London Borough of
Barking & Dagenham

Notice of Meeting

THE EXECUTIVE

Tuesday, 15 July 2008 - 7:00 pm
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Dagenham

Members: Councillor C J Fairbrass MBE (Chair); Councillor L A Smith (Deputy Chair); Councillor J L Alexander, Councillor G J Bramley, Councillor S Carroll, Councillor H J Collins, Councillor R C Little, Councillor M A McCarthy, Councillor M E McKenzie and Councillor Mrs V Rush

4 July 2008
R. A. Whiteman
Chief Executive

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AGENDA

1.   **Apologies for Absence**

2.   **Declaration of Members' Interests**

In accordance with the Council's Constitution, Members are asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interest they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting.

3.   **Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2008 (Pages 1 - 3)**

Business Items

Public Items 4 to 7 are business items. The Chair will move that these be agreed without discussion, unless any Member asks to raise a specific point.

Any discussion of a Private Business Item will take place after the exclusion of the public and press.

4.   **Budget Monitoring Report 2008/09 (Pages 5 - 21)**

5.   **'Achieving Excellence' - 4th Quarter (January to March 2008) (Pages 23 - 80)**

6. **Housing Advice Service - Audit Commission Inspection Report (Pages 81 - 138)**

7. **National Memorial to the Evacuation Appeal Fund (Pages 139 - 142)**

Discussion Items

8. **Capital Programme - Primary Schools (Pages 143 - 183)**

9. **Dagenham Park School - Change of Status (Pages 185 - 200)**

10. **Expansion of Ripple Infant School (Pages 201 - 204)**

11. **Local Government Pension Scheme - Employer Discretions (Report to follow)**

12. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**

13. **To consider whether it would be appropriate to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted.**

Private Business

The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Executive, except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed. The list below shows why items are in the private part of the agenda, with reference to the relevant legislation (the relevant paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended). There are no such items at the time of preparing this agenda.

14. **Any other confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent**

THE EXECUTIVE

Tuesday, 3 June 2008
(7:00 - 7:55 pm)

Present: Councillor C J Fairbrass (Chair), Councillor J L Alexander, Councillor G J Bramley, Councillor H J Collins, Councillor R C Little, Councillor M E McKenzie and Councillor Mrs V Rush

Also Present: Councillor J McDermott, Councillor G Vincent, Councillor R Gill and Councillor P Walker

Apologies: Councillor L A Smith, Councillor S Carroll and Councillor M A McCarthy

10. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

11. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2008 (Previously Circulated)

Agreed.

12. * Council's Revenue and Capital Outturn 2007/08

Received a report from the Corporate Director of Resources on the Council's provisional revenue and capital outturn position for the financial year 2007/08.

The final position for the Council's General Fund revenue services highlighted an overall overspend of £563k, after carry forward requests from departments.

For the Housing Revenue Account, the final working balance showed a position of £2.3m which continued to demonstrate sound financial strength.

For Capital, the final position showed that £63.3m had been spent out of the original budgeted programme of £75.1m and a final working budget of £65.7m, which showed that continued progress had been made in quicker capital delivery based on accurate profiling.

Agreed, as a matter of good financial practice, to:

(i)   Note the final outturn position of the Council's revenue budgets for 2007/08;

(ii)   Approve the use of the Council's General Reserve balances to fund the minimal 2007/08 overspend;

(iii)   Approve the final in-year budget adjustments;

(iv)   Note the position of the working balance for the Housing Revenue Account;

(v)   Note the outturn position for the 2007/08 Financial Health Indicators;

(vi)   Note the final outturn position of the Council's Capital programme;

(vii)   Approve the carry forward of categories A, B, D and E (i.e. committed and rolling programmes) from the 2007/08 Capital Programme to be incorporated into future years service capital programmes, and approve the carry forward of category C schemes (i.e. not yet contractually committed) subject to an appraisal through the EPO process;

(viii)   Approve that the appropriate 2008/09 budgets be adjusted for advanced expenditure in 2007/08 of £6.2m; and

(ix)   Note the outturn position for 2007/08 Prudential Indicators.

13.   Local Area Agreement

Received a report from the Corporate Director of Resources setting out the three year Local Area Agreement (LAA) to be introduced in June 2008.   The LAA reflects the ambitions of all the Borough's diverse communities and partners into priorities to be delivered by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP).

The final draft of the LAA will be submitted to Government Office for London and will be given final approval by Government Ministers by the end of June 2008.

Agreed, to assist the Council in achieving all its Community Priorities and deliver the Community Strategy, to adopt the draft LAA to be submitted to the Government Office for London and approval by the appropriate Secretary of State, subject to delegation of this function to the Executive by the Assembly.

14.   Private Business

Agreed to exclude the public and press for the remainder of the meeting, as the business was confidential.

15.   * Annual Treasury Management Statement 2007/08

Received a report from the Corporate Director of Resources detailing the Council's outturn position in respect of its treasury management activities, including returns on the Council's investments and preparation for borrowing in order to fund the capital programme.

Agreed, in order to comply with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services, to note the Treasury Management Annual Report for 2007/08.

16.   Highways Investment Plan - Appointment of Contractors

Received a report from the Corporate Director of Customer Services detailing:

(i)   The ambitious programme of investment in improving the condition of the Borough's roads and footpaths with an area based approach; and
(ii)   The tendering process.

Agreed, in order to assist the Council in achieving its Community Priority 'Making

Barking and Dagenham Cleaner, Greener and Safer', to:

(i)   The appointment of Bardon Contracting to commence works; and
(ii)   Authorise the Corporate Director of Customer Services to enter into formal discussions with Balfour Beatty Contracting on terms set out in the report and, if considered appropriate, to appoint Balfour Beatty as reserve contractor.

(*The Chair agreed that these items could be considered as a matter of urgency under the provisions of Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.)

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THE EXECUTIVE

15 JULY 2008

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

Title: Budget Monitoring Report May 2008/2009	For Decision

Summary:
The report updates the Executive on the Council's revenue and capital position for the first two months of the 2008/09 financial year.

The current forecast across the Council in respect of its revenue budget has identified that four departments are projecting in-year pressures amounting to £6.4m (Adult & Community Services £900k, Children's Services £5.1m, Customer Services £74k and Regeneration £355k). The largest pressure is within the Children's Services department where significant budget pressures continue to arise from Looked after Children Placements, and in meeting the Councils' Leaving Care responsibilities. On the basis of existing commitments and projections to the end of the financial year, the forecast overspend in this area is £5.1m.

Where pressures do exist, all departments will need to address these as part of their own, and the Council's, ongoing budget monitoring process so that they produce the necessary balanced budget by the year end. The outcomes and progress of any action plans will be monitored and reported to both the Resource Monitoring panels and the Executive through the regular budget monitoring meetings and reports.

For the Housing Revenue Account the forecast is that the year end working balance will be £2.9m which is broadly in line with the original budget projection of £3.1m.

In regard to the Capital programme, the current projection is that total spend will be broadly in line with the budget by the year end. Directors will continue to review the delivery of individual capital schemes to ensure maximum spend is achieved by the year end.

Wards Affected: This is a regular budget monitoring report of the Council's resource position and applies to all wards.

Recommendation(s)
The Executive is asked to:

(i) Note the current position of the Council's revenue and capital budget as at 31st May 2008 (Sections 3 and 5 of the report);

(ii) Note the position and projected out-turn for the Housing Revenue Account (Section 4 of the report); and

(iii) Note the action plans being undertaken to alleviate the budget pressures to ensure that the necessary balanced budget for the Council is achieved by the end of the financial year (Section 3 of the report).

Reason (s)
As a matter of good financial practise, the Executive should be regularly updated with the position on the Council's budget.

Implications:

Financial:
The overall revenue budget for May is indicating early budget pressures across four of the Council's service departments. Where pressures exist Directors are required to identify and implement the necessary action plans to alleviate these pressures. The capital programme is reported to be broadly on target against the working budget of £81.9m.

Legal:
There are no legal implications regarding this report.

Risk Management:
The risk to the Council is that budgets are overspent and that this reduces the Council's overall resource position. Where there is an indication that a budget may overspend by the year end the relevant Director will be required to review the Departmental budget position to achieve a balanced position by the year end. This may involve the need to produce a formal action plan to ensure delivery of this position for approval and monitoring by the Resource Monitoring Panel and the Executive.

Similarly, if there are underspends this may mean a lower level of service or capital investment not being fully delivered. Specific procedures and sanctions are in place through the Resource Monitoring Panels, Enterprise Programme Office (EPO), Corporate Management Team and the Executive.

Social Inclusion and Diversity:
As this report does not concern a new or revised policy there are no specific adverse impacts insofar as this report is concerned.

Crime and Disorder:
There are no specific implications insofar as this report is concerned.

Options Appraisal:
There are no specific implications insofar as this report is concerned.

Contact Officer	Title:	Contact Details:
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1.   Introduction and Background

1.1   It is important that the Council regularly monitors its revenue and capital budgets to ensure good financial management. It is now practise within the Council for this monitoring to occur on a regular monthly basis, which helps members to be constantly updated on the Council's overall financial position and to enable the Executive to make relevant decisions as necessary on the direction of both the revenue and capital budgets.

1.2   The report is based upon the core information contained in the Oracle general ledger system supplemented by detailed examinations of budgets between the budget holders and the relevant Finance teams to take account of commitments and projected end of year positions. In addition, for capital monitoring there is the extensive work carried out by the Enterprise Programme Office (EPO).

1.3   The monthly Resource Monitoring Panels, chaired by the lead member for finance, and attended by Directors and Heads of Service, monitors the detail of individual departments revenue and capital budgets alongside relevant performance data and this also enhances and forms the basis of this report.

2.   Current Position

2.1   Overview for Revenue Budget

2.1.1   The current forecast across the Council in respect of its revenue budget has identified that four departments are projecting in-year pressures amounting to £6.4m (Adult & Community Services £900k, Children's Services £5.1m, Customer Services £74k and Regeneration £355k). The largest pressure is within the Children's Services department where significant budget pressures continue to arise from Looked after Children Placements, and in meeting the Councils' Leaving Care responsibilities. On the basis of existing commitments and projections to the end of the financial year, the forecast overspend in this area is £5.1m.

2.1.2   Where pressures do exist, all departments will need to address these as part of their own and the Council's ongoing budget monitoring process so that they produce the necessary balanced budget by the year end. The outcomes and progress of any action plans will be monitored and reported to both the Resource Monitoring panels and the Executive through the regular budget monitoring meetings and reports.

3.   Service Position

3.1   General

3.1.1   Details of each Department's current financial position are provided in Section 3 of this report. In those areas where budget pressures have been highlighted, continual work is being undertaken by Corporate Directors and their management teams to ensure a balanced budget is produced for the year end. To this end, Corporate Directors are beginning to identify action plans to address and rectify these pressure areas and these plans will be actively monitored by the various Resource Monitoring Panels.

3.2   Adults and Community Services Department

3.2.1   At this early stage of the year the Department is projecting a £900k overspend position. However as these end of year projections are based on only two month's activity it is difficult to quantify this position with full certainty at this stage.

However it is clear there are some issues and pressures facing the Department at this time, but the Executive is reminded that the Department and its Management Team have a track record of dealing with issues and pressures throughout the year to deliver a balanced budget. The current projected overspend of £900k is primarily

as a result of delays in the Older Persons Home Care Modernisation programme, and the anticipated 2008/09 savings taken from the base budget.

3.2.2 The department's 2008/09 budget reflects a total of £3.35m of savings which includes the outstanding £900k of savings from last years Older Persons Modernisation Programme in the Home Support Service.

3.2.3 **Adult Care Services**
This service area is primarily Older Persons Residential and Home support provided by the councils remaining in-house services, and also includes the Passenger Transport Service. The net budget for this area is £7.1m. Budget pressures of £900k are being experienced in this area due to the savings issues regarding the Older Persons Modernisation Programme.

3.2.4 **Adult Commissioning Services**
This service area represents the Social Work and Care Management budgets in the department, together with services commissioned from the Independent and Private Sector. Service areas include Older Persons, Physical Disability, Learning Disability and Mental Health. The net budget for the area is £44.5m and is by far the largest area (70%) in cash terms in the department. The department has set itself some challenging targets in this area particularly around procurement and commissioning gains/savings. Interface issues with the local Hospitals and the PCT regarding Delayed Transfers of Care are acute in this area, and are carefully managed. The Executive will recall pressures in previous years' regarding external care packages in this area that led to a review of the FACS eligibility criteria. It is envisaged that robust monitoring and gate-keeping will again be required in this area to contain demand within budgets in 2008/09.

3.2.5 **Community Safety and Preventive Services**
This service area includes CCTV, Community Safety & Parks Police, Substance Misuse, and the Youth Offending Team and the total net budgets are in the region of £4m for this area. Minor pressures are being experienced in the Community Safety area at present.

3.2.6 **Community Services and Libraries**
This service area covers Heritage and Libraries, the Lifelong Learning Centre, Community Development and Halls, Community Cohesion and Equalities and Diversity. Net budgets are in the region of £7.6m and currently the budgets in this area are cost neutral.

3.2.7 **Other Services, Central Budgets, Recharges, and Government Grants**
The Adult and Community Services Department receive specific government grants, and incur recharges for departmental and divisional support. All specific grants will be used in support of existing service areas. Central budgets and recharges within the department are on target.

3.3   Children's Services Department

3.3.1 Although it is very early in the financial year, it is clear that the budget pressures experienced in 2007/08 from Looked after Children Placements and in meeting the Councils' Leaving Care responsibilities are likely to prevail again in 2008/09. On the

basis of existing commitments, and assessing the future profile for each of the 343 looked after children, the forecast is for an overspend on these budgets of £5.1m.

3.3.2   Elsewhere within Children's Services it is estimated at this early point in the year that spending can be contained within budget. There are nonetheless a number of significant and potential variances that may partly offset each other, but in-year management action will be necessary to contain all of those pressures.

3.3.3   **Schools**
The carry-forward revenue balances for schools were £6m at 31 March 2008. All schools with balances are being asked to demonstrate why they are holding balances, with the Scheme for Financing Schools allowing for clawback where schools have no plans for balances in excess of DCSF thresholds. All schools with deficits are required to have a recovery plan.

3.3.4   **Quality and School Improvement**
It is not expected that there will be any major variances in the Quality and School Improvement service. Work is being done to ensure that Standards Fund budgets, particularly those within the Area Based Grant are properly aligned with commitments.

3.3.5   **Shared Services and Engagement**
Much of the work of the Shared Services and Engagement division is either funded from SureStart Grant or from the Dedicated Schools Grant, with only around £1m funded from the General Fund. This division has some savings targets to deliver, as well as absorbing some of the Integrated Family Services work from a now disbanded division. There are not anticipated to be any major variances at this stage.

3.3.6   **Safeguarding and Rights**
The main budget issue for the Safeguarding & Rights service is that of the cost of Looked After Children placements and Leaving Care costs.

On the basis of existing commitments and an assessment of the future profile for each of the 343 looked after children, the current forecast is for an overspend on these budgets of £5.1m. Extensive work is being done in analysing the activity that is producing these costs, with a view to identifying financial forecasts that are more sensitive to the care plans for individual children, taking account of future demand, but also to assess the likely effectiveness of any measures to prevent children having to go into care or to keep costs reasonable when this is not avoidable.

The main reasons for this projected overspend include:
• Change in demographics – highest number of 0-18s;
• Significant improvements in the life chances of children in care;
• Complexity of cases with multiple presenting issues;
• A high number of children in need cases open to Safeguarding & Rights;
• Significant improvements in fostering service – judgment of 'outstanding' in January 2008 OFSTED inspection – including:
  ▪ Not placing over approved numbers
  ▪ Improved matching
• Deregistration of some foster carers;
• No recourse to public funds cases & new arrivals to LBBD;

- Lack of sufficient 'edge of care' projects to prevent admissions into care;
- Contact, transport and legal costs.

Extensive work is being done to understand and diminish the financial impact of this budget pressure and further updates will be provided in future reports to the Executive.

3.3.7 Children's Policy Trust and Commissioning
At present there are concerns about cost pressures being experienced by the catering service, whose costs are predominantly charged to the Dedicated Schools Grant.

3.3.8 Other
Most of the costs here are for capital charges, on-going pension costs, central recharges and the costs of the Director of Children's Services. It is not anticipated that there will be any major variances in this area at this stage.

3.4 Customer Services Department

3.4.1
The initial review and forecast of the 2008/09 revenue budgets for the Customer Services Department has not highlighted any immediate concerns with just a small budget pressure of £74k.

3.4.2
Whilst some areas of pressures have been identified at this stage, these pressures should generally be contained within existing resources through disciplined and robust financial management teamed with timely and effective management decisions.

3.4.3 Environmental and Enforcement Services
The Environmental and Enforcement Section is expected to be on budget. Whilst the management team have identified some pressures they are currently working on appropriate actions to ensure that the services are delivered within the budget allocation. The Fleet service is undergoing a review of its budgets to minimise the risk of overspending this year. This is particularly relevant as the service is undergoing a procurement process to replace the existing high maintenance fleet. The procurement process is expected to be completed in October 2008, however this places the emphasis on management to control costs and maximise income in first half of the year. The division's financial resources are often overstretched due to the need to employ temporary staff to cover vacant posts to maintain regular high quality services. Whilst this pressure will continue throughout the year robust budgetary control should enable management to contain these pressures within existing budgets.

3.4.4 General Housing
The Council has a statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation to vulnerable clients and by the nature of the service is subject to fluctuating costs that are associated with a demand led service. A recent Government initiative to reduce the use of Temporary Accommodation by 2010 is embedded in the Departments Homelessness Strategy, however this is contingent on socio-economic factors that are outside the control of the Council and as such emphasise the need for management to maintain financial discipline through rigorous budgetary control.
The initial review of the budget indicates a small budget overspend of £74k which is due to a higher level of voids than that anticipated in the original budget. The Housing Management Team is currently working on action plans to ensure that the total spend for the financial year stays within the budget.

3.4.5 **Customer Strategy**
There are currently no indications of any significant pressures which cannot be contained within the service budgets.

3.4.6 **Barking & Dagenham Direct**
There are currently no indications of any significant pressures which cannot be contained within the service budgets.

