps parents of pre-school children with significant learning difficulties and disabilities and the 100 families involved have over 95% success in teaching programmes.

The child and family consultation team provide parental training for families with children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties

which have been extended through the Children's fund to provide family workshops which have been positively evaluated by both children and parents. There are community outreach programmes of health education for parents from hard-to-reach groups. Ante-natal road shows and the South Asian healthy link partnership are examples of community outreach programmes for hard-to-reach groups.

400 overweight and obese young people a year attend Young Pals, our exercise referral scheme. We have trained 15 'Extras', young people who have been through Young Pals to act as volunteers to support new participants. We use dance to encourage physical activity and 1500 young people perform 3 times a year at Lawrence Batley Theatre. We run 22 out-of-school dance programmes and 15 community dance classes. The Girls Active programme has encouraged 250 of South Asian girls to participate in dance activity. A young people's forum advises us on physical activity and sports programming to help design what they want to see us deliver.

Kirklees Youth Games

The launch of the Kirklees Youth Games is a culmination of a huge amount of work focussed on putting sport and active recreation at the heart of the council's work. The Games will involve young people from every school across Kirklees and, working with the voluntary sector and other partners, demonstrate the role sport plays in health, community cohesion, active citizenship and educational attainment. This would not be possible without the efforts over several years to develop a robust infrastructure locally, particularly with Culture and Leisure Service, Kirklees Active Leisure, local School Sports Partnerships, Children and Young Peoples Service and the voluntary sector. The Council has played a key leadership role in creating this infrastructure.

Improving health of working age people

We have a well developed commissioning approach, with clear mechanisms for user and carer involvement, through partnership boards for learning difficulties, mental health and physical disability and sensory impairment.

Over 340 food outlets have now achieved our 'Healthy Choice Award', which includes becoming smoke-free for the 260 who have achieved the Gold Healthy Choice Award. The Active for Life campaign enabled us to achieve our adult physical activity LPSA target and is continuing to deliver. Our 'proof of age' scheme, taxi marshals and street pastors are all helping reduce harm from alcohol.

The Better Health at Work national pilot is on track to achieve its yearly target of 90 businesses assisted. Health Advisers are working at GP surgeries and health centres with over 350 clients about workplace health. The team is also working with the local smoking cessation service assisting businesses to implement the “Smoke Free” legislation and support their staff to stop smoking.

Our ‘Worklink’ unit, which was established to support people with disabilities access employment with the Council, is now working with our Employee Healthcare Service a private training provider, JobCentre Plus and the PCT on a major programme to tackle worklessness, particularly amongst people on Incapacity Benefit

We operate a SWEET project which supports sex workers and addresses their health needs.

Healthy Living Centres have been rolled out across Kirklees...(awaiting stuff from Phil)

In Golcar & Colne Valley pathways improvements sponsored by LACs, are key to link communities together, access local facilities, public transport and encourage walking **for health** and leisure purposes, thereby hopefully reducing car usage.

Improving the health of older people

We have significantly reduced the number of sedentary older people and people on low incomes by, for example, setting up over 80 walking groups. Our Physical activity prescription scheme (PALS) has celebrated its 12th anniversary and now supports over 2,100 inactive vulnerable people a year to become more active.

Nearly 2500 private sector homes have been lifted out of fuel poverty using a range of energy saving schemes to impact on all low income families including those not on benefit; these programmes have now been brought together into the universal ‘Warm Zone plus’ programme which will visit every household in Kirklees over three years, and is helping vulnerable people in particular, to conserve energy, reduce costs and keep warm; while our work on ‘decent homes’, ‘homes for life’ and benefit take-up all have health enhancing implications. We have run an Asthma Project for 10 years which is now mainstreamed as part of medical housing assessments and provides advice and equipment that has successfully alleviated the condition.

Disadvantage, access, well-being and engagement

We have supported over 9,300 vulnerable people to live at home rather than in residential care. We have also been remodelling our homelessness service so that it is focused on early intervention to prevent homelessness and launched a new Options Service last year. The Kirklees Sanctuary

scheme will allow victims of domestic violence to choose to stay put in their home with additional safety measures in place. Our Housing and Children’s Services are developing a more comprehensive service to meet the needs of young people at risk of homelessness. Since 2003/04 we have reduced homelessness acceptance by 33%, compared to 22% nationally and 30% regionally. We have also reduced bed and breakfast cases from 115 to 65 and this is set to reduce further. By developing access to temporary private rented properties as an alternative, we are saving £11.5K per week.