3.5 **Regeneration Department**

3.5.1 The May forecast for 2008/09 for the Regeneration Department is a projected shortfall in income of £355k.

The current key issues for the department are:
- the creation of the Capital Programme Unit which, by drawing in staff and budgets from across the council, will require a re-structuring and the identification of savings;
- provision of free swims for under-18s – working in partnership with the PCT;
- delivery of the land disposal programme to support the capital programme and generate budgeted revenue income from transaction fees.

3.5.2 **Directorate and PPP**
There are currently no indications of any significant pressures which cannot be contained within the service budgets.

3.5.3 **Housing Strategy & Property**
The main pressure for the division relates to potential delays in the delivery of the land disposal programme which will result in a loss of budgeted income in respect of transaction fees. The current projection is that there may be a shortfall of income of £310k. Other potential service issues include:
- Local Housing Company;
- Commercial rental income – the economic slowdown may affect the ability to re-let and increase income from rent reviews and lease renewals.

3.5.4 **Spatial Regeneration**
The current projection is for a balanced budget. However potential issues do exist including possible pressures on income generation in the Local Land Charge service as a result of the slow down in the housing market. Similarly the slow down in the housing market may also impact on the Development Control and Building Control functions.

3.5.5 **Skills, Learning & Enterprise**
The main financial pressure in the division relates to a £45k shortfall of income in relation to LSC funding. In addition there may be further pressures around potential loss of income at the Barking Market as a result of the introduction of ELT.

3.5.6 **Leisure, Arts and Olympics**
The current projection is for a balanced budget.
Potential service issues in the near future include:
- Finalisation of the Leisure Centre Value for Money review scheduled for June 2008;

- Introduction of free swimming for under 18's in partnership with PCT in September;
- Broadway Theatre – potential financial risk to the council in relation to finalisation of access and usage arrangements for Barking College which are not able to be quantified at this stage.

3.5.7 Asset Strategy & Capital Delivery

The current projection is for a balanced budget. Potential service issues for the near future are around the delivery of the Capital Programme Unit. This involves the drawing together of significant numbers of staff and budgets from across the council to create a re-shaped structure to delivery both a more effective service and significant savings. Value for Money will form an integrated part of the process of creating the new function.

3.6 Resources Department

3.6.1 The initial forecast of the department's 2008/09 Revenue budget has not identified any major budget pressures that cannot be contained within existing resources through disciplined and robust financial management combined with timely and effective management decisions. There are currently a number of staff vacancies within the Department where advertisement and recruitment is ongoing. In some cases the use of agency staff has been necessary to ensure that services continue to deliver their statutory and corporate functions.

3.6.2 Policy, Performance, Partnerships & Communications

The current projection is for a balanced budget. The main pressures currently identified within the division relate to reduced levels of income in relation to the cessation of Standards Fund grant for the Corporate Web Team (£31k) and a reduction in the amount of income received for filming at locations within the Borough (£10K). These shortfalls can, however, be funded in 2008/09 from existing budgets as there are currently a number of vacant posts.

3.6.3 Democracy & Legal Services

There are currently no indications of any significant pressures which cannot be contained within the service budgets.

3.6.4 Corporate & Strategic Finance

There are a number of vacant posts within the division for which a number of agency staff has been approved to ensure that the service continues to deliver its statutory functions. The recruitment process for several of these posts is ongoing and it is envisaged that these vacancies will be filled by September/October 2008.

However, it should be noted that the division has experienced difficulties in the past to recruit suitable candidates for senior roles and therefore, heavy reliance on agency staff may result in a pressure on the budgets. Managers have implemented tight controls on hours worked by agency staff and will continue to monitor the staff levels in order to ensure that costs are contained within existing budgets.

3.6.5 ICT & e-Government

There are currently no indications of any significant pressures which cannot be contained within the service budgets.

3.6.6 **Human Resources**
The Division currently has a number of cost pressures including:

- The implementation of the Council's Single Status Strategy has been successful with the process set to be fully completed by the end of July 2008. However, there is still the need for some additional work (estimated at £80k) resulting from the legal challenges from the Trade Unions in respect of the "Knowledge and Experience Allowance";

- One-off costs in respect of the Statutory Equal Pay Review and the Administrative, Technical, Professional and Clerical (ATP & C) Staff Review. The cost of this work is estimated to be in the region of £45K;

- Cost pressures of around £30K in respect of the preparation for the Authority's "Investors in People (IIP)" assessment planned for October 2008.

The departmental management team are currently in the process of identifying the necessary funding sources to finance these costs.

3.6.7 **Interest on Balances**
The current position on interest from investments is that these are performing to the budget target. A proportion of the Council's investments continues to be managed by two external investment managers, and the Council's Treasury Management Strategy has once again set stretching targets for these managers in 2008/09 which are being closely monitored by the Corporate Finance Division. An element of these investments may require the use of investment instruments such as gilts to be used which require tactical trades to be undertaken. Inevitably there are risks and rewards with the use of such investment instruments, and whilst the Council needs to continue to review the manager's performance it also needs to be aware that these potential risks/rewards do exist.

The position of interest on balances is also affected during the year by both performance and actual spend on the Capital Programme and the delivery of the Council's disposals programme. Any positive position arising in these areas may allow Council balances to increase, however, at the same time any weakening of this position may lead to reductions in investment income.

3.6.8 **Corporate Management**
There are currently no immediate issues identified within Corporate Management and it is projected that this budget will break even by the end of the financial year.

4. **Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

4.1 The Housing Revenue Account balances in 2008/09 are forecast to reduce by £415k due to the revenue contribution of £255k towards the Housing Modernisation Programme (Capital) and other net overspends of £160k. This revised projection compares to an original budgeted reduction of £255k.

Projected HRA Working Balance

Description	£000
Working Balance – 1st April 2008	3,330
Projected Surplus / (Deficit) Balance 2008/09	(415)
Projected Working Balance – 31st March 2009	**2,915**

4.2   The income due from HRA tenants in respect of Housing Rents and service charges are currently forecast to overachieve by £351k, this is due to a lower than budgeted Right to Buy sales in 2008/09.

4.3   Supervision and management costs are projected to overspend by £511k due to increased energy costs of £390k and increased estate management costs of £121k. Proactive budget management has helped to identify potential budget pressures earlier and will enable budget holders/service managers to take corrective actions to contain these pressures within existing resources.

4.4   RTB sales were estimated to be 200 in 2008/09 which would generate capital receipts of £19.2m. The current projection for RTB sales has reduced significantly in light of the economic downturn faced by consumers to 100 sales. This is estimated to generate capital receipts of £9.6m, equalling a projected shortfall in capital receipts of £9.6m. The revised projection will impact on the available capital receipts to the Council for investment in capital projects, reducing the retained capital receipts from a budgeted £4.8m to a projected £2.4m.

5.   Capital Programme

5.1   As at the end of May, the working budget on the capital programme had increased to £81.9m against an original budget of £65m. Since the original budget was set, the programme has been updated for approved roll-overs from 2007/08 and a number of new schemes for 2008/09.

5.2   These new schemes fall into two categories:
       (a)   Provisional schemes from the 2008/09 budget report that have now been successfully appraised by EPO; and
       (b)   Schemes which have attracted additional external funding, and whose budgets have been increased accordingly.

5.3   Whilst the current projection is that total spend will be in line with the budget by the year end, it is vitally important at this early stage of the year that projects and budgets are subject to robust scrutiny to ensure that timetables and milestones can be adhered to, and that budgets are realistic. As a result, Directors and sponsors, with support from corporate finance and EPO, are currently carrying on this work which will include reviewing the delivery of individual capital schemes to ensure maximum spend is achieved by the year end.

5.4   The completion of capital projects on time and on budget not only supports the Council's drive to excellence through its Use of Resources score, but will also ensure that the benefits arising from our capital projects are realised for the community as a whole.

6.   Consultees

6.1   The members and officers consulted on this report are:

       Councillor Bramley
       Corporate Management Team
       Group Managers – Corporate Finance
       Enterprise Programme Office

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:
- Oracle reports
- EPO reports

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BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - MAY 2008

SERVICES	2008/09								
	Original Budget	Working Budget	Year to Date Budget	Actual to Date	Year to Date Variance - over/(under)	Forecast Outturn	Variance - over/(under)	Action in place/to be taken	Projected Outturn 2008/09
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Adult & Community Services									
Adult Care Services	5,401	7,139	1,432	1,582	150	8,039	900	900	0
Adult Commissioning Services	45,103	44,511	6,524	6,524	0	44,511	0	0	0
Community Safety & Preventative Services	2,613	4,018	(1,632)	(1,632)	0	4,018	0	0	0
Community Services, Heritage & Libraries	8,796	7,632	1,191	1,191	0	7,632	0	0	0
Other Services	643	576	1,185	1,185	0	576	0	0	0
	62,556	**63,876**	**8,700**	**8,850**	**150**	**64,776**	**900**	**900**	**0**
Children's Services									
Schools	123,673	123,673	20,612	20,365	(247)	123,673	0	0	0
Quality & School Improvement	14,026	14,026	2,338	1,529	(809)	14,026	0	0	0
Shared Services & Engagement	3,018	2,970	495	1,257	762	2,970	0	0	0
Safeguarding & Rights Services	30,885	30,962	5,160	8,441	3,281	36,029	5,067	0	5,067
Children's Policy & Trust Commissioning	3,525	3,531	588	702	114	3,531	0	0	0
Other Services	6,902	6,988	1,165	645	(520)	6,988	0	0	0
	182,029	**182,148**	**30,358**	**32,940**	**2,582**	**187,215**	**5,067**	**0**	**5,067**
Customer Services									
Environment & Enforcement	21,714	22,125	3,495	3,494	(1)	22,125	0	0	0
Barking & Dagenham Direct	4,139	4,363	13,344	13,436	92	4,363	0	0	0
Customer Services Strategy	(75)	0	0	90	90	0	0	0	0
Housing Services	672	677	625	653	28	751	74	74	0
	26,450	**27,165**	**17,465**	**17,673**	**208**	**27,239**	**74**	**74**	**0**
Regeneration Department									
Asset Strategy & Capital Delivery	306	322	54	5	(49)	322	0	0	0
Spatial Regeneration	4,298	4,345	724	560	(164)	4,345	0	0	0
Skills, Learning & Enterprise	1,700	1,725	288	127	(161)	1,770	45	45	0
Leisure, Arts & Olympics	6,704	6,848	834	873	39	6,848	0	0	0
Housing Strategy Services	(1,053)	(1,047)	(175)	(231)	(56)	(737)	310	310	0
Directorate, Policy & Strategic Services	(31)	(77)	(13)	(82)	(69)	(77)	0	0	0
	11,924	**12,116**	**1,712**	**1,252**	**(460)**	**12,471**	**355**	**355**	**0**
Resources									
Chief Executive	35	37	6	(30)	(36)	37	0	0	0
Director of Resources & Business Support	130	131	22	26	4	131	0	0	0
Corporate Finance	(330)	(305)	(51)	(33)	18	(305)	0	0	0
Human Resources	51	74	(20)	91	111	74	0	0	0
ICT & eGovernment	304	328	55	111	56	328	0	0	0
Partnerships, Policy, Performance & Communications	563	578	300	332	32	578	0	0	0
Legal & Democratic Services	883	940	173	81	(92)	940	0	0	0
Strategic Finance & Audit	34	39	7	(89)	(96)	39	0	0	0
Corporate Management	4,986	4,986	655	646	(9)	4,986	0	0	0
General Finance	(15,668)	(18,168)	(3,028)	(3,058)	(30)	(18,168)	0	0	0
	(9,013)	**(11,360)**	**(1,882)**	**(1,923)**	**(41)**	**(11,360)**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Contingency	1,200	1,200	0	0	0	1,200	0	0	0
Levies	7,182	7,182	22	22	0	7,182	0	0	0
TOTAL	**282,328**	**282,328**	**56,375**	**58,814**	**2,439**	**288,724**	**6,396**	**1,329**	**5,067**

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HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT - BUDGET MONITORING SUMMARY

Month May 2008

Housing Revenue Account	Original Budget £'000	Revised Budget £'000	Budget May-08 £'000	Actual May-08 £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000
NET RENT OF DWELLINGS	(73,317)	(73,317)	(12,220)	(12,319)	(73,618)	(301)
OTHER RENTS	(2,593)	(2,593)	(432)	(432)	(2,593)	0
OTHER CHARGES	(5,542)	(5,542)	(924)	(924)	(5,592)	(50)
CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS EXPEDITURE	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL INCOME	**(81,452)**	**(81,452)**	**(13,576)**	**(13,675)**	**(81,803)**	**(351)**
REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE	21,754	21,754	3,626	3,626	21,754	0
SUPERVISION & MANAGEMENT	25,549	25,549	4,258	4,258	26,060	511
RENT, RATES AND OTHER CHARGES	379	379	63	63	379	0
NEGATIVE HRA SUBSIDY PAYABLE	17,046	17,046	2,841	2,841	17,046	0
NEGATIVE HRA SUBSIDY TRANSFERABLE TO GENERAL FUND UNDER TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS	4,611	4,611	0	0	4,611	0
DEPRECIATION & IMPAIRMENT OF FIXED ASSETS	19,963	19,963	3,327	3,327	19,963	0
CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUNDED FROM REVENUE	255	255	0	0	255	0
HRA SHARE OF CDC COSTS	792	792	132	132	792	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**90,349**	**90,349**	**14,247**	**14,247**	**90,860**	**511**
INTEREST EARNED	(1,660)	(1,660)	(277)	(277)	(1,660)	0
NET COST OF SERVICE	**7,237**	**7,237**	**394**	**295**	**7,397**	**160**
NET ADDITIONAL AMOUNT REQUIRED BY STATUTE TO BE DEBITED (OR CREDITED) TO THE HRA	(6,982)	(6,982)	(1,163)	(1,163)	(6,982)	0
MOVEMENT IN WORKING BALANCE	**255**	**255**	**(769)**	**(868)**	**415**	**160**
WORKING BALANCE B/F	(2,819)	(3,330)			(3,330)	**0**
WORKING BALANCE C/F	(2,564)	(3,075)			(2,915)	**160**

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CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2008/2009

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE - MAY 2008

Department	Original Budget (1) £'000	Working Budget £'000	Actual to date £'000	Percentage Spend to Date %	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Outturn Variation against Working Budget £'000	Projected Outturn Variation against Original Budget £'000
Adult & Community Services	3,661	3,968	59	1%	3,767	(201)	106
Children's Services	4,982	5,644	564	10%	5,877	233	895
Customer Servcies	5,683	12,613	287	2%	13,314	701	7,631
Regeneration	47,007	55,770	1,329	2%	56,729	959	9,722
Resources	3,675	3,851	247	6%	3,456	(395)	(219)
Total for Department Schemes	**65,008**	**81,846**	**2,486**	**3%**	**83,143**	**1,297**	**18,135**
Accountable Body Schemes							
Regeneration	-	11	-	0%	11	0	11
Total for Accountable Body Schemes	**-**	**11**	**-**	**0%**	**11**	**0**	**11**
Total for all Schemes	**65,008**	**81,857**	**2,486**	**3%**	**83,154**	**1,297**	**18,146**

Note
(1) Excludes provisional schemes approved at Executive 19th February 2008 subject to achieving 'four green lights' from EPO appraisal

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THE EXECUTIVE

15 JULY 2008

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

Title: Achieving Excellence 2007/08 - Quarter 4	**For Decision**

Summary:
This report summarises the performance of the Council in key areas.

The overview section identifies:
- the key areas of progress;
- progress against previous actions agreed by Members.

The appendices contain the following supporting information:
- Appendix A: **Service Plans** – delivery against key objectives
- Appendix B: **Performance** - key performance indicators, CPA and complaints data;
- Appendix C: **Programmes** - progress on the Council's key programmes;
- Appendix D: **Pounds** - budget monitoring and the efficiency programme;
- Appendix E: **People** - key indicators for human resources;
- Appendix F: **Recommendations** for action (progress from last meeting)

It is noted that this report format and timetable will be amended as part of an ongoing review of the Performance Framework. To be discussed with Cllr Bramley as part of his Portfolio responsibilities.

Wards Affected: None

Recommendation(s)
The Executive is recommended to:

(i)   Consider the report and note the progress against Quarter 3 actions; and
(ii)   Agree the Quarter 4 actions as set out in Appendix F to the report.

Reason(s)
To assist in achieving the Council Priority of "Improving Performance Across the Board".

Implications

Financial:
The outturn position for revenue expenditure at Q4, i.e. the final position for 2007/08 is a 0.2% over spend, which equates to £563k. The budget pressures reduced a result of the implementation of a range of departmental action plans. The latest full position is identified in Appendix C, Table 1. For the Housing Revenue Account, the final working balance shows a position of £2.3m The Capital Programmes final position shows that £65.3m has been spent out of the original budgeted programme of £75.1m and a final working budget of £65.7m bringing an under spend of £2.4m.

Legal:
No specific implications.

Risk Management:
No specific implications.

Social Inclusion and Diversity:
This report is an important part of the performance management framework in terms of monitoring our service delivery to all citizens of the borough.

Crime and Disorder:
No specific implications.

Options Appraisal:
Not applicable.

Contact Officer: Guy Swindle	Title: Head of Policy, Partnerships, Performance & Communications	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 2094 E-mail: guy.swindle@lbbd.gov.uk

1. **Overview of Service Plan Performance for 2007-08**

This has been an important year for the Council with an improved Corporate Assessment score of 3 and the annual assessment of Adults Services delivering a 3 Star service rating to give us an overall rating of 'Good' in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). The Council also successfully attained Beacon Status for Climate Change, won the coveted LGC Award for 'Most Improved Council' and delivered the innovative Barking Learning Centre, providing an important hub for delivering accessible services from first point of contact. Barking and Dagenham was one of four councils selected as an action learning site for the new Corporate Area Assessment which replaces CPA from 2009.

Overall 65% of service objectives were achieved or are on track (green), while 3% were not delivered (red), compared with 4% at quarter 3.

Key achievements include:

- Recognised as one of most improved in the country for national test results for 11 year olds and our best ever performance on pupils with 5A*-C GCSEs
- 56% of schools inspected judged as good or outstanding and none assessed as inadequate
- 14 children's centres completed on target and the ambitious Building Schools for the Future programme on track
- More than 500 homes completed with 43% of newly built houses classed as affordable
- 28% reduction in burglary and 9% reduction in crime and disorder
- Regular customer surveys to establish satisfaction and 40% of respondents to the 2007 budget survey satisfied that the council provides value for money – an increase of 10% from 2006
- High usage of the newly opened Barking Learning Centre with strong enrolments at both Barking College and University of East London

- Barking Town Centre and Riverside development programmes are on track
- 175 new businesses have formed with LEGI support and youth apprenticeships have been established in construction, sports leadership and motor vehicle maintenance

Areas where objectives and targets have not been met include:

- Cleanliness of streets
- Delays in plans for Becontree Leisure centre, Barking Learning Centre Forum and Eastbury and Valence house developments
- Development of Neighbourhood Management local plans
- Completion of supporting people homes (52 completed against a target of 66) and wheelchair accessible homes (3% against target of 10%)
- LAA economic well-being target assessed as red
- Stretch target for affordable housing not met (835 delivered, target 1190)

2. Overview of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), CPA and Inspections

2007-08 was the final year of BVPIs; from 1 April 2008 they have been replaced by the new National Indicator set comprising 198 indicators – these will be reported in the next performance report.

The un-audited figures for the basket of key performance indicators show:

- 87% at or above target
- 13% below target
- 31% of KPIs are below the level they were for the last financial year

There are seven key indicators performing significantly (10%+) above their target:-

- ***BV109** - % of **a)** major planning applications determined in 13 weeks, **b)** minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks, **c)** other planning applications determined in 8 weeks;*
- ***BV204** – proportion of planning appeals allowed;*
- *Killed and seriously injured road casualties;*
- *Slightly injured road casualties;*
- ***HIP E6** – average time for non-urgent repairs*

One indicator was significantly below (10%+) target:

- ***PAF D41** – number of delayed transfers of care per 100,000 population aged 65+*

No inspections were reported during the quarter and our CPA score for 2007 was confirmed as 3 star. The final framework for CPA 2008 is due to be confirmed in July. Based on the un-audited performance data for 2007-08 the following service block scores are predicted:

Environment – 3
Housing – 4
Benefits – 4

Adult Social Care and Use of Resources both scored 3 in 2007 and are projected to at least retain these scores.

The culture block has 4 indicators that are collected during 2008-09. In 2007-08 three of these were lower threshold and the fourth in between. To achieve an overall service block score of 3 at least one needs to move to upper and there can be no more than one in lower.

The Children and Young People block is due to be refreshed this year following last year's Joint Area Review, which returned an assessment of 2.

3.   **Overview of Complaints Received 1 January to 31 March 2008**

The number of complaints received have decreased by 80 (12%) from the previous quarter, and 4.6% for the same period (Jan – Mar) in 2007.

The provisional complaint statistics from the Local Government Ombudsman for 2007/08 highlight a reduction in the number of premature complaints from 40 – 28.

On 12 March 2008 the Council was accredited by the British Standards Institute, which confirms that the organisation is compliant with ISO 10002:2004, for its Complaints Management System.

A neighbouring borough is re-launching their complaints procedure and visited the LBBD Corporate Complaints Team to discuss training and best practice.

Delivered improvement:

- Private Sector Housing now offer an appeal process for unsuccessful renovation grant applicants. They have arranged for Hanover Housing to carry out an independent inspection. 2 appeals have already been received.
- Housing have designed and implemented a Health & Safety Rating System, which they now use when carrying out inspections in residential properties.
- Dagenham Swimming Pool has prepared a business case for improvement of fitness room.
- Guidelines issued to all staff regarding breast feeding in Leisure Centres and improvements made to facilities.
- Revenue Services have amended their booklet 'Your Council Tax and Business Rates Information' to include a section on multiple occupancy.

Future Priorities for Improvement:

- Reduce response times at all stages – particularly swift resolution to stage 1 complaints in line with Done in One principles.
- Continue to improve the content and quality of complaint response letters.
- To keep in closer contact with complainants to increase customer satisfaction with the complaint process.
- Better learning from complaints
- To monitor staff conduct and attitude complaints more closely
- Develop closer working relationships between corporate complaint team & service areas.

4.   **Overview of Programmes and Projects Performance**

The Council's programme approach provides a unique opportunity to effect transformational change.   Initially they require significant intellectual and time investment in terms of:

- Identifying the programme
- Defining the programme

Alongside of this there is a considerable amount of work in ensuring that outcomes and benefits are realised and are in line with the strategic aims of the council.

Work on the first two established programmes, Modern Ways of Working and Excellent Customer Services is well underway. The outcomes for these are shown below.

Modern Ways of Working
By December 2010, the programme will have created flexible and high quality workplaces staffed by skilled and motivated people supported by effective processes to serve customers by providing value for money services.

Excellent Customer Services
The Excellent Customer Services programme will deliver transformational change to the quality of delivery of customer facing Council services. It will encompass the existing "Done in One" and Customer First and Housing Modernisation programmes. (This programme also relies upon the realised benefits and associated projects of Modern Ways of Working.)

Programme Boards have also been established for 3 Programmes:

- Living and Working
- Strong, Safe, Active and Healthy Communities
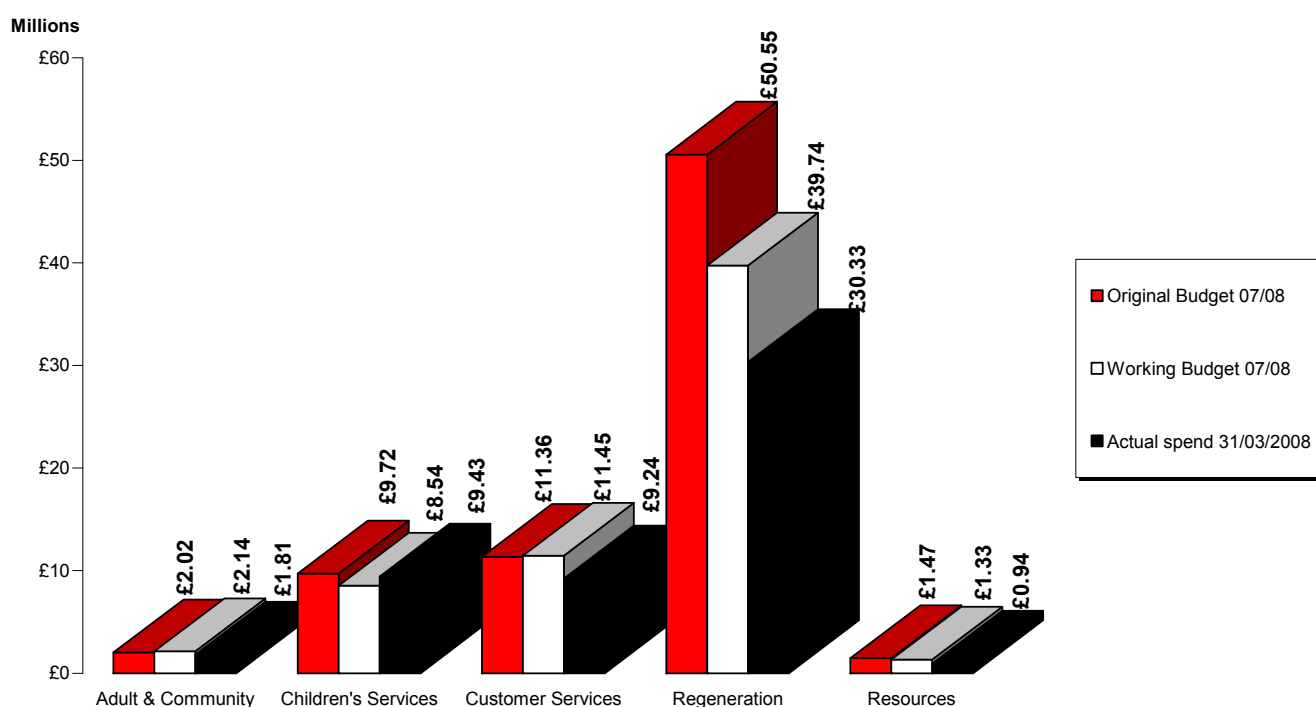- Enjoy and Achieve

Work is underway on each of these, learning from the initial 2 programmes will inform their development.

An outline of projects included under each Programme is set out in Appendix C

The Capital Programme
The Council set an original Capital Programme budget of £75.1m for the financial year 2007/08. As of 31 March 2008 this had been revised to a working budget of £63.3m. This budget is allocated across the five Council departments funding the delivery of the 143 reported Capital projects (see Appendix B for details).As of 31 March 2008 the Council had spent £ 51.83 m (82%) of its working capital budget and is projecting full year expenditure of £59.36m (94%).

Capital Expenditure 2007/08

Legend:
- Original Budget 07/08
- Working Budget 07/08
- Actual spend 31/03/2008

Category	Original Budget 07/08	Working Budget 07/08	Actual spend 31/03/2008
Adult & Community	£2.02	£2.14	£1.81
Children's Services	£9.72	£8.54	£9.43
Customer Services	£11.36	£11.45	£9.24
Regeneration	£50.55	£39.74	£30.33
Resources	£1.47	£1.33	£0.94

External funding

A significant proportion of the Council's capital programme is funded by external bodies such as DfES, Transport for London or Heritage Lottery Fund etc. The original Capital programme budget for 2007/08 was set at £75.1m, of which £40.7m (54.2%) was contributed by external funding bodies. As of 31 March 2008 the value of external funding in the working capital budget stood at £32.98m contributing to the delivery of 37 individual projects. This represented 52.1% of the working capital budget as of that date.

5.   **Overview for Pounds**

Revenue - The provisional outturn position for 2007/08 in relation to the revenue budget indicates a 0.2% overspend. This position is provisional and will be subject to the Council's closure of accounts process and end of year adjustments.

Capital Programme - The final position shows that £63.3m has been spent out of the original budgeted programme of £75.1m. The Capital Programme has been reviewed throughout the year for new schemes, changes to budget profiles, etc. and these are reflected in both the working budget and actual spend

Efficiency - The council had a three year efficiency target of £13.4 million to achieve by the end of 2007/08. When estimated efficiency gains from 2007/08 are factored in, we are expecting achieve a total of £19.3m of efficiency gains in the period, nearly £6m over the original target and meeting that target more than one year early.

While the Council's outturn position is still being finalised, it seems likely that the in-year target that we set ourselves at the beginning of 2007/08 will not be realised, as reported throughout the year. This is as a result of the decision to delay the implementation of older persons' modernisation programme, which will delay the

efficiencies that will accrue from this. Against an original target of £5.9m, we expect to achieve £5.1m. However, this is still a considerable achievement considering that we have easily exceeded the target the government set us.

The Government announced plans for efficiency targets of 3% per annum cashable efficiency gains from 2008/09 onwards in the Comprehensive Spending Review in October 2007. This is a challenging target, and the Council has already begun to develop a "Modern Ways of Working" Programme which will aim to deliver these efficiency gains over the next 3 financial years.

Value for Money - Plans have been agreed to sustain the judgement awarded for 2006/07 and continue embedding VFM across the council.

6. Overview for People

6.1 1 of the 6 indicators has been exceeded whilst 2 others are close to or on target. The top 5% of earners from i) BME communities, and ii) who declare themselves to meet the disability definition has reduced from 16 -15 and from 4 -2 staff respectively.

Performance Indicator	2007/8 Target	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	Final Quarter
Top 5% of earners who are women	46%	45.6%	46.07%	46.41%	44.56%
Top 5% of earners from minority ethnic communities	11%	9.89%	9.55%	8.94%	8.15%
Top 5% of earners declaring they meet the disability definition.	3%	2.67%	2.01%	2.60%	1.27%
Sickness Absence	9.5 days	11.21 days	10.83 days	11.38 days	10.65 days
Number of staff declaring they meet the Disability definition as a % of the total workforce	4%	4.05%	3.98%	4.03%	3.91%
Minority ethnic community staff as a % of the total workforce	15.51%	15.11%	16.32%	16.72%	16.70%

Staff turnover and "exit" data is being monitored closely to identify any trends. The workforce monitoring is being updated to capture more accurate information across the equality strands etc, which will help with workforce planning and in setting local indicators, as well as targeting resources on recruitment and retention initiatives.

6.2 Sickness absence is reported as 10.65 days during the last rolling year, which is above the target of 9.5 days per person but below the comparable period last year. As previously reported, action is being taken to embed performance and sickness management processes, and to target areas with the highest levels of absence i.e.:

- Increased monitoring by senior management/action through the formal processes
- Promotion of staff "well being" programmes and initiatives
- Additional vocational support with "case management" (via Remploy)
- Specific "project" work to look at absence related to stress and back issues
- Development of sickness absence targets for all service areas.

6.3 The annual Staff Appraisals were due to be completed by 31 March, with a 100% target for completion. Reminders have been sent to managers to report back the

appraisals they have undertaken and 83.84% had been completed as at 6 May, (up from 76.30% in May 2007). An update will be provided to CMT prior to the Committee.

6.4   Progress is being made with partners on developing measures to attract local people to work for the Council and those from underrepresented groups into employment and training. This ranges from job advice sessions at Children's Centres, to updating recruitment forms and processes, and piloting initiatives such as "job trialling" etc.

6.5   Action is being taken to ensure that the organisational development strategy is working to deliver the Council's cost-cutting priorities and links into other corporate strategies/plans and initiatives, including the development of leadership capacity.

7.   Progress against actions agreed by Executive for 2007-08 quarter 3

The following table provides a progress update for actions agreed in quarter three:-

Area	Recommended Action	Update On Progress Since Quarter 3	Lead
BV200b Planning Milestones	Take corrective action to ensure all milestones are met by end of March. Report progress to next Regeneration performance board to ensure that all future milestones will be achieved. Report at next Regeneration Performance Board on LDF progress and how to integrate with corporate planning.	The Local Development scheme has been modified and agreed by Government Office London (GoL). This ensures that the indicator result will be positive ('yes').	**Jeremy Grint**
BV106 % of new homes built on previously developed land	Look at implications of not using brownfield sites for new home development. Report progress to next Regeneration performance board to ensure that all future developments comply with our targets and planning policy.	The issue relates to former council allotment land being sold for housing development which is not previously developed land. The Local Development Framework is reviewing the issue of allotment land and subject to the Executive's agreement this should result in this land being protected. The definition has been changed in the new National Indicators to "previously developed land that has been vacant or derelict for more than 5 years."	**Jeremy Grint**
BV82a+b Recycling and Composting	For next Customer Services Performance Board, develop marketing strategy for back-end products of bio-MRF involving all relevant partners to seek to unlock the 6% performance that it is claimed finding a market will create.	Reported to April Customer Services Performance Board. Agreement signed for glass, but tonnage not yet reached. Composting still at trial stage. 6% will be delivered when tonnage targets are achieved.	**Darren Heneghan**
Culture service block	Need to revisit the Culture route map and assess risks and issues as soon as possible, considering	The two PIs that are critical to the block achieving a score of 3 have been identified and focused on:

C.16 – participation of children in sport. Range of activities to improve participation | **Heather Wills & Rob Hardy** |

Area	Recommended Action	Update On Progress Since Quarter 3	Lead
	data quality issues of third party information. Feed results into next Culture Performance Board.	levels to move this indicator up from lower threshold.	
		C.19 – population within 20 minute walk of accredited sports facility. Quest accreditation has been achieved for Dagenham Pool and Abbey sports centre. Assessment of Wood Lane and Goresbrook Leisure Centre later in May – if successful expected to lift indicator from lower to upper threshold.	
APA	Carry out a mock self-assessment and report on findings and actions resulting from it to CMT in March.	Guidance for APA 2008 not published until late April. Project team assembled to support development of self assessment. Annual Management Conference at the end of April used to collect information to support the process.	**Roger Luxton**
BV156 % authority buildings open to public where all public areas suitable and accessible to disabled people	Report to Regeneration RMP to assure members that investment has resulted in the delivery of the required outcome.	Performance report presented to Regeneration RMP on the 24th of April 2008. Councillors keen to see clear links between finance and performance ensuring transferring of resources from BVPIs performing well to those performing less well.	**Jennifer Dearing**
Investors In People	Resources DMT to consider the risks around the re-accreditation and inspection process. For onward discussion as part of the next available Organisational Development Performance Board at CMT.	There is a corporate working group overseeing the re-accreditation process being led by Sarah Bryant. Each department is undertaking a gap analysis and producing a departmental action plan. These plans will be monitored by the OD Performance Board.	**Bill Murphy**

Appendix A: Service Planning Report

Overview of Service Plan Performance for Quarter 4

The bar chart below sets out this quarter's performance, outlining the status of the 337 objectives being delivered through the 24 out of 26 strategic services of the Council.
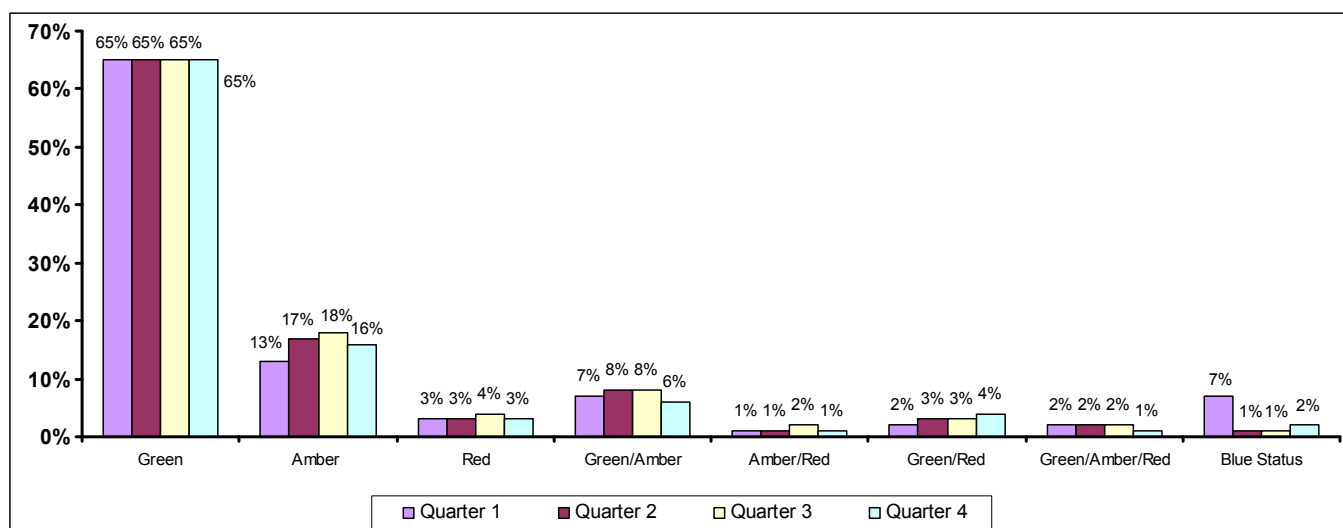
65% of objectives have been completed or are on track (green) at this stage, whilst 16% are in amber status (2% decrease from previous quarter) and 3% are showing red status, a 1% decrease on the previous quarter. Overall the Council continues on a positive direction of travel and is aiming to achieve Excellent, 4 Star status in 2008/09.