The ‘Gateway to Care’ concept has moved onto an even more proactive footing with a new team of Gateway Workers based in each locality. The creation of park wardens, investment in streetscene, public rights of way improvements and our parks and open spaces strategy are all contributing to encouraging people to make more use of open spaces to be active. We also have robust mechanisms in place to respond to major disasters and pandemic flu. Health has been major feature of locality action planning in collaboration with the PCT and resulted in numerous projects to tackle local people’s health issues. We have an active role in local and regional scrutiny of health, including major scrutiny panels on ADHD and reconfiguration of local maternity services with our neighbouring authorities.

Where next?

- Tackle the big health challenges, i.e. addressing the underlying causes of high levels on infant mortality; reducing obesity and alcohol misuse; improving emotional well-being; reducing numbers of people unable to work due to ill-health and improving support for people with long-term conditions
- Develop our strategic needs assessment to ensure our commissioning and service delivery focuses on issues where we can make the most difference to health and inequalities
- Improve the way key services are delivered to maximise their impact on health and inequalities.

Older people

We aim to increase independence and broaden opportunities for further involvement to enable older people to live life to the full. We have prioritised the needs of older people for some time, from a Scrutiny Commission in 1999 looking at transport provision, education and cultural opportunities to a Policy Panel in 2000 that led to major changes to services for vulnerable older people and the reshaping of the local care market. Our Social Care (Adults) Services are rated 4*. We created an independent Older People's Network in response to Better Government for Older People to facilitate engagement and influence in policy and service delivery. We set up an Older People's Partnership Board in 2001 and the strategic overview of the older people's agenda now comes under the Adults and Healthier Communities LPSB. It has recently refreshed and broadened the vision with a focus on citizenship and involvement, health and well being, active independence and quality and choice. We have a history of consulting and engaging with older people, particularly in housing and social care. We are strong on supporting leisure, health and safety initiatives, and particularly strong in social care, where we know there are real challenges ahead.

Strategic partnership focus

Working with our partners and older people we have developed a strategic approach going beyond care services, based on older people's priorities now and in the future. These reflect the 'seven dimensions of independence', housing and the home; neighbourhood; social activities, social networks and keeping busy; getting out and about; income; information; and healthy living. We agreed a new vision for older people in March 2007, following comprehensive consultation that prioritises things older people said are important to them. These are summarised in the Adult Services Commissioning Strategy 2007-10. We are remodelling social care and extending choice, enhancing the delivery capacity of the voluntary sector and offering a range of healthy living options and activities aimed at older people. The LAA PIs focus on satisfaction levels, involvement in learning and access to care. Work on wider engagement indicators is on-going. The LPSB is currently monitoring tracker satisfaction data, the refreshed vision and linkages across the Boards.

Supporting a full and active life

We support a range of local organisations offering adult learning opportunities to encourage older residents to learn new skills, increase their confidence and develop new relationships in their communities **(SB1)**. Examples include Reading Friends training offered through the Extended Learning Service and courses to help people to develop IT and multimedia skills through the Disabled People's Electronic Village Hall (DPEVH), Beaumont Street Studios and neighbourhood ICT centres. The oldest learner is over 90, while for others it is an opportunity to get back into work after illness. We have an LAA target for the number of people over 50 who are actively engaged with learning, 3687 last year. Our physical activity projects and services are all partnerships with agencies like the PCT, Sports

England and the British Heart Foundation. Some programmes are on open access and others on a referral basis **(SB2)**. The Active Older Peoples Network has over 100 members providing training and support for people to become more active. The Practice Active Leisure Scheme (PALS) has 75 weekly programmes with 2050 new patients each year. The Kirklees Walking Network has 35 weekly health walks and 105 volunteers. There are 60 trained volunteers working on a weekly basis as Physical Activity Motivators while the Moving More Often programme supports those working with frail elderly people. We have 154 registered walk leaders running 43 weekly walking groups. We have introduced a large number of older women into running, increased levels of physical activity generally and received the Keiser Award for work in this area.

Work to provide a safer living environment, reduce the fear of crime, improve public transport and enhance community facilities and access to services identified in previous sections all particularly benefit older people. With West Yorkshire Trading Standards we help people identify and deal with bogus callers. We run target hardening campaigns, do free home fire safety checks with the Fire Service and have purchased three fully accessible minibuses for a 'Ring & Ride' service to help older people get around.