This has been an important year for the Council with an improved Corporate Assessment score of 3 and the annual assessment of Adults Services delivering a 3 Star service rating to give us an overall rating of 'Good' in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). The Council also successfully attained Beacon Status for Climate Change, won the coveted LGC Award for 'Most Improved Council' and delivered the innovative Barking Learning Centre, providing an important hub for delivering accessible services from first point of contact. Barking and Dagenham was one of four councils selected as an action learning site for the new Corporate Area Assessment which replaces CPA from 2009.

End of year outcomes below highlight the considerable benefits from service delivery for local residents and the community:

Key outcomes from service planning, broken down in to LAA headings:

A Strong Community
• 66% of people in the borough think that people from different background get on well;
• Direction of Travel statement –score of "improving well" judgment;
• 9 Neighbourhood Management areas launched during October 2007;
• Day care review - implementation consultation with service providers underway;
• Sheltered services engaged with Neighbourhood Management;

- Transitions Team operational, ensuring smooth transition into adulthood for young disabled people;
- Commissioning strategy Achieved 3* rating;
- Achievement of Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government;
- Achieving Committed2Equality (C2E) Accreditation in Employment;
- Community Cohesion Strategy launched;
- Programme of Equality Impact Assessments and action plans for all services across the Council ongoing;
- Neighbourhood Management service launched, significant partnerships developed, profile achieved, neighbourhood action plans being drafted;
- New approach to commissioning voluntary sector activity successfully implemented, with focus on community cohesion and capacity building
- Ongoing development of the Mental Health Service Model with a strong emphasis on delivering MH services across a range of community bases and at all levels from Primary Care to Secondary;
- Reconfiguration of MH services to work across the Partnership;
- Promotion of "Benefits Take Up Campaign" through outreach;
- Specialist Debt advisers(Capitalise) now in place;
- Benefits set to achieving a score of 4 for CPA 2008;
- *Unity Week* held in the autumn;
- Customers surveyed monthly to establish satisfaction levels – Customer services;
- Partner services in place in BLC e.g. Police / PCT;
- Successful integration of Revenues & Benefits in Contact Centre;
- 40% of residents (respondents to budget consultation) are satisfied the Council is providing value for money, a 10% increase on 2006;
- Introduction of new Member development programme with IDEA;
- Leadership programme (IL2) for 600 managers underway to develop greater leadership capacity;
- Implementation of Single Status;
- Improved choice of I.T access channels for the Community;
- Wireless access in the BLC – Live April 2008;
- *ICT Disaster Recovery Programme* implemented giving more reliable systems to our front-line staff;
- All 14 Children's Centres complete – on target;
- Neighbourhood Management (NM) represented on each Children's Centre Development Group;
- Three NM teams co-located in children's centres;
- Extended schools meet regularly with NM.

Active & Healthy

- Adult Care 3 star rating;
- CSCI homecare inspection rating 4 stars excellent;
- Transitions Team operational;
- Shift balance of care from hospital to community settings - Over 100 Older people receiving direct payments;
- Establish Adult Trust in partnership with stakeholders - this objective is now completed. Sub-groups now becoming well established and effective;
- Redesign services to promote independence & choice for all service users - Quarterly feedback is excellent Unique Care went live 1 October 2007;
- Strengthen corporate and departmental links to help improve service delivery for all - Increased usage of Individual Budgets;
- Information Prescription project up and running in libraries;
- Healthy walks programme delivered in Heritage Services;
- Skills for Health programme launched in libraries;

- Implementation of health and wellbeing groups within CMHT for people with Serious Mental Illness;
- High level of people (for Mental Health) with access to Direct Payments;
- 2007 – significant improvement in 2 hours PE indicator - 80% target met;
- Healthy Schools programme on track;
- 98.64% (C19) children in care with up to date health & medical checks – maximum banding and well above statistical neighbours;

Living & Working

- Extension on contract with Osborne partnership, establishing social enterprise;
- Lakerise residential home for people with dementia, currently being commissioned;
- Eastbury Manor House and Valence House achieved Heritage Lottery funding for major refurbishments;
- Capital Volunteering Scheme offering a range of activities and projects supporting mental health service users back into a work environment etc;
- Building Schools for the future – on track for renewal of secondary school estate;
- Development of Frizlands site undertaken to encourage new small businesses;
- 50% reduction in temporary accommodation - on target;
- Planning permission granted for Barking Business Centre/Dagenham Business Centres as part of LEGI programme-both on-site in 2008;
- Tesco Express opens on the Heathway;
- Major physical improvements continue on the Heathway;
- Child/Family Health Centre/Foyer –ahead of construction schedule –both open later in 2008;
- New Council Regeneration Strategy 2008/13 agreed by Executive;
- Designs completed for Creekmouth Environmental Improvement scheme;
- Eastern End Thames View -4 tower blocks emptied and decant continues on low-rise blocks;
- In excess of 500 homes completed within year;
- Local Development Framework on track with Core Strategy submission to be made and Barking Town Centre Area Action Plan Preferred Options to be consulted on next quarter;
- East London Transit designs for town centre agreed by all parties;
- DLR alignment agreed and Board approval to make the Transport Works Act application in April 2008;
- Design for Renwickroad/A13 junction agreed by TfL Board;
- All Development Control indicators in top quartile performance;
- 43% of newly built houses are affordable;
- Meeting local housing need and investment in the community through completion of 203 units affordable sustainable units;
- 10 new homes for older people available for purchase;
- Work towards establishing local housing company on track;
- Child/Family Health Centre and Foyer Construction on track;
- 76% of value for money service objectives are green;
- Use of Resources score of 3 – level 4 achieved in 'Financial Standing' element;
- 100+ residents undertaking NVQ Level 2 courses, or above (target 65);
- 175 new businesses have formed with help from LEGI support projects;
- 600 businesses have been advised;
- 24 networking events held for local businesses;
- 609 jobs created;
- 29 Olympic businesses relocated;
- E- service choice increasing for customer access;
- Good progress on Transformational government (T-Government);
- Above 46% target for highest paid, top 5% women earners;

- Disability 2 tick accreditation sustained;
- On track for sustaining IIP accreditation;
- Programme Board approach being implemented to support project outcomes for community.

Clean & Green

- Consideration given to environmental issues in the development of Lakerise residential home for people with dementia;
- Consideration of environmental issues in all new build i.e. the new psychiatric hospital build at Goodmayes and Porters Ave development;
- Targeted street cleaning/ enforcement taking place;
- Waste containerisation pilot being initiated in 5 areas of the borough for disposal of waste through: wheelie bins for general refuse and green waste 9 latter upon; request);continued use of orange recyclables and a box for glass;
- Barking Town Centre and riverside developments on track;
- Accommodation strategy and interim office moves on target;
- Estate inspections carried out monthly;
- Planning permission granted for first Code for Sustainable Homes Level 5 dwellings above Barking Business Centre;
- *Tackling Climate Change* Beacon bid successful;
- Further feasibility work underway for Barking Power Heat Main;
- Successful E-Auction for Desktop Replacement, improving on our Green Footprint & Value for money;
- Electronic Reporting & Tracking Web system for Environmental issues (Less Fly-tipping, Abandoned cars, etc) giving faster clear-up of problems;

Be Safe, Feel Safe

- 28% reduction in burglary;
- 9% reduction in crime and disorder;
- Increase in number of people in treatment for substance misuse;
- Increased numbers of people retained in treatment for 12 weeks or more;
- Sheltered services engaged with Neighbourhood Management;
- Neighbourhood Management launched in all areas;
- Forensic MH services are in place; new forensic consultant psychiatrist is proactive, meeting staff, setting up clinics;
- Developing a Personality Disorder Service and to continue to develop partnership working with the CS team;
- 3 PD support worker posts financed to work across service areas and support local housing groups etc to work effectively with people who have difficult personality issues;
- 100% (C20) of child protection reviews have been held within timescale;
- 10.14% (A3) re-registrations on the CPR – Maximum banding;
- 'Contact venue' for supervised contact with children identified (supports confidentiality and engagement);
- Contaminated land inspection strategy delivered;
- Increased numbers of abandoned / untaxed vehicles being towed away;
- Operation tailgate implemented at Gascoigne;
- Intensive estate management implemented at Gascoigne;
- New lighting installed at *Oban House* to be piloted elsewhere;
- Diversionary activities for Youth Offenders implemented e.g. Decorating Boundary Close.

Enjoy & Achieve

- Transitions Team have agreed a Person Centred Plan (PCP) for all year 9 pupils with special needs;

- Opening of BLC in partnership with Adult College, Barking College and University of East London: good levels of usage, strong enrolments by the 2 Colleges;
- Skills for Health programme launched in libraries to increase language and literacy skills while increasing health and wellbeing awareness in local people;
- Extended opening hours piloted in six borough libraries, leading to increased library visits;
- A range of self help booklets have been published through Mental Health services to support people in aiding their own recovery from mild to moderate depression and anxiety;
- School inspection results 9 x outstanding, 19 x good, 23 x satisfactory, 0 x inadequate, 8 awaiting inspection;
- 56% of schools inspected in current cycle are judged good or outstanding;
- No schools in an Ofsted category that is judged inadequate;
- Trinity Special School judged outstanding;
- National test results for 11 year olds one of most improved in the country;
- Best ever performance at 5A* - C GCSE (within 1% of national) and 5A* - C including English and maths (key priority for improvement);
- 53.25% (A2) young people leaving care with 1 or more GCSE;
- 25 care leavers at university;
- Work on diversionary activities with schools underway;
- Council staff recognition / reward scheme implemented;
- 300+ residents have undertaken training in key employment areas such as fork lift truck driving; construction site safety, Long Goods Vehicles (LGV) - target 100;
- 400 progressions into employment;
- Welfare benefits services now delivered through children's centres;
- Reduction in the size of the NEET cohort such that the trajectory indicates that the 2010 PSA stretch target will be met;
- Successful Specialised Diplomas national assessments are being developed in Creative and Media; Society, Health and Development, and Engineering for delivery from September 2008; Hair & Beauty; hospitality and Catering, and ICT from September 2009, to supports local skills development;
- Young Apprenticeships started in construction, sports leadership and motor vehicle;
- Successful application (only one of 10 local authorities nationally) to deliver the Foundation Tier Learning 14-16 Pathway from September 2008;
- Blackberry Rollout for staff giving faster response times for issues;
- Blackberry Rollout pilot for Members giving faster response times for issues;
- All 14 children's centres completed;
- 35 infant and primary schools enabled to signpost to Children's Information Service 0 – 19 years. (Ongoing outreach programme in schools);
- 7 Children's Centres to provide childcare by non-for-profit organisations;
- Work on Parenting Strategy on track;
- 67% of children (yrs 8 &10) felt CYP views are listened to, as against 53% nationally;
- 97% of Children Act Inspections 'satisfactory or above' in the non maintained sector;
- 98% of nursery inspections in maintained or non maintained settings 'satisfactory or above' ;
- 60% of maintained and non maintained settings 'good and above'.

Key issues in relation to service plan delivery include:

A number of 'red' and 'amber' status areas relate to crucial front facing services in customer services and adult skills and learning, libraries and heritage which have an impact on public perception and satisfaction rates, these include:-

- Cleanest streets still showing Red – though mitigating actions underway.
- Work re: ethnicity data /profile, on-going (Housing) - Red
- Exclusions from school in Amber
- JAR Action Plan in Amber
- Sickness level at 10.65 days end of year target was 9.5 days – Amber
- Pension fund rates of return bottom quartile - impact of low investment yield - Red
- Achieving level 4 Equality Standard - in Red
- Delay in publication of service standards in Community Services, Libraries & Heritage services - Amber
- Neighbourhood Management local plans delayed – Red
- Eastbury and Valence House developments delayed – Red
- LEGI targets in Amber (Skills and Enterprise service target)
- LAA – economic well being target in Red
- Supporting people homes target 66, actual 52 units completed – Amber
- Proportion of wheelchair accessible homes – target 10%, actual 3% delivered (6 out of 203 units) – Amber
- Tennant Satisfaction levels for new RSL developments not obtained - quality of service and impacts therefore not assessed – Amber
- Becontree Leisure centre delayed – Red
- Affordable housing target, revised in line with GLA configurations for London borough's stretch target not met (target 1190 actual delivered 835) – Red
- Barking Learning Centre Forum delayed – Red

Appendix B: Performance – key performance indicators, CPA and Inspection and complaints data

B1.1 Performance

This report contains the council's 2007-08 key performance indicators (KPIs), showing:-

- our direction of travel;
- if we are on target;
- benchmarking against our CIPFA neighbours; and
- where current performance puts us in CPA 2008 provisional thresholds.

KPIs are the council's most important indicators, determining how our services are perceived to be improving. They are the focus of our efforts to achieve excellence and support the commitment to improve made to the community. KPIs therefore consist of the following types of measure:

- Portfolio Holder PIs;
- The most critical PIs reflecting the diversity of the Council's services.

B1.2 Key Performance Indicators 2007-08

This section of the report is designed to highlight current KPI issues, enabling focus of our resources for improvement. Identifying where performance is below expectations allows underlying causes to be identified and corrective action to be taken. Identifying where performance is above expectations allows attention to be drawn to what we are doing well, enabling appreciation to be shown to those involved in the improvement and to inform the community of higher standards.

During 2008, overall performance against our KPI targets was:
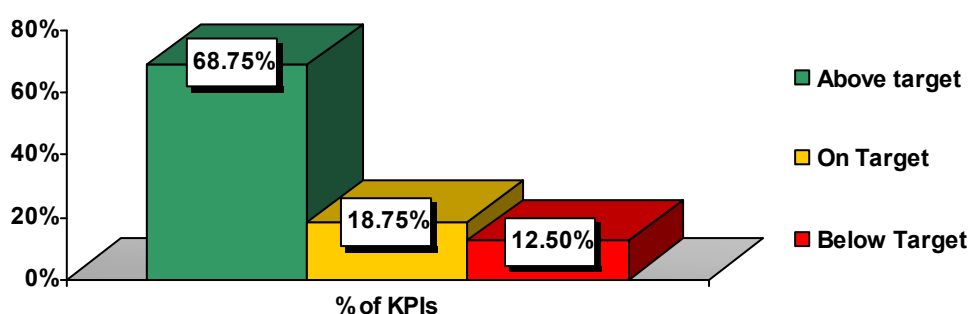
The table below shows how the KPI variances are calculated and reported:

Well Above Target	Above Target	On Target	Below Target	Well below Target
Result above target by 10% or more	Result above target by 5% - 10%	+ or - 5% of target	Result below target by 5%-10%	Result below target by 10% or more

During 2007-08 performance has improved for **33.33%** of indicators (**12 PIs**), remained static for **36.11%** (**13 PIs**) and has fallen for **30.55%** (**11 PIs**).

Table 1 summarises the KPIs for 2007-8 quarter 2, including (where available) how our performance compares against:

- the current **provisional** CPA 2008 threshold (Upper, Middle or Lower) and which CPA service block the indicator relates to;

- the direction of travel since 2006-7 year end:-

    ↑   improving;   ↔   static;   ↓   falling.

- an indication of how well we are meeting the target:-

    ☺   5%+ better than target or 100% achieved;

    😐   +/–   5% from target set;

    ☹   5%+ worse than target.

Table 1

DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE FOR END OF YEAR 2007/08						
	06/07 Actual (CPA 2007)	07/08 Target	07/08 Actual (CPA 2008)	Estimated CPA 2008 Threshold	Direction of Travel	On Target?	Notes
Environment							
BV 109a: Percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 wks	87.50%	60.00%	86.67%	Upper	↓	☺	
BV 109b: Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 wks	85.92%	65.00%	91.48%	Upper	↑	☺	
BV 109c: Percentage of "other" planning applications determined within 8 wks	96.62%	80.00%	96.53%	Upper	↓	☺	
BV 204: Proportion of planning appeals allowed	40.54%	33.00%	19.23%	Upper	↑	☺	
BV 205: The local authority's score against a "quality of planning services" checklist	77.78%	77.78%	77.78%	Middle	↔	☺	
BV 200b: Has the local planning authority met the milestones which the current Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Middle	↔	☺	
BV 165: Percentage of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people	100.00%	100.00%	100%	Upper	↔	☺	
Intervention by the Secretary of State under Traffic Management Act powers	No interventions	No interventions	No interventions	Middle	↔	☺	

DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE FOR END OF YEAR 2007/08						
	06/07 Actual (CPA 2007)	07/08 Target	07/08 Actual (CPA 2008)	Estimated CPA 2008 Threshold	Direction of Travel	On Target ?	Notes
Management Act powers							
BV 91b: Kerbside recycling – two or more recyclables (% of households served by kerbside collection of at least two recyclables)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	Upper	↔	☺	
BV 82 a + b: Recycling and composting performance (Total percentage of household waste recycled or composted)	20.97%	25.90%	20.53%	Middle	↓	☹	
BV 106: New Homes on previously developed land (Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land)	100.00%	85.00%	78.8%	Middle	↓	☹	
BV 84: Tonnage of waste per head of population	524.18	519	525.62	Lower	↓	☹	
BV 199a: Cleanliness of public places (Proportion of land assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level)	37.74%	20.00%	23.00%	Lower	↑	☹	
BV 111: Satisfaction of applicants with planning service	76% (+/-3.61%)	n/a	76%	Middle	n/a	n/a	3 yearly survey next due 2009/10
BV 90a: Satisfaction with waste collection	82.00% (+/-2%) 80% - 84%	n/a	82.00%	Middle	n/a	n/a	3 yearly survey next due 2009/10
BV 90b: Satisfaction with recycling	96.72% (+/-3%) 99.72% - 93.72%	n/a	96.72%	Middle	n/a	n/a	3 yearly survey next due 2009/10
BV 90c: Satisfaction with waste disposal (civic amenity sites)	81.00% (+/-3%) 78% - 84%	n/a	81.00%	Middle	n/a	n/a	3 yearly survey next due 2009/10
BV 89: Satisfaction with the cleanliness of public space	82.35% (+/-2%) 80.35% - 84.35%	n/a	82.35%	Middle	n/a	n/a	3 yearly survey next due 2009/10
Killed or seriously injured (KSI) road casualties	52.00	100.40	67.00	Upper	↓	☺	
Slightly injured road casualties	630.00	651.67	556.00	Upper	↑	☺	
BV 166b: Trading standards checklist (Percentage of criteria for trading standards met)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	Upper	↔	☺	

DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE FOR END OF YEAR 2007/08						
	06/07 Actual (CPA 2007)	07/08 Target	07/08 Actual (CPA 2008)	Estimated CPA 2008 Threshold	Direction of Travel	On Target ?	Notes
BV 166a: Environmental health checklist (Percentage of criteria for environmental health met)	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	Upper	⟷	☺	
Managing council homes							
HIP E5: Urgent repairs in time	93.00%	97.00%	98.12%	Upper	↑	☺	
HIP E6: Average time for non-urgent repairs	8.32 days	11.00	8.69	Upper	↓	☺	
BV 66a:Rent collection and arrears	96.95%	97.60%	97.18%	Middle	↑	😐	
BV 212: Average re-let times	35.31	30.00	36.89	Middle	↓	☹	
HIP E1: Average weekly management cost	£18.01	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
BV 74a: Overall satisfaction with housing service	86.71%	n/a	86.71 (06/07)	Middle	n/a	n/a	3 yearly survey next due 2009/10
BV 75a:Satisfaction with opportunities to participate	69.31%	n/a	69.31% (06/07)	Middle	n/a	n/a	3 yearly survey next due 2009/10
BV 184a: The proportion of non-decent LA homes	44.80%	39.00%	38.94%	Middle	↑	😐	
Housing the community							
BV 183a: Average time in temporary accommodation – time spent in B&B	0.00	n/a	0.00	Upper	⟷	n/a	
BV 183b: Average time in temporary accommodation – time spent in hostels	0.00	0.00	0.00	Upper	⟷	☺	
BV 64:Proportion of private sector vacant properties returned to occupation or demolished as a result of local authority action	40.53%	n/a	10.44%	Upper	↓	n/a	
BV 175: Racial incidents with further action	100.00%	100.00%	100%	Upper	⟷	☺	
BV 214: Housing advice service – preventing homelessness (Households accepted as statutorily homeless who were accepted by the same authority in the last two years)	0.00%	n/a	0.00%	Upper	⟷	n/a	

DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE FOR END OF YEAR 2007/08						
	06/07 Actual (CPA 2007)	07/08 Target	07/08 Actual (CPA 2008)	Estimated CPA 2008 Threshold	Direction of Travel	On Target ?	Notes
BV 203:Percentage change in the average number of families placed in temporary accommodation	56.76%	n/a	14.98%	Middle	↑	n/a	
Culture							
BV 178: Footpaths and other rights of way easy to use by members of the public (percentage of the total length of rights of way in the local authority area that are easy to use by the general public)	100.00%	100.00%	100%	Upper	↔	☺	
BV 119a: Resident satisfaction sport / leisure facilities	56% (+/- 3%) 53%-59%	n/a	56% (06/07)	Middle	n/a	n/a	3 yearly survey next due 2009/10
BV 119b:Resident satisfaction libraries	67% (+/- 3%) 64%-70%	n/a	67% (06/07)	Middle	n/a	n/a	3 yearly survey next due 2009/10
BV 119c:Resident satisfaction museums / galleries	29% (+/- 3%) 26%-32%	n/a	29% (06/07)	Middle	n/a	n/a	3 yearly survey next due 2009/10
BV 119d: Resident satisfaction theatres / concert halls	34% (+/- 3%) 31%-37%	n/a	34% (06/07)	Middle	n/a	n/a	3 yearly survey next due 2009/10
BV 119e: Resident satisfaction parks / open spaces	66% (+/- 3%) 63%-69%	n/a	66% (06/07)	Middle	n/a	n/a	3 yearly survey next due 2009/10
Participation of children in sport (Percentage of 5–16 year olds in school sports partnerships engaged in two hours a week minimum on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum)	80.00%	90%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Adults & community Services							
PAF D37: Availability of single rooms	96.00%	98.00%	98%	n/a	↓	☺	
PAF D40: Clients receiving a review	83.99%	88.00%	96.58%	n/a	↑	☺	
PAF D41: The number of delayed transfers of care per 100,000 population aged 65 and over	50.00%	39.78%	65%	n/a	↓	☹	
Childrens Services							

DESCRIPTION OF PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	PERFORMANCE FOR <u>END OF YEAR 2007/08</u>						
	06/07 Actual (CPA 2007)	07/08 Target	07/08 Actual (CPA 2008)	Estimated CPA 2008 Threshold	Direction of Travel	On Target ?	Notes
First time registrations as a percentage of total registrations on the CP register	88.98%	90.00%	89.86%		↑	😐	
BV 49:Percentage of children in care who have had 3 or more placements during the year	15.90%	14.00%	15.34%	Upper	↑	🙂	
BV 162: Percentage of child protection cases which should have been reviewed within the year that were reviewed	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	Upper	↔	🙂	
BV 163: The number of children in care adopted during the year as a percentage of the total number of children in care looked after for 6 months or more.	9.70%	9.00%	12.25%	Upper	↑	🙂	

B1.3   Comments on performance

Comments have been provided for indicators that significantly exceed target (10%+ above) and those that are significantly below target (10%+ below). This is to highlight where we are doing well and draw attention to our successes, and where we need to focus in order to ensure we stay on route to excellence.

B1.3.1 Indicators that well exceed their target

BV109 - *The percentage of:* a) *major planning applications determined in 13 weeks;* b) *minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks;* c) *other planning applications determined in 8 weeks.*					
2006/7 Actual	a) 87.50% b) 85.92% c) 96.62%	**2007/8 Target**	a) 60% b) 65% c) 80%	**2007/8 Actual**	**a) 86.67% b) 91.48% c) 96.53%**
Benchmarking 07/08 v CIPFA 2005/6 data	a) 1st of 16 b) 2nd of 16 c) 2nd of 16	**% target achieved**	a) 144% b) 141% c) 121%	**CPA threshold**	**UPPER**

- BV109 had a major improvement drive in 2002/3. Detailed analysis of blockages and process improvement was undertaken and weekly monitoring identified cases at an individual level where performance could be improved;

- Our weekly monitoring report enables closer management control and analysis of all applications. It has enabled continued improvement and performance levels significantly above the nationally set targets;

- Consequently all three elements of BV109 remain comfortably in the upper threshold for CPA and among the top 5 performers in our CIPFA benchmarking group.

BV204 – *Proportion of planning appeals allowed.*					
2006/7 Actual	40.54%	**2007/8 Target**	33.00%	**2007/8 Actual**	**19.23%**
Benchmarking 07/08 v CIPFA 2005/6 data	1st of 16	**% target achieved**	172%	**CPA threshold**	**UPPER**

- Member development and training has improved the quality and consistency of decisions.

Killed and seriously injured (KSI) road casualties.					
2006/7 Actual	52.00	**2007/8 Target**	100.40	**2007/8 Actual**	**67.00**
Benchmarking 07/08 v CIPFA 2005/6 data	3rd of 16	**% target achieved**	150%	**CPA threshold**	**UPPER**

Slightly injured road casualties.					
2006/7 Actual	630.00	**2007/8 Target**	651.67	**2007/8 Actual**	**556.00**
Benchmarking 07/08 v CIPFA 2005/6 data	4th of 16	**% target achieved**	117%	**CPA threshold**	**UPPER**

- Our most important road safety targets remain well ahead of target;

- There has been a long-term, targeted campaign of engineering improvements and working in partnership with schools to improve road safety through education and producing and delivering School Travel Plans;

- In partnership with seven other London Borough we have launched websites (www.dangerousgames.co.uk and www.mopedsafety.com) and produced promotional materials directed at motor-cyclists, who are a high risk group among road casualties;

- To address what appears to be an increasing problem of drive throughs and aggressive driving behaviour at school crossing patrol sites across London the borough along with others in London promoted the Stop means Stop campaign through the local media;

- In 2007 in partnership with 6 other London boroughs the Right Gear Campaign was promoted through a number of mediums (including poster and radio) aimed at raising awareness of scooter and commuter riders to the need for protective clothing. One of the campaigns images featured a naked rider which helped to illustrate the vulnerability to injury of powered 2 wheeler riders who are still a high risk group;

- Drink Driving continues to be addressed through publicity and joint initiatives with the police. Options for raising awareness of Drug Driving are being explored;

- With the introduction of National standards in Cycle training we are increasing the numbers trained year on year.

HIP E6: *Average time for non-urgent repairs.*

2006/7 Actual	8.32 days	2007/8 Target	11.00 days	2007/8 Actual	9.05 days
Benchmarking 07/08 v CIPFA 2005/6 data	n/a	% target achieved	122%	CPA threshold	UPPER

- Improved operations and joint working within the parameters of the partnership.

- Increased focus on key CPA PI's emphasising the importance of these via contract meetings with senior managers at Enterprise

- Enhanced contract monitoring via the client team now relocated to Pondfield House

- The partnership's determination to deliver improvement in services.

- Rigorous system auditing

BV163 – *Number of children in care adopted during the year*					
2006/7 Actual	9.70%	2007/8 Target	9.00%	2007/8 Actual	12.25%
Benchmarking 07/08 v CIPFA 2005/6 data	n/a	% target achieved	n/a	CPA threshold	n/a

- As part of the campaign for foster families, special guardianship orders (SGO) are being encouraged. As a result, the number of SGO has increased this year.

- Parallel to the campaign to increase the number of foster families in the borough, the authority is also running one for adoptions. Other activities include developments in adoption consortia, parallel planning between the reviewing and the adoption teams, and looking at adoption with sibling groups.

- The borough promotes adoptions/SGOs to improve the emotional and mental wellbeing of children by providing stability and a family setting in which to grow up rather than being in care long term.

B1.3.2 Indicators significantly below target

BV82a + b – *Total percentage of household waste recycled or composted.*					
2006/7 Actual	20.97%	2007/8 Target	25.90%	2007/8 Actual	20.53%
Benchmarking 07/08 v CIPFA 2006/7 data	a) 12th of 16 b) 10th of 16	% target achieved	126%	CPA threshold	IN BETWEEN

- Loss of "back end" processes from the refining section of the Bio MRF's, which consists of recycling a glass fraction and composting a 'fine' fraction. This has had significant impact on overall performance, because markets/contracts for these materials have yet to be found by Shanks. However, Shanks has recently managed to send trial loads of fines to different re-processors, and this is reflected in February's improved recycling performance due to the increase in glass recyclate out of the Bio MRF.

- The decrease in green waste arising is generally expected at this time of the year. This has contributed to the year end local performance target of 25.90%, by March 31 2008, not being achieved, but the statutory target of 20% has been met. The year end actual is 20.53%.

BV199a – cleanliness of public places					
2006/7 Actual	a) 37.74%	**2007/8 Target**	a) 20.00%	**2007/8 Q2 Actual**	a) 23.00%
Benchmarking 07/08 v CIPFA 2006/7 data	a) 9th of 16	**% target achieved**	a) 87%	**CPA threshold**	**IN BETWEEN**

- There has been a marked improvement in the performance against BV199a. Although we are currently still in the bottom quartile, we have made considerable steps towards moving into the middle quartile and expect further improvements in 2008/09.

- This year we made the positive step of instigating our own street cleanliness assessments in line with Defra's guidance. These are more frequent than Encamm's surveys and have shown a realistic view of the boroughs cleanliness.

- In the coming year we anticipate better results as we deploy new cleansing machines to deal with chewing gum etc on specific surfaces e.g. marble outside the BLC.

- We anticipate a decrease in street litter with the implementation of waste containers, moving away from black bags and the ability to present loose side waste.
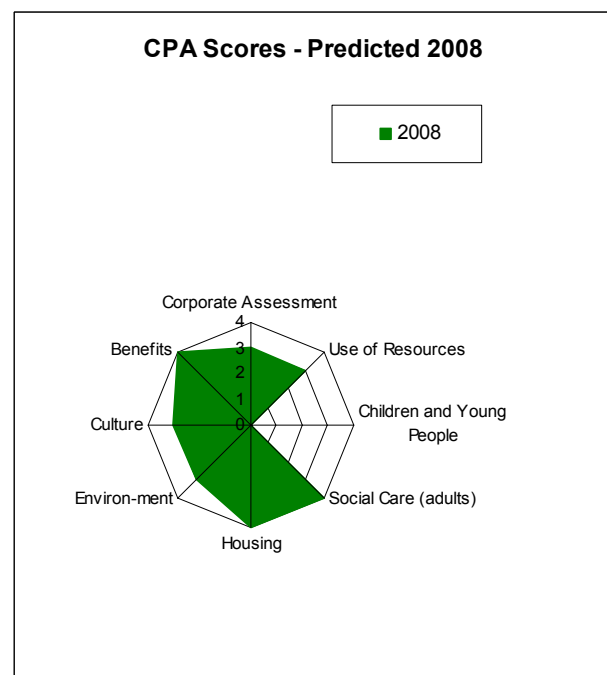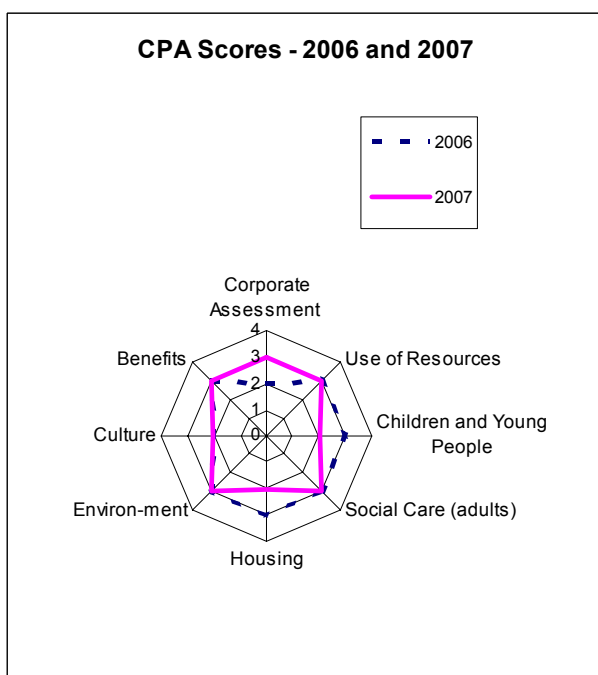
PAF D41 – The number of delayed transfers of care per 100,000 population aged 65+					
2006/7 Actual	50	**2007/8 Target**	39.78	**2007/8 Actual**	**65**
Benchmarking 07/08 v CIPFA 2005/6 data	n/a	**% target achieved**	61.2%	**CPA threshold**	n/a

- The national framework implementation in October 2007 and lack of training with BHRT coupled with ward closures both within the Trust and at Grays Court meant the planned reduction in delayed transfers of care was not achieved.

B.1.4 CPA, Inspections & Assessments

Comprehensive Performance Assessment Scores (bold type indicates confirmed score)

Year	CPA score	Corporate Assessment	Use of Resources	Children and Young People	Social Care (adults)	Housing	Environment	Culture	Benefits
2006	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
2007	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	3
2008 (projected)	tba	3	3	N/A	4	4	3	3	4

CPA Scores - 2006 and 2007

- - - 2006
—— 2007

CPA Scores - Predicted 2008

■ 2008

Recent Inspection and Assessment Results

Assessment/Inspection	Date	Result	Ranks
Housing Inspection	Feb-08	Report due to be published at the end of May	N/A
Use of Resources 2007	Jan-08	3	1 to 4
Direction of Travel 2007	Jan-08	Improving Well	4 categories - this is third highest
Annual Relationship Meeting (Adult Social Care) 2007	Nov-07	3 *	1 to 3 star
Equalities Standard	Sep-07	3	1 to 5
Corporate Assessment	Jul-07	3	1 to 4
Joint Area Review	Jul-07	2	1 to 4

B1.5 Conclusions

Performance against our key indicators remains good with 87% at or above target. 2007-08 was the final year of BVPIs; from 1 April 2008 they have been replaced by the new National Indicator set comprising 198 indicators – these will be reported in the next performance report.

Two of the lower threshold leisure CPA PIs relating to children participating in PE and sport (C.16) and percentage of population living within a 20 minute walk of an accredited sports facility (C.19) are both projected to improve to at least 'in-between' threshold. If Goresbrook Leisure Centre receives the expected Quest accreditation, C.19 is projected to move to upper threshold taking the culture block service score to 3.   If projected performance scores are realised, reaching a four star 'excellent' CPA rating depends on improving the Children's service block score from 2 to 3. Work is focusing on preparing for the Annual Performance Assessment to deliver this improvement.

Complaints

Complaints Received 1 January 2008 – 31 March 2008

This report covers complaints made to the Council under the Corporate Complaints Procedure and the Social Services Statutory Complaints Procedure. It breaks down complaints into stages, department, outcome, nature of complaint, timescales and by Ward.

**Breakdown of Corporate Complaints by Stages
– 1 January 2008 – 31 March 2008**

Complaints Received
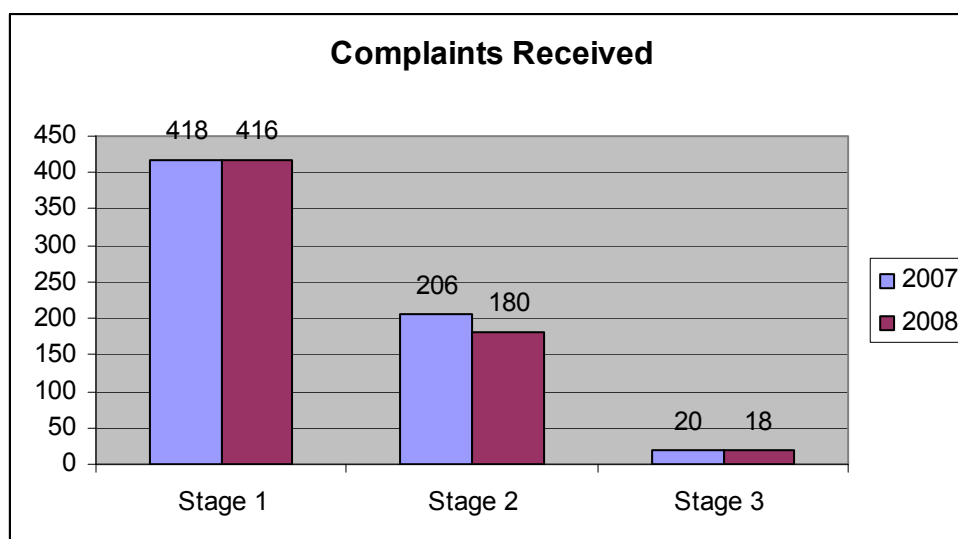
There were 614 corporate complaints received at all stages during this period and 1 Petition from over 100 households. This is a decrease of 80 complaints compared to the previous quarter. However, complaint numbers remain similar to the same period last year with just a 4.6% decrease.