Supporting independence and care

In 2006 we opened four brand new older people's residential homes providing state of the art accommodation and incorporating specialist dementia facilities and respite capacity. The homes have en suite facilities and enclosed gardens and were part of a £10m investment programme involving de-commissioning 15 older homes that were no longer fit for purpose. **(SB3)**.

We are helping more older people to live at home through a range of community based services.

Carephones have launched a Home Safety service using Telecare to keep people safely at home. The Council supports approximately 3500 users through the provision of Community Alarm services attracting 700 new users in 2006/7. The use of telecare technology contributes to the prevention agenda with partnership working taking place with the Fire Service to identify vulnerable service users and reduce community safety risks. Targeted work is also taking place with the South Asian Healthy Living Project to pilot tele-medicine. We have increased the number of people who receive direct payments, enabling them to increase their opportunities for independence, social inclusion and enhanced self-esteem. This provides an alternative to more traditional social care services, giving people greater control and choice.

We have commissioned a range of housing for older people, including 150 affordable units for extra care in Our Excellent Homes for Life PFI and a retirement Village at Storthes Hall. Our Decent Homes programme has improved warmth and comfort and the Kirklees Supporting People Service offers housing related support to 5,306 vulnerable older people to enable them to become more independent and take control in making choices about their lives.

The Gateway to Care centre that opened in Huddersfield in 2005 is proving a success **(SB4)**. It offers a wide range of information, advice and support by health and social care organisations working together in one place. People are referred to other support – benefits advice, health trainers, adult learning and community support groups. People said they wanted health and social care advice and support under one roof or in their local community in places they can easily get to with good parking and public transport. Working with partners, voluntary groups, users and carers, we have set up a site in Batley with one to follow in Dewsbury. Partnerships with LICs, Adult Services, KNH, Police and Health deliver a programme of locality based information surgeries. Information is also available through Voluntary Sector projects, websites, a suite of leaflets for older people, listening points in health and community centres and DigiTV.

We are also piloting Gateway Workers, (a role similar to Care Navigators) working in local communities to help people get the health and social care services they need from public services, community and voluntary organisations. We support 200 local community and voluntary organisations to deliver 150 social care projects in their own communities as part of an ambitious programme to enhance capacity in the sector.

We launched a new service in April 2005 to provide small equipment or minor adaptations to enable hospital patients to return home as quickly as possible. It was developed through joint working between our housing and health service and Kirklees Integrated Equipment Services - a jointly managed partnership between the Council and local Primary Care Trusts. In 2005/06 83% of items of equipment were delivered within 7 days.

Performance indicator D41 which measures delayed transfers of care. Performance against this indicator for 2005/6 was 12.9 per 100,000 of population aged 65 or over which was half the national rate (28), well below the metropolitan council average of 24 and the IPF average of 17. The council funds twice as many people through residential intermediate care than the comparator group average. Under LPSA 2 joint work is taking place with Health to reduce the number of bed days in hospital for people aged 75 and over.

Supporting old people's engagement

Older people are well represented through Tenants and Residents Associations and the Older People's Network (OPN). Our revised vision for older people involves looking to the future needs on issues like learning, keeping safe and health and these are based on what older people and carers have told us, together with the views of a wide range of stakeholders. Consultation for the Equality and Diversity framework with the OPN identified the need for a clear point of contact with the council on older people's issues. We promote regular "Have your say" web based consultation sessions on various topics and issues include those especially affecting older people and their families.

The Cabinet Member and Head of Commissioning and Planning for Adult services are the Older people's champions, promote the wider engagement of older people and feed their views into the Council. This included input to the shape of the Excellent Homes For Life scheme and agreement of bids, tenders and contracts.

The Working in Partnership Team (WIP) has engaged with the voluntary sector to identify a specific approach to consultation with the BME community. Examples around the Older People's Review include a Chinese community coordinator feeding back from discussions with 120 Chinese elders, joint consultation with 30 African Caribbean older people and two focus groups for Asian Older people. We also support a BME carers group and ensure its voice is heard. The South Asian Health Living Partnership works with older people from different heritage backgrounds, brings people together who would not otherwise

have opportunities to meet and mix, contributing to their improved mental health and well being. Their work includes Older Men's Day Care, Women's Day Care , Chair Exercise Sessions for elderly, an Expert Patients Programme, Walking Group, Information and Awareness Sessions, Day Trips, Volunteering, Complementary Therapies and Tele Medicine.

Adult Services provide a wide range of information in different formats: leaflets, CDs, DVDs, cassettes, websites, Interactive Digital TV, local newsletters, information in local media and radio and in Kirklees Together.