**Breakdown of Corporate Complaints by Department
– 1 January 2008 – 31 March 2008**

Department	Petition - over 100 households	Petition - under 100 households	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Total
Adult & Community Services	0	0	14	7	0	21
Children's Services	0	0	6	1	0	7
Customer Services	1	0	380	159	13	553
Regeneration	0	0	14	8	5	27
Resources	0	0	2	5	0	7
Total	*1*	*0*	*416*	*180*	*18*	*615*

Numbers of complaints against Regeneration have once again dropped this period. Customer Services have received an increase of 87 complaints this quarter with distribution changes between the remaining departments being minimal. 67.7% of complaints were received at Stage 1. This is a 2.7% increase on the previous quarter.

There have been 34 Stage 3 recommendations made to service areas to improve service provision in this period. 27 have been agreed whilst 7 are not being taken up by the service area.

Breakdown of nature of Corporate Complaints
– 1 January 2008 – 31 March 2008

Complaint Nature	Adult & Community Services	Children's Services	Customer Services	Regeneration	Resources	Total
Data Protection	0	0	1	0	1	2
Discrimination+	0	0	1	0	0	1
Employee behaviour+	0	1	57	2	1	61
Service access+	1	0	0	1	0	2
Service cost	0	0	1	0	0	1
Service delayed+	0	2	36	2	0	40
Service inappropriate	3	1	72	1	0	77
Service not provided+	7	0	171	8	1	187
Service policy	0	0	11	0	0	11
Service quality or mistake+	6	3	217	8	4	238
Service taken away	4	0	1	0	0	5
Total	*21*	*7*	*570*	*23*	*7*	*628**

*This total varies from the previous two tables as this figure relates to the nature of complaints. Customers may raise more than one issue within a single complaint hence the difference in totals.

The table above shows that complaints about the quality of the service being provided, or mistakes being made make up 37.9% of all complaint issues.

Service Inappropriate is one of the top three complaint natures this quarter. Although complaints about staff behaviour (conduct/attitude/rudeness) are not in the top three types of complaint made to the Council, the number being received has again increased this quarter. 32 (52%) of the 61 complaints have so far been determined as agreed/partly agreed. Both these issues have been highlighted in the CMT, HOS and service area reports.

Breakdown of Corporate Complaints by Outcomes
– 1 January 2008 – 31 March 2008

Department	Agreed	Not Agreed	Part Agreed	W/drawn, discontinued or o/s CCP	No response – escalated to next stage	Open	Total
Adult & Community	6	3	7	1	-	4	21
Children's Services	2	2	2	1	-	-	7
Customer Services	171	145	127	27	4	79	553
Regeneration	12	4	8	-	-	3	27
Resources	3	2	1	-	-	1	7
Total	**194**	**156**	**145**	**29**	**4**	**87**	**615**

55.1% of complaints were found to be agreed or part agreed on investigation.

The number of complaints escalating to the next stage because of non response decreased this month it is hoped that this trend will continue.

Breakdown of numbers of complaints answered within published timescales (working days) – 1 January 2008 – 31 March 2008

Department	Stage 1 (5 days)	Stage 2 (20 days)	Stage 3 (20 days)
Adult & Community Services	10 (66.7%)	3 (100%)	0 (0%)
Children's Services	5 (71.4%)	1 (100%)	-
Customer Services	192 (57.3%)	69 (54.8%)	0 (0%)
Regeneration	9 (50%)	5 (50%)	3 (60%)
Resources	2 (66.7%)	4 (100%)	-

Performance against timescale at both stages has improved this quarter in Adult & Community Services and response times at stage 2 have also improved within Children's Services and Resources. Response times for both Customer Services and Regeneration have dropped at both stages this quarter.

Across the board only 57.7% of all Stage 1 complaints were answered within the 5 working day timescale.

Stage 2 performance times are at an average of 56.9% across the board. Stage 3 performance has slightly improved this quarter. The Council should be aiming to respond to all complaints within published timescales to avoid any further outside criticism and to increase customer satisfaction.

Breakdown of Corporate Complaints by Ward – 1 January 2008 – 31 March 2008

Corporate & LGO Complaints Received by Ward - 1.01.08 - 31.03.08
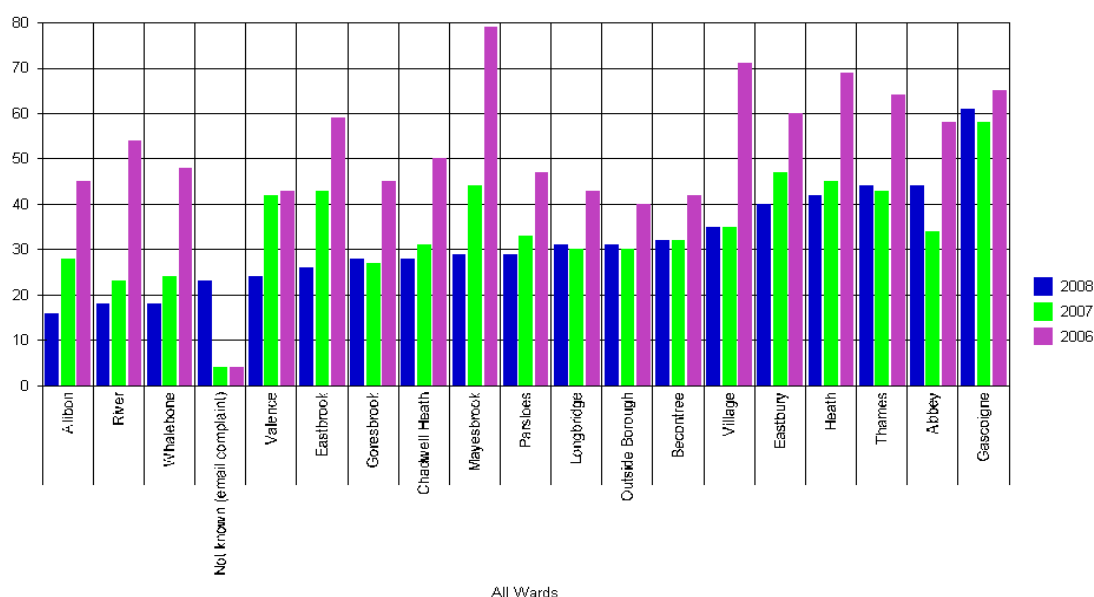
The graph above illustrates where complaints are being received by Ward. Further detail on the nature of complaints can be obtained by contacting the Corporate Complaints Team.

Stage 1 Complaints received under the Social Care Statutory Complaints Procedure – 1 January 2008 – 31 March 2008

Department	Agreed	Part Agreed	Not agreed	Withdrawn Outside Procedure	Resolved	Open	Total
Children's Services	6	10	20	0	0	7*	44

*Of the 7 complaints that are still open 1 has been suspended due to worker absence and 2 families have been offered resolution meetings but neither has taken up this offer to date and have not continued to engage with the process. 1 complaint was responded to but unresolved due to worker absence, this remains in a suspended state until the worker is fit for interview.

33 complaints were answered within the published timescales, 7 are still open. Overall this means that 4 complaints have failed to meet the agreed deadline so far.

The trend covered delayed actions, worker communication and engagement style.

Department	Agreed	Part Agreed	Not agreed	Withdrawn Outside procedure	Resolved	Open	Total
Adult & Community Services	6(5)	6(1)	3(1)	8*(1)	3(1)	8	34**

** Of the 34 complaints received 17 (50%) related to provider complaints. Of these 17 (Provider complaints) 5 x were agreed, 1 x resolved, 1 x withdrawn, 1 x partly agreed. 1 x not agreed. 8 are still open and in hand with the customers.

*Of the 4 complaints that were outside the procedure, 3 of these were passed into the Adult Protection route.

18 complaints were answered within the published timescales, 8 are still open and 4 were outside the procedure. Overall this means 4 complaints have failed to meet the agreed deadline so far.

There were no main trends this quarter, however in house complaints were closely linked to panel decisions and assessed outcomes.

The Good Job / Bad Job workshops are now near completion and have been received well by all who attended. This quarter saw some 70 children services staff attending the workshops. This brings the total to date to 168 social work staff attending. The Good Job bad job workshop training is now going to be taken into Adult services with hopefully the same level of high attendance and positive feed back.

Success in achieving the BSI award for complaints handling also featured this quarter and involved considerable work and evidence base information being supplied.

LGO Complaints – 1 January 2008 – 31 March 2008
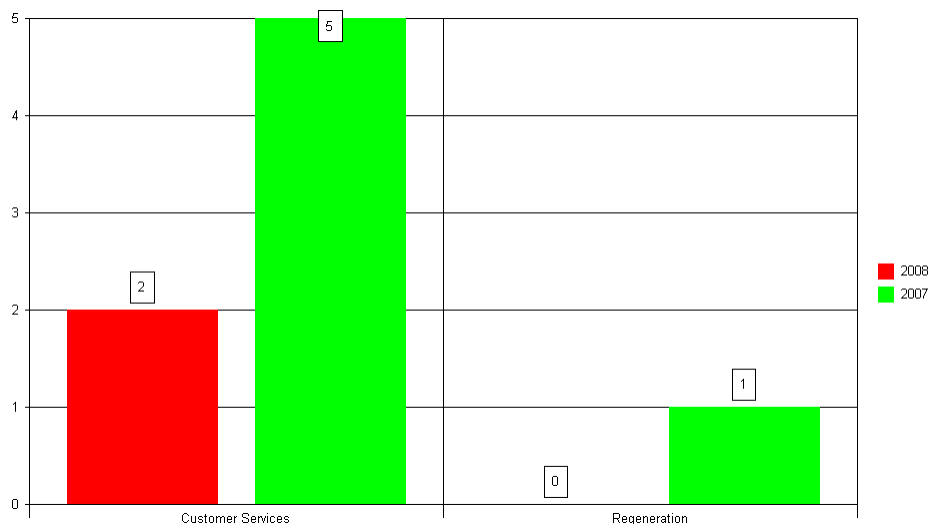
The chart above shows that there have been 2 LGO complaints this quarter compared to 8 in the last quarter.

Compliments – 1 January 2008 – 31 March 2008

Service	Total
Adult & Community Services	
Community Services & Libraries	6
Social Care Compliments	46
Customer Services	
Contact Centre & Customer First	
Barking One Stop Shop	34
Call Centre	6
Customer First Programme	1
Environmental & Enforcement Services	
Environmental Health	1
Parking	2
Anti Social Behaviour	1
All Parks	2
Millennium centre	1
Graffiti Removal	4
Street cleansing	5
Bulky refuse collection	1
Domestic Refuse Collection	1
Recycling	3
Housing Services	
CHP 1,3 & 6 Staff	2
Gas servicing	4
Call Centre	6
Day-to-day repairs	35
Staff	10
Revenues & Benefits	
Income & Collection Recovery	1
Appeals	1
Assessments	3
Customer Services	3
Regeneration	
Design & Surveying	2
Area Regeneration	1
Housing Needs & Options	1
Events	1
Resources	
Members Services	1
Security	1
Corporate Complaint Team	1
Total	*187*

Appendix C: Programmes

C1.1 Progress on Programmes

Modern Ways of Working
The projects that constitute the Modern Way of Working Programme are:

- Corporate Accommodation
- Human Resources
- Business Improvement
- IT Project

All constituent projects have boards and appropriate governance structures in place. Business plans have been submitted and the next phase of work will see Project Initiation Documents being finalised.

Excellent Customer Services
The Excellent Customer Services Programme Board is in the process of defining its intended outcomes and project work streams. At present the constituent projects are:

- Done in One
- Customer First
- Housing Modernisation Programme

It is envisaged that the list of projects will grow over time.

Living and Working (Inc Cleaner and Greener)
The Living and Working Programme Board is in the process of defining its aims, objectives and intended outcomes. Work is underway to define the project work streams required to facilitate the delivery of these outcomes.

Strong, Safe, Active and Healthy Communities
The Strong, Safe, Active and Healthy Communities Programme Board is in the process of defining its aims, objectives and intended outcomes. Work is underway to define the project work streams required to facilitate the delivery of these outcomes.

Enjoy and Achieve
The Enjoy and Achieve Programme Board is in the process of defining its aims, objectives and intended outcomes. Work is underway to define the project work streams required to facilitate the delivery of these outcomes.

C1.2 Progress on the Capital Programme

Adult and Community Services
As of 31 March 2008 the Adult & Community Services Capital working budget stood at £2.138m. Based on Sponsor "Expected Spend" the department is projecting full year expenditure of £1.949m (91%). Expenditure for the year to end of March stood at 85% of the allocated working budget.

As of March 31 2008 the Adult & Community Services department had three projects that are in receipt of external funding:

- Eastbury Manor House (£52,000)
- Valance Redevelopment (£98,000)
- CCTV Chadwell Heath High Street (£141,892)

Children's Services

As of 31 March 2008 the Children's Services Capital working budget stood at £8.542m. Based on Sponsor "Expected Spend" the department is projecting full year expenditure of £10.030m (117%).

Expenditure for the year to end of March stood at 110% of the allocated working budget.

As of March 31 2008 the Children's Services department had ten projects that are in receipt of external funding:

- Dagenham Park Sports Hall (£240,539)
- Furze Children's Centre (£663,000)
- Leys Children's Centre (£500,000)
- School Modernisation Fund (£450,000)
- Trewern Climbing Wall (£247,000)
- Extended Schools (£310,000)
- Ford Road Children's Centre (£4,162)
- Exceptional Basic Need - Eastbury Primary School. (£200,000)
- Exceptional Basic Need - Northbury School (£500,000)
- Sydney Russell Children's Centre (16,000)

Customer Services

As of 31 March 2008 the Customer Services Capital working budget stood at £11.448m due to structural changes in the Council Departments. Based on Sponsor "Expected Spend" the department is projecting full year expenditure of £10.945 (96%). Expenditure to the end of March stood at 81% of the allocated working budget.

As of March 31 2008 the Customer Services department had three projects that are in receipt of external funding:

- Housing Renovation Grants- DFGs (£420,000)
- Contaminated Land Programme (£207,972)
- TFL Schemes (£1,227,600)

Regeneration

As of 31 March 2008 the Regeneration Capital working budget stood at £39.84m due to structural changes within Council Departments. Based on Sponsor "Expected Spend" the department is projecting full year expenditure of £35.33 (89%). Expenditure to the end of March stood at 76% of the allocated working budget.

As of 31 March 2008 the Regeneration department had twenty one projects that are in receipt of external funding:

- TFL Schemes (£2,366,000)
- Housing Futures (£15,522,801)
- Parks and Greens Spaces (£460,000)
- BTC Lifelong Learning Centre (£60,032)
- BTC Public Realm (£200,000)
- BTC Artwork (£38,343)
- Barking Town Square – Secret garden (£154,000)
- Barking Park Artwork (£10,000)
- Civic Artwork (£3,000)
- Sporting Legends (£51,505)
- Dagenham Dock Infrastructure (£5,000)
- Thames Gateway Social Infrastructure (£46,482)
- Dagenham Heathway Public Realm (£607,000)
- Barking Town Square (phase 2) (£1,600,000)
- BTC Redevelopment / Lintons (£2,100,000)
- LRL Industrial Signage (£11,000)
- Energy Efficiency Programme (£71,725)
- LEGI Business Centre (£1,187,000)
- LEGI (Excite Dagenham Centre) (£100,000)
- London Road Market Square (£2,850,000)
- PDG Capital Allocation (£69,000)

Resources

As of 31 March 2008 the Resources Capital working budget stood at £1.32m. Based on Sponsor "Expected Spend" the department is projecting full year expenditure of £1.12m (84% of the allocated working budget and 76% of the original budget). Expenditure to the end of March stood at 71% of the allocated working budget.

- e-Government (£197,106)

Appendix D: Pounds – budget monitoring and efficiency

D1.1 Pounds

This chapter provides detail on the council's budget monitoring for revenue and capital and provides a progress report on our procurement practises and our efficiency programme.

Revenue Budget Monitoring – overview of quarter 4 2007/08

The outturn position for revenue expenditure at Q4, i.e. the final position for 2007/08 shows a 0.2% over spend, which equates to £563k. The budget pressures reduced as a result of the implementation of a range of departmental action plans. The full position is identified in **Table 1**.

Adult and Community Services Department

The Adult and Community Services budget position throughout the 2007/08 financial year was challenging. However the final year outturn position was an under spend of £29k.

The pre-dominant area of financial pressure was within the Adult Care Service, with revised timescales in the delivery of the Older Persons Modernisation savings in residential and Home Care. This was partly addressed by an approved adjustment to the budget of £1m by the Executive. The Library and Community Safety and Prevention Services have both experienced pressures on non-delivery of approved savings options, the decision not to site the one-stop shop/library at the Heathway and pressures in the Parks Police and external Security service. These pressures have been offset by underspend/contingency in other areas of the Department's budget.

The Department's Management Team remain committed to maintaining a sound financial base, dealing with current overspend areas, and bringing the departmental budget in on target for the current year. VFM considerations are paramount within Adult and Community Services.

Children's Services Department

The Children's Service final outturn position for 2007/08 reports a budget overspend of £680k. .

The main area of pressure in 2007/08 related to the Safeguarding and Rights service and in particular the Placements and leaving care services whose overspend amounted to £4.6m. The service received a £1.2m budget enhancement for 2007/08, to set an original budget of £11m, and a further in year budget supplement was agreed by the Executive for £3.5m bringing the working budget to £14.5m. The service has been implementing an action plan to address the position for the future which covers issues on fostering, prevention and commissioning. Whilst these actions will reduce expenditure, the base budget position for children's placements for 2008/09 has also been adjusted as part of the recently approved 2008/09 budget to reflect these ongoing pressures. There still continues to be pressure in the service due to the numbers of Children in out-borough placements, and care leavers which are required to still be looked after as they are still in Education settings.

The remaining reasons for the outstanding pressures include the non-delivery of some of the £1.4m approved savings for 2007/8, as well as financial pressures related to care leavers, multi-occupation buildings and PFI funded projects.

Customer Services

The departments outturn position was an under spend of £210k against a budget of £28.8m.
The department has experienced a number of pressures in 2007/08 including:

- Recurring overspends from existing pressures;
- Reduction in levels of income for vehicle maintenance and fleet management, and increased repair costs due to age of existing fleet;
- Income in Trade Waste Service is currently below budget requirement;
- Delivery of new savings option for 2007/08.

A variety of management actions have taken place throughout the year to reduce expenditure including holding vacant posts, tight controls on agency recruitment and supplies and services spend, reduction in levels of overtime and a review of recovery of outstanding debt.

Regeneration Department

The departments final budget outturn for 2007/08 was an over spend of £240k. The reasons for this overspend includes:

- pressures around recurring overspends arising from 2006/07, such as additional employee costs and shortfall in income, as well as delivery of all the approved savings options for 2007/08;
- reduced income in Property services and on Commercial property;
- additional costs incurred as result of the delivery of the land disposal programme;
- pressures in the Skills, Learning and Enterprise service;
- shortfall in LLC income.

A variety of management actions have taken place throughout the year to reduce expenditure including holding posts vacant and tight controls on agency recruitment and supplies and services spend remain in place to contain the recurring items and to balance the budget by the year end.

Resources Department

The Department budget position at year end is under spend of £118k.2007/08 following the implementation of a detailed action plan by the department's management team.

The Department has incurred a number of financial pressures during 2007/08 including:

- The savings relating to the Payroll Review not being achieved due to the additional work required within Payroll to move employees from weekly to monthly payroll;

- The need to fund the shortfall in Land Charges income due to changes in Legislation;
- Legal Services costs in respect of the service review undertaken by consultants

The management actions taken to reduce these pressures have included holding vacant posts and tight controls on both the use of agency recruitment and supplies and services spend.

TABLE 1

REVENUE BUDGET 2007/2008

Department	Original Budget 2007/08 £'000	Revised Estimate Budget 2007/08 £'000	Actual £'000	Variation £'000
Adults & Community Services	58,647	62,165	62,136	(29)
Children's Services	172,129	177,289	177,969	680
Customer Services	28,439	28,849	28,639	(210)
Regeneration	9,847	10,093	10,333	240
Resources & Corporate Management	6,014	6,926	6,861	(65)
Other Services				
General Finance	(19,470)	(28,540)	(28,568)	(28)
Contingency	1,200	24	0	(24)
Levies & precepts	6,581	6,581	6,580	(1)
Total	**263,387**	**263,387**	**263,950**	**563**

Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

'The closing HRA balance as at the end of 2007/08 is £3.3m, against a revised budget of 2.7m. The closing balance includes a Rent Reserve of £1.1m'

In general terms, the increase in the negative subsidy payable to the Government has, and will continue to increase the pressures on the HRA. In addition Right to Buy sales will reduce stock levels which will result in income falling, and the challenge will be to ensure that costs fall in line with the reducing stock.

There are also other significant pressures on the HRA including repairs and maintenance spend, premises costs, rising energy prices and reducing Supporting People Grant. In part this may be off-set by improved performance in rent collection and better management of voids.

Specific issues relating to the HRA include:

- The overall income of £2.3m has been achieved. This is due to a combination of 2007/08 being a 53 week year (£1.5m) thereby allowing the HRA to achieve an additional one week's rental income, and £600k increase in rental income due to lower than budgeted void and write off levels. Right to Buy sales are in line with the 200 sales forecast in 2007/08;
- Supervision and Management overspend budget in 2007/08 by £1.7m (6.8%) due to increased employee and premises associated costs;
- The Repairs and Maintenance budget overspend by £631,000 (2.9) mainly due to increased demand;
- Increased income from the Department of Communities and Local Government due to the loss of rental income to the HRA due to restrictions imposed on Council rent increases through the Governments rent restructuring policy;
- Interest on balances due to higher returns on balances than expected generated an extra £461,000 (34.0%) .

A summary of the latest position for the HRA is shown in **Table 2**.

Capital programme

The Capital Programme is managed by the Enterprise Programme Office (EPO) team, in the Department of Resources, with financial input from the Corporate Finance service. A summary of the latest position for the 2007/08 programme is shown in **Table 3**.

As at the end of March £51.8 million of this year's programme had been spent out of an overall working budget for the year of around £63.3 million. As part of the Council's closure of accounts process the actual spend will increase as a result of sundry creditor postings.

Table 2

Housing Revenue Account – Budget monitoring summary – Month March 2007

Housing Revenue Account	Original Budget £'000	Revised Budget £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000
NET RENT OF DWELLINGS	-69,047	-69,047	-69,988	-941
OTHER RENTS	-2,438	-2,438	-2,473	-35
OTHER CHARGES	-5,170	-5,170	-6,012	-842
CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS EXPENDITURE	0	-825	-93	732
TOTAL INCOME	**-76,655**	**-77,480**	**-78,566**	**-1,086**
REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE	21,878	21,722	21,769	47
SUPERVISION & MANAGEMENT	24,023	24,843	27,417	2,574
RENT, RATES AND OTHER CHARGES	994	379	474	95
NEGATIVE HRA SUBSIDY PAYABLE	14,125	14,125	13,414	-711
NEGATIVE HRA SUBSIDY XFER TO GENERAL FUND, TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS	3,449	3,449	3,175	-274
DEPRECIATION & IMPAIRMENT OF FIXED ASSETS	23,197	23,197	23,197	0
HRA SHARE OF CDC COSTS	750	776	776	0
				0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	**88,416**	**88,491**	**90,222**	**1,731**
INTEREST EARNED	-1,354	-1,354	-1,803	-449
NET COST OF SERVICE	**10,407**	**9,657**	**9,853**	**196**
DEPRECIATION ADJUSTMENT	-10,098	-10,098	-9,865	233
				0
MOVEMENT IN WORKING BALANCE	**309**	**-441**	**-12**	**429**
WORKING BALANCE B/F	-2,776	-1,665 1	-1,665	0

EARMARKED RESERVE – HOUSING SUBSIDY			-580	-580	0
EARMARKED RESERVE – RENTS				-1,073	-1,073
WORKING BALANCE C/F	-2,467	-2,686	2	-3,330	-644

Notes:
(1) Revised Budget b/fwd balance reflects the closing working balance as per 2006/07 outturn
(2) Revised Budget c/fwd balance reflects forecast balances at year end

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2007/08

Table 3

Department	Original Budget £'000	Revised Budget £'000	Actual £'000
Adult & Community Services	2,019	2,406	2,115
Children's Services	9,718	9,218	11,501
Customer Services	11,358	11,804	11,474
Regeneration	50,554	40,769	36,900
Resources	1,467	1,516	1,338
Total for Department Schemes	**75,116**	**65,713**	**63,328**

D1.1 Procurement

The Corporate Procurement team continues to look at ways in which the council can achieve both financial savings and improve efficiency in the council's procure to pay processes, with a focus on meeting the requirements of the Gershon Efficiency Programme and the National Strategy for Procurement. In addition, they will ensure that our procurement initiatives fit with the broader strategic objectives of the council. The main priorities for procurement are set out below:-

Developing Procurement Skills

Effective procurement skills will enable the organisation to develop more efficient and best practice procurement which will assist in the successful delivery of major procurement projects, the management of strategic partnerships and the realisation of savings that can be channelled into priority services or into council tax reductions.

As part of a London Centre of Excellence initiative, a procurement skills needs analysis was undertaken amongst procurement practitioners and those managers for whom procurement forms a significant part of their day to day role. As a consequence, a framework of procurement training with seven core procurement modules plus eight specialist procurement modules, erg commissioning social care contracts, has been developed and is now being promoted across the council. Half day internal Procurement Overview sessions have been developed and are held once a month. All training events have been well attended and the feedback all events held so far has been positive.

Contracts

The council will look to increase the number of corporate contracts as a consequence of standardising and aggregating demands for the supply of regularly used goods and services. This will enable the council to explore opportunities to use various procurement options including partnering, use of voluntary and community sector, collaboration and consortia. The work programme includes energy procurement (spend £5.5M), consultancy services (spend £6M), various facilities management goods and services (spend £0.5M).

Sustainability

Corporate Procurement are working to establish mechanisms through which local enterprise and employment can be fostered and encouraged to exploit trading opportunities provided by the council and through its procurement activities. Corporate Procurement officers have presented and participated in a number of local small business events with further events planned for late May and late June.

A full spend profile analysis has been undertaken, one objective of which is to identify the extent to which the Council trades with local businesses and to highlight particular areas of risk and opportunities for local firms when embarking on major procurement initiatives.

The council will also be introducing a number of electronic procurement solutions over the next three years (see below). It has been recognised that as a consequence many

local, and especially small, businesses may have difficulty trading in this way and in light of this, Corporate Procurement officers continue to participate in local SME workshops to alert and encourage them to consider the benefits of electronic trading methods. Feedback from these workshops has been positive.

In a move towards a consistent approach to the letting and monitoring of contracts to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) we have designed a Commissioning and Procurement Guide with the objective to secure the excellence that can be achieved by the VCS. The guidance document will be primarily available to Council commissioning managers to promote the use of the VCS in service delivery, and to aid their commissioning work. In edition it has been established that Voluntary Sector Organisations often experience difficulty in breaking into the public sector market due to limited marketing resources and uncertainty as to how to become a supplier or who to talk to about opportunities and dealing with what they perceive as a bureaucratic pre-qualification procedure. Corporate Procurement are currently working with the Council's partners such as the PCT on developing a VCS supplier accreditation process

Equalities

In line with the Council's Equalities and Diversity Framework we will work towards raising service providers' performance in race equality and in employment and equal opportunities in general by securing contracts that deliver equalities in public procurement for the residents of the council. The Corporate Procurement Team regularly review the procurement guide to equalities in tandem with any new legislation advised by the Group Manager Equalities and Diversity. New guidance has been circulated that cover the requirements of Contracting for services in light of the Human Rights Act 1998

Electronic Procurement

The council is looking at the introduction of e-procurement solutions with a view towards improving efficiency in the purchasing process through reduced internal transaction times for regularly purchased goods and services, reducing error rates, focussing spend with contracted suppliers, speeding up invoice payment times and the identification of opportunities for collaboration and aggregation reducing purchasing price.

Following the decision to close the Stores Corporate Procurement have established an electronic on-line ordering facility for goods previously ordered via the Stores with payment using Purchase Card as the Council's preferred payment mechanism.

The roll out of purchase cards is now much more aggressive and applications are being processed from all divisions across all Departments. We are also promoting the benefits of purchase cards to the boroughs schools with a reasonable level of interest being generated.

The Corporate Procurement team have been working with stakeholders from across the Council on implementing an electronic sourcing tool which will enable procurement projects to be advertised, tender documents issued, evaluated and contracts awarded on line. This system will save significant amounts of time both for Council staff

regularly involved in tendering exercises and for suppliers completing tender documents. The pilot phase exposed several flaws in the technology and accessibility to the system and as a result the pilots have been suspended subject to the resolve of the following fundamental issues:

Work on implementing Oracle I-Procurement which will make the raising of purchase orders a much easier process is nearing completion with roll out across the Council to take place over the next three to six months. The system will also enable the next phase of our e-procurement strategy, i.e. electronic invoicing to be embarked upon. This will bring about further efficiencies in the order to pay process.

Future Direction

The Corporate Procurement team has been very much focused on the operational procurement activities of the Council providing best practice support and guidance as and when required, across all departments. We are now looking to refocus our activities concentrating more on developing our strategic function, looking at procurement panning, greater compliance, and greater achievement of Value for Money.

D1.2 Efficiency

Targets for efficiency gains were set across the public sector for the period 2005/06 to 2007/08. The Council's efficiency target for this period is £13.4m.

This table shows how we have achieved our overall three year target to 2007/08:

	£'000
Backward look for 2004/05 (outturn)	4,502
Backward look for 2005/06 (outturn)	4,986
Backward look for 2006/07 (outturn)	4,689
Estimated 2007/08 efficiency gains	5,147
Total	19,324
Target to 2007/08 (revised, originally £12,300)	13,400
Over-achievement/(shortfall)	**5,924**

The Council has set itself an efficiency target of £5.9m for the period 2007/08. Current projections after 9 months suggest that actual efficiency gains in the period will only total £5.1m. The reason for this is that the planned efficiency gains from the older person's modernisation programme will accrue later than originally planned, as a result of a decision to re-profile this work. Overall however, it is estimated that we will over achieve against the target the government set us by nearly £6m, which is a significant achievement.

The Comprehensive Spending Review was announced in October 2007. Part of this announcement indicated the future for the efficiency agenda over the next 3 years. The key headlines were as follows:

- At least 3 per cent value for money savings per year over the CSR period are expected across central and local government, all net of implementation costs;
- Cash releasing savings totalling over £30 billion of annual savings by 2011 across the public sector; and
- A £150m transformation fund is being made available to support efficiency delivery.

This will be a challenging agenda, and the Council is already taking steps to ensure that these targets can be met. The "Modern Ways of Working" programme is now underway that will drive out significant efficiency gains over the next few years through better use of Information Technology, accommodation, better procurement practices and improvements to business processes across the organisation.

Appendix E: People – key indicators for our human resources

This chapter contains the results for the Human Resources (HR) key performance indicators for the fourth quarter of 2007/08 and others that are useful benchmarks for the HR function across London Boroughs. The HR Management Team tracks the performance of the indicators on a monthly basis and reporting of these and additional HR management information is done quarterly.

E1.1 Projects

i) Investors In People – To maintain Corporate IIP recognition on reassessment in 2008

The Project outcome is to retain IIP status on re-assessment in October 2008. The Project continues to make progress against the priorities identified in the action plan whilst departmental groups continue to monitor management processes.

ii) Sickness Absence

The Project outcomes will be reduced sickness and absenteeism levels, and increased management and leadership competence. There has been a reduction in sickness levels in some departments but not enough to reach the target for 2007/8. As previously reported, the Improving Attendance workshops for managers received positive feedback and other initiatives are being considered to support them to manage sickness. HR has set up a "project" to look at absence relating to back injuries and stress, and are using Remploy as an additional resource for vocational support with case management and return to work programmes. The introduction of new flexitime arrangements across the Council will enable staff to take more responsibility for their well-being and "work life balance". Resources will continue to be focussed on embedding "sickness management" and targeting those areas with the highest levels of sickness absence; this includes developing sickness absence targets for all service areas. Project status remains the same as the previous quarter, with a red risk status due to the impact on BV 12.

iii) Single Status (Project added on recommendation of Resources DMT).

Staff covered by the National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service for Local Government Employees 1997 (Green Book) moved onto the Single Status terms and conditions of employment on 1 January 2008. Offers of compensation were made where there have been "historic" unfair pay differentials. Project had a red risk status having previous been monitored at Resources DMT but this should be reviewed in line with the introduction of the new arrangements on 1 January 2008.

E1.1 Workforce Monitoring

As previously reported, a data verification exercise is to be carried out to obtain up to date workforce information for impact assessment purposes and to help with target setting. Progress has been made on agreeing the information to be "checked" and consultation is now taking place on the practical arrangements and timing for this.

Further progress has been made in consultation with the Disabled Staff Group and Disability Equality Forum on the arrangements for a separate survey of disabled staff,

where there is an issue of under-reporting; the Staff Survey results indicated that 13% of staff considered themselves to have a disability against 3.91% for the last quarter.

Staff turnover, "exit" and casework data etc is being monitored closely to identify any trends and the quality of the information provided to managers etc is continually improving. The performance indicators will be reviewed shortly with a view to setting local targets to help ensure better representation at all levels across departments.

i) Starters and Leavers

The starters and leavers data for the year to March 2008 indicates the Council is successfully recruiting from across the community and age groups, especially from BME communities and young people. A full summary of staff turn-over across the Council is provided at E3.

ii) Exit Procedure

As previously reported, the Exit Procedure has been updated to enable staff to complete the questionnaire on-line and to capture more detailed information. The information for the final period to March is being collated and will be reported back next quarter. Previous information for the period April to December 2007 indicated "Home relocation/travel" was the main reason for leaving followed by:

- Lack of job satisfaction/career prospects
- Wanting a new challenge
- Pay/benefits

iii) Equalities Impact Assessments (EIA's)

There is a timetable for impact assessing employment policies in 2008/2009 and the Flexitime Policy, along with the management guidance "Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)" and "Use of Private Vehicle on Council Business" have been through the process. A progress report will be provided each quarter.

Recruitment and Retention Initiatives

HR are continuing to work with partners, (departments, colleges, community groups and Job Centre Plus etc), to develop measures to attract local people to work for the Council, and/or into employment and training. This will help to regenerate the Borough and provide better value for money i.e. in reducing the reliance on agency staff and with recruitment to shortage areas. In the short-term, this includes:

- Reviewing recruitment forms/processes and piloting initiatives including "job carving" and "job trialling"
- Proposals to develop the Internal Administrative Staff Bank
- Outreach work in the Community providing advice on applying for jobs, including "drop-in" sessions at Children's Centres and recruitment fairs
- Developing work experience arrangements to create more opportunities for under-represented groups in the Community

As reported previously, the partnership with Job Centre Plus to handle the responses for all posts up to SO2 has achieved considerable savings on advertising in the local press. Work is now progressing with Jobcentre Plus on "work trialling", which will give disabled people and those returning to employment, (parents etc), the opportunity to try out posts and be interviewed by managers before applying.

The Valuing People Strategy for the employment of people with learning difficulties will be completed shortly with targets for 2008/9. The proposed "work trialling" and work experience arrangements are essential to delivering the Strategy, and will also help to create opportunities for other represented groups; managers will be encouraged to build in capacity for work experience when work force planning.

HR is working to promote the Council as a good employer and on introducing recruitment and retention initiatives to attract and develop managers and staff. The Salary Sacrifice Child Care Voucher Scheme launched in April 2007 has proved very successful with increasing numbers of staff electing to join; there are currently 51 staff on the Scheme, which compares favourable to other boroughs.