Older people are the most satisfied with the way the Council runs things, 58% compared with 49% overall, up from 54% in 2003. Their satisfaction with other services is in line with the overall population except in relation to the provision of public transport information and bus services, where 71% of over 65s are satisfied in comparison with 61% of all residents.

When undertaking the residential homes programme we consulted widely with residents and relatives, publishing the options which we could explore for each home and involved users/carers and staff in the design of the new service. We also worked closely with Stirling University's Dementia Care Research Centre to ensure that the designs of all four homes were "Dementia Friendly" even though initially only two of the homes were to be used for people with mental health support needs. To assist Older People to relocate from one home to another we put a Transitions Protocol in place which has very well received.

At least 15,800 pensioners on low incomes have benefited financially as a result of the **Pensioner reduction scheme** we have introduced this year, and over 5,000 of these pensioners have asked for a benefit check and we are working with the Pensions Service and local advice providers to help each one of these pensioners claim any additional benefits they may be entitled to. The Lighten Your Load campaign has been very successful, see box. **SB5**. We have a dedicated team supporting BME clients to claim appropriate benefits and work with the Harriet Tubman Agency providing a specific service to support BME elders with benefits/pension advice claims. The Warm Zone project will be visiting every household in Kirklees targeting the improvement of heating within households, but will also gather information to refer people for grants and benefits advice.

Enhancing older people's income

Through the 'Lighten Your Load' initiative in 2005/06, 524 pensioner households in Kirklees received over £640K in previously unclaimed Housing or Council Tax Benefits. This was achieved by publicising services out in the community and working more closely with the Pensions Service. The campaign has continued this year and £1m now paid out to 894 pensioner households.

Government figures had indicated that as many as 17,000 households were not claiming their entitlement to council tax benefit in Kirklees, on average worth £390 each per year. Of those aged over 60, up to 40% were not claiming their entitlement. In 2005/06, our campaign resulted in Kirklees achieving 4% of the national total of successful claims, whereas our size meant we could have expected to have achieved 0.4%.

The campaign is providing an opportunity to raise the profile of a whole range of the services available to older people within the district and involves a partnership approach that includes the Pension Service, Social Services Information Points, West Yorkshire Fire Service, the Energy Efficiency Advice Centre, Community Safety and more than 15 other organisations. **(SB)**

Unpaid care is provided by 10% of under 65 and 11% of over 65s, 8% of people over 75 are still providing unpaid care. MORE INFO REQUIRED PLEASE.

Where next?

- Implement the Older Peoples Vision.
- Continue the programme to help local communities develop their own care provision
- Broaden the extent of older people's policy engagement with the council, with clear points of contact
- Redevelop the Physical Activity and Health Action Plan

Children and young people

Our purpose is to improve the lives of children, young people and families in Kirklees. We operate within the national framework set by 'Every Child Matters' with its emphasis on being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well being. We have established a Children and Young People Service and a wider LPSB and are together developing new ways of working and better integrating the services we provide. Our approach has a strong emphasis on involving children and young people in all aspects of what we do. Full details of the outcomes for children and young people can be found in our Review of the Children and Young People Plan. Here we highlight some key achievements that have implications across or for particular groups within the community.

Strategic partnership approach

The LPSB provides strategic oversight in this area building on previous partnerships. The Board's early priorities were overseeing the Children and Young People Plan (C&YPP) and its integration with the LAA. The Board also co-ordinates and oversees work on integrated working, the Common Assessment Framework, children's workforce development and the planning and implementation of the Children's Centres programme. We have established the Local Safeguarding Children Board and are developing the integration of the wider safeguarding role and links with the LPSB. The LAA provides a shared performance focus with the Board prioritising actions to reduce obesity and infant mortality; raise attainment; facilitate more and better play; tackle bullying; grow confident parents and improved self-esteem for children and young people. There are identified champions from the Board for each priority and accompanying work programmes. The LPSB has adopted a framework for Joint Commissioning and established a Joint Commissioning Group. Work is underway to implement the arrangements to put this into practice. Voluntary sector representatives are fully involved in this work and our successful HM Treasury Invest to Safe Bid strengthens this collaboration.

Improved performance

Standards of attainment have improved at Key Stage 2 level 4+ in maths and English and are now in line with the national average. Key Stage 4/GCSE 5+ A* - C performance has improved in line with the national increase of 2%. **(SB1)**. Overall school attendance is good in comparison with similar authorities and national averages. We have achieved a big increase in the percentage of excluded children in receipt of full-time education. The percentage of SEN statements produced on time has improved significantly. A high school and a primary school remain in special measures and both are expected to be removed in 2007/08, showing real improvement since 2004 when six schools were in this category **(SB2)**. There are strong collaborative arrangements for high schools, sixth form colleges, FE colleges and

work-based learning providers through our 14-19 Collegiates programme. This is providing the partnership through which vocational diplomas are being developed and is increasing the numbers taking up vocational options at Key Stage 4. We have the highest A level average point score per student in the country. Our staying in learning post-16 rate is 85.8%, with strong indications that it will continue to improve. Achievement of level 2 qualifications at age 19 is 67.9%, a yearly increase of 1.3%.

Outcomes relating to the safety of children and young people are in most cases significantly better than in similar areas (e.g. stability of foster placements, adoption, reviews of child protection cases, re-registrations on the child protection register). We have brought together support arrangements for Looked After Children and this has led to improved health outcomes. We are establishing a corporate parenting panel to improve how we discharge this responsibility. Our Accommodation Strategy has enabled us to reduce the number of residential establishments from five to three, open a new children's home and improve the overall quality of residential care for children and young people.

We have an award winning campaign to increase foster carer recruitment and have just recruited another 28 in the past few months. This is linked to the increased use of fostering to improve placements for children in care, reduce expensive residential care costs and raise community awareness of fostering.

The Together We'll Succeed initiative supports parents and children undertaking tests and involves schools, children and young people, parents and the wider community in supporting achievement. Two new state-of-the-art special schools, Castle Hill and Fairfield, funded through PFI provide the best possible learning environments for children with complex needs and are a resource and expertise on special educational needs for the rest of the system.

We have exceeded targets for Extended School provision and participation in the Healthy Schools Standard. We have pioneered the development of

a Healthy College Standard which has been taken up by all four post-16 institutions in Kirklees

Phase one of our Children Centres programme, with 14 centres, is complete, providing integrated early education, child care, parent support and access to health services. A further 15 centres will follow in Phase two. The programme provides a model for integrated multi-agency working while our school twinning initiative is helping community cohesion.

Challenges

Whilst we have made significant progress in improving outcomes for children and young people we know there are number of challenges and we have clear plans to address these.

- Ensure CAMHS meet identified needs
- Developing an integrated programme to tackle obesity in children and young people
- Better integration of services for children with disabilities
- Continue to develop initiatives to address bullying and establish clear systems and processes for recording and analysing data to inform future action
- Reducing the number of schools that are underperforming and sharpening our challenge to those schools that are 'coasting'
- Improving the school attendance and educational attainment of Looked After Children and increasing the number who participate in their reviews. Reducing the number of convictions and cautions of Looked After Children is also an area of focus.
- Working to improve attendance with those schools identified as having a problem with persistent absence
- Continuing to improve permanently excluded pupils' access to full time education provision and reducing the number of fixed term exclusions
- Reducing the number of young people who become involved in the criminal justice system and improving the participation of young people under Youth Offending Team supervision in education, employment or training
- Use the developing 14-19 collaborative arrangements to strengthen level 1 and 2 provision

Engaging children and young people

There was strong input into the C&YPP, including separate children's and young people's versions. Some key consultation points are that self esteem, relationships, emotional, mental and physical well being are important issues, bullying, harassment, safety whilst out and about and more and better play facilities are important concerns. Children want to be taken seriously and have their opinions valued.

Young people determined Kirklees' involvement in the UK Youth Parliament; around 80 children are trained to work with other young people and take youth issues to Local Area Committees and other bodies; young people who are or who have been Looked After continue to deliver 'Total Respect' training for social care staff, and contribute to foster-carer training. There are 4 grants schemes administered fully by children: £440K of Youth Opportunities funding was allocated by young people in 2006/07; while a number of the Children's Fund projects involve children volunteering to support each other. Children are also involved in the appointment of senior staff and fieldwork staff in key services. SB

Further detail and evidence of our improved performance and our response to these challenges is set out in the Review of the Children and Young People Plan and the accompanying Position Statement

Where next?

- Building Schools for the Future with a shared vision for re-shaping learning in communities across all ages and providing the infrastructure to support it
- Continuing to raise standards of achievement for all with a focus on overcoming barriers to learning for those who don't do well and re-shaping and sharpening challenge and support to schools
- Developing integrated working in localities to ensure coherent, joined up support to children and families
- Ensuring the most vulnerable children are kept safe, strengthening the Local Safeguarding Children Board to embrace wider responsibilities