As part of the "Modern Ways of Working" Programme, the Council also introduced new, improved flexi-time arrangements on 1 January 2008 for staff up to and including PO6. An interim review of the implementation of the new flexi-time arrangements will be carried out in June with a view to extending flexible working and to start piloting other initiatives including career breaks and "hot desking" etc.
HR successfully developed and launched the Inspiring Leaders, Improving Lives (IL2) development programme for middle managers in 2007 and are currently working on developing apprenticeship and local graduate schemes. A review is currently taking place of the corporate induction arrangements and training programme, along with the mentoring and shadowing schemes.

E2.0   KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Top 5% of earners who are women

The figures for the final quarter shows the number of women in the top 5% of earners has reduced from 46.41% to 44.56%, just below the 2007/8 target of 46%.

Top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities

RESOURCES - HR
BVPI 11b - The percentage of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities (cumulative)

CIPFA position 05/06 - 9th of 16 - no National Average available yet
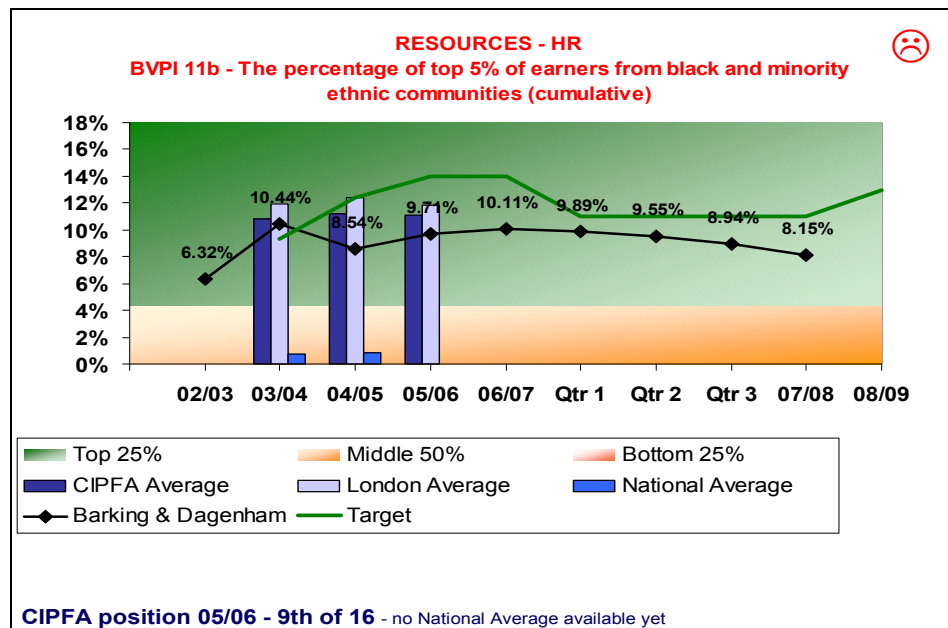
The number of staff from minority ethnic communities in the top 5% of earners has reduced by 1 from 16 to 15, which reduces the overall percentage from 8.94% to 8.15%, below the 2007/8 target of 11%.

Top 5% of earners declaring they meet the disability definition.

The number of self assessed disabled staff in the top 5% of earners has decreased from 4 to 2, which reduces the overall percentage to 1.27%, below the 2007/8 target of 3%.

This data is taken from the monitoring form people complete when applying for posts, and the Staff Survey results indicate the actual figure is much higher e.g. 6% of JNC officers that responded, consider themselves to have a physical, learning, sensory or mental health impairment or disability.

The number of staff declaring that they meet the disability definition as a percentage of the total workforce (cumulative)

There has been a decrease from 4.03% to 3.91% from last quarter, which is just below the 2007/8 target of 4%.

This data is taken from the monitoring form people complete when applying for posts, and the Staff Survey results indicate the actual figure is much higher e.g.13% of staff that responded consider themselves to have a disability. HR are working with partners on introducing various initiatives to attract and retain disabled people.

Minority ethnic community staff as a percentage of the total workforce

There has been a minute decrease from 16.72% to 16.70% during the final quarter. The figure is above the 2007/8 target of 15.51%.

Sickness Absence

Council Sickness Average
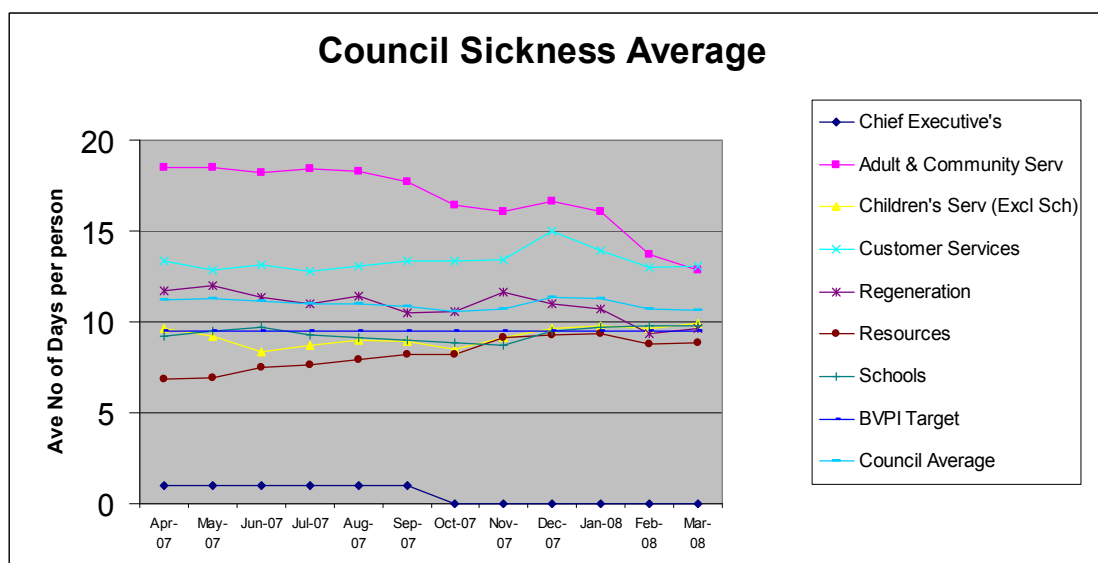
	Apr 07	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 08	Feb	Mar
Chief Executive's	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Adult & Community Services	18.52	18.52	18.24	18.41	18.31	17.73	16.41	16.09	16.62	16.04	13.07	12.88
Children's Services (excluding schools)	9.65	9.19	8.36	8.71	9	8.94	8.52	9.17	9.64	9.8	9.65	9.9
Customer Services	13.33	12.88	13.11	12.78	13.1	13.36	13.34	13.40	14.98	13.93	12.97	13.04
Regeneration	11.7	11.97	11.35	10.98	11.4	10.5	10.59	11.66	11.00	10.71	9.35	9.63
Resources	6.86	6.94	7.53	7.63	7.93	8.24	8.21	9.14	9.31	9.37	8.79	8.89
Schools	9.19	9.49	9.72	9.32	9.16	9.02	8.89	8.71	9.5	9.68	9.79	9.78
BVPI Target	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	9.5
Council Average	11.22	11.26	11.17	10.98	10.98	10.83	10.56	10.73	11.38	11.27	10.68	10.65

An average of 10.65 days were lost during the year ending 2007/08 compared to 10.99 days lost in the year ending 2006/07, a reduction of 0.34 days per person.

Senior managers are monitoring absence to ensure early intervention and action is taken to progress cases, through the management processes and/or Occupational Health, with an increase in the number of cases going through to Stage 3 Hearings. Return to work interviews can now be recorded on the Oracle HR Self Service system.

All managers and supervisors are attending the HR "Improving Attendance" workshops and will continue to receive regular guidance on managing staff. HR are also now using Remploy's vocational services for additional support with managing long-term sickness and return to work arrangements.

Occupational Health are actively promoting health, wellbeing and sickness programmes, including health screening, "weight wise" and physiotherapy. Other developments due

shortly include morning walk-in clinics, workplace wellness sessions, body MOT's, hearing and vision checks and health promotions linked to PCT initiatives.

Appraisal

The target for completing the annual appraisals is 100%. Reminders have been sent to managers to report back the reviews they completed and the resulting information is still being inputted. An update will be provided prior to the Committee.

As previously reported, the IIP Steering Group has already taken action to help achieve the appraisal targets and to ensure that there is a significant improvement on the number completed at the end of the reporting periods, including:

- using DMT's to review the number of appraisals scheduled/completed/recorded;
- monthly spreadsheets to show the number of appraisals recorded on Oracle;
- regular features in the staff e-newsletter.

A new module has been developed on Oracle so managers can now record appraisal ratings via Oracle HR Self Service, which should enable more accurate and timely information to be provided in future.

E3.0   STAFF NUMBERS

As at end of March 2008, the Council employed 7,702 staff, a decrease of 246 from the last quarter. The reason for the decrease is attributed to reductions in School based staff and the discovery that some duplication of staff assignments have been included in the previous figures. The staff numbers now reflect those produced from the Oracle BVPI Absence report.

Total Employees:

Total Employees (excluding casual claims staff)		Total at Start of Quarter	Total at End of Quarter
Chief Exec		3	3
Adult & Community Services		918	935
Children's Services	Departmental Staff	1,034	1,036
	Schools Staff	3,480	3,289
	Total	4,514	4,325
Customer Services		1,075	1,015
Regeneration		564	664
Resources		862	748
TGLP		12	12
	TOTAL:	**7,948**	**7,702**

Recruitment Information

The Corporate Performance Indicator is that interviews should be completed and the offer of employment made within 25 days of the closing date of the advert. The information below is a summary of performance against the Indicator. Performance against the target is affected by delays in managers returning paperwork to the HR Recruitment Team and delaying interview deadlines

Offers Made within 25 days of closing date
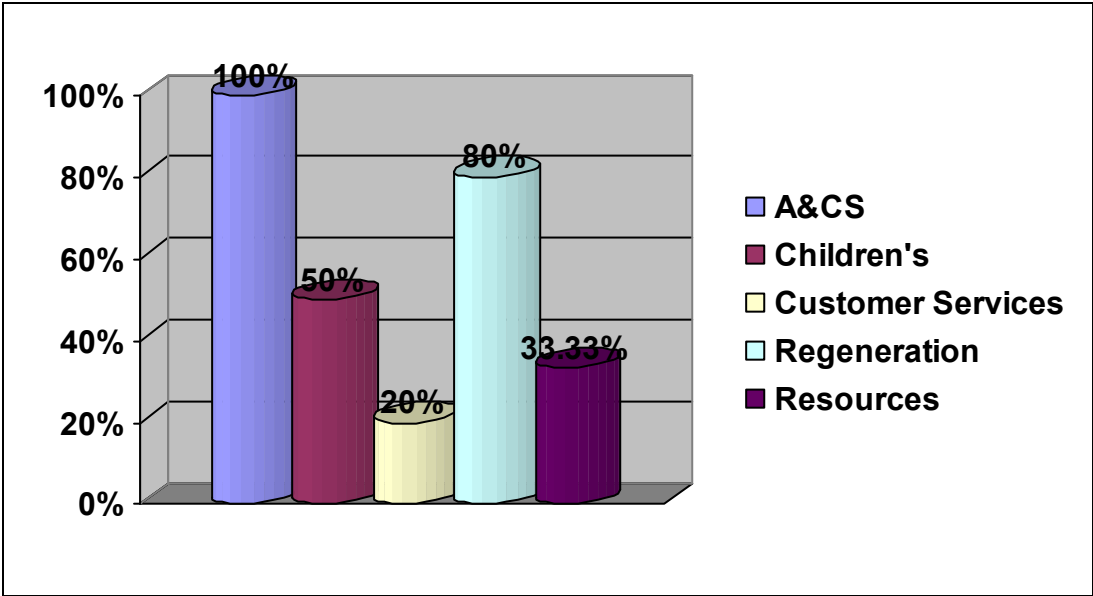
Staff Turnover

The table details staff turnover across the Council, including schools, from April 2007 to March 2008. (The information is taken from the monthly "starters and leavers" data).

Employee Turnover April 2007 to March 2008 All Departments (including schools staff)					
Starters			**Leavers**		**Total increase/ decrease (-)**
Gender:		No:	**Gender:**	No:	No:
Female		726	Female	649	77
Male		344	Male	299	45
Total		**1,070**	**Total**	**948**	**122**
Age:		No:	**Age:**	No:	No:
16-19		67	16-19	14	53
20-29		387	20-29	206	181
30-39		254	30-39	236	18
40-49		219	40-49	206	13
50-59		103	50-59	175	-72
60-65		27	60-65	105	-78
66-74		11	66-74	6	5
75+		2	75+	0	2
Total		**1,070**	**Total**	**948**	**122**
Ethnic origin:		No:	**Ethnic origin:**	No:	No:
Asian:	Indian	36	Indian	23	13
	Bangladeshi	32	Bangladeshi	4	28
	Pakistani	23	Pakistani	5	18
	Asian Other	5	Asian Other	3	2
Total		**96**	**Total**	**35**	**61**
Black:	African	140	African	88	52
	Caribbean	52	Caribbean	34	18
	Black Other	5	Black Other	4	1
Total		**197**	**Total**	**126**	**71**
Chinese:	Chinese	2	Chinese	1	1
	Chinese Other	0	Chinese Other	1	-1
Total		**2**	**Total**	**2**	**0**
Mixed:	White and Black African	3	White and Black African	6	-3
	White and Black Caribbean	12	White and Black Caribbean	5	7
	White and Asian	2	White and Asian	1	1
	Asian and Black	0	Asian and Black	0	0
	Mixed Other	0	Mixed Other	2	-2
Total		**17**	**Total**	**14**	**3**
White:	British	677	British	673	4
	Irish	24	Irish	22	2
	White Other	54	White Other	64	-10
Total		**755**	**Total**	**759**	**- 4**
Other Ethnic Group:		**2**		**8**	**-6**
Total		**2**	**Total**	**8**	**- 6**
Not Disclosed:		**1**		**4**	**-3**
Total		**1**	**Total**	**4**	**- 3**
Overall Total		**1,070**	**Overall Total**	**948**	**122**

Appendix F: People – Recommendations For Action

Achieving Excellence 2007/08 - Quarter 3 Recommendations for Action (Updated from last report to include progress on actions)

Page	Title	Issue	CPA Impact	Action	Who
18, 12	BV200b Planning Milestones	Not all planning milestones have been met.	Part of the CPA Environment service block: not meeting all milestones will send the indicator into the lower threshold banding.	Take corrective action to ensure all milestones are met by end of March. Report progress to next Regeneration performance board to ensure that all future milestones will be achieved. Report at next Regeneration Performance Board on LDF progress and how to integrate with corporate planning.	**Jeremy Grint**
17, 12	BV106 % of new homes built on previously developed land	Fallen below 100% for first time.	Current performance takes PI from upper to in-between threshold in Environment service block.	Look at implications of not using brownfield sites for new home development. Report progress to next Regeneration performance board to ensure that all future developments comply with our targets and planning policy.	Jeremy Grint
18, 12	BV82a+b Recycling and Composting	Performance is below target and has fallen for both recycling and composting elements since Q2.	Part of the CPA Environment service block: falling performance puts the indicator nearer the lower threshold banding. Upper threshold performance requires 94%.	For next Customer Services Performance Board, develop marketing strategy for back-end products of bio-MRF involving all relevant partners to seek to unlock the 6% performance that it is claimed finding a market will create.	Darren Henaghan
21, 20, 14	Culture service block	Some thresholds look to be changing in the consultation for CPA 2008.	The culture block is probably the highest risk of our service blocks as it has a large number of satisfaction based PIs that we cannot move as it is not a survey year – so the few remaining PIs in the block make it sensitive to changes in thresholds.	Need to revisit the Culture route map and assess risks and issues as soon as possible, considering data quality issues of third party information. Feed results into next Culture Performance Board.	Heather Wills and Allan Aubrey
21	APA	Last CPA saw this fall from scoring 3 to 2.	Getting back to scoring 3 supports our journey towards excellence.	Carry out a mock self-assessment and report on findings and actions resulting from it to CMT in March.	Roger Luxton

20, 15	BV156 % authority buildings open to public where all public areas suitable and accessible to disabled people	3 year programme of investment ends in March: movement towards 100% sluggish – will it be achieved?	None.	Report to Regeneration RMP to assure members that investment has resulted in the delivery of the required outcome.	Jennifer Dearing
44	Investors In People	Major inspection this year managed by IIP steering group to get re-accredited with Investors In People.	None.	Resources DMT to consider the risks around the re-accreditation and inspection process. For onward discussion as part of the next available Organisational Development Performance Board at CMT.	Christine Shepherd

THE EXECUTIVE

15 JULY 2008

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER SERVICES

Housing Advice Service – Audit Commission Inspection Report	For Decision
Summary: This report presents the Audit Commission's report (Appendix 1) following its recent inspection of the Council's Housing Advice Service; together with an Action Plan (Appendix 2) produced in response to the inspection findings and recommendations. The Housing Advice Service was scored as fair (one star) service with promising prospects for improvement. **Wards Affected:** All	
Recommendation(s) The Executive is recommended to: (i) Note the Audit Commission's Inspection Report and in particular the main recommendations (Appendix 1); (ii) Endorse the Improvement Plan (Appendix 2) produced in response to the inspection findings and recommendations; and (iii) Note the Executive will receive a progress report of the action plan in March 2009.	
Reason(s) To assist the Council in achieving its Community Priorities 'Improving Health, Housing and Social Care' and 'Promoting Equal Opportunities and Celebrating Diversity'.	
Implications **Financial:** The financial implications of implementing the recommendations of this review will be contained within existing resources. The department will continue to work with finance to ensure that appropriate existing resources are set aside to fund the service improvements. Where some resources are identified in other departments, Customer Services need to ensure these continue to be available to fund the Housing Advice Service improvements. **Legal:** There are no legal implications arising from this report **Risk Management:** The management of the risk associated with the delivery of the 7 recommendations will be built into the overall risk management plan for the Housing Advice Service.	

Social Inclusion and Diversity:
One of the Key Lines of Enquiry covered Equality & Diversity. There are a number of recommendations covered in the Audit Commission Report regarding this, which are responded to in the Action Plan.

In addition, in terms of a number of actions the Council is proposing to take, they will involve consultation with service users and community groups, and in the case of any policy development, such as the review of the Homelessness Strategy, an equality impact assessment will be undertaken.

Crime and Disorder:
There are no specific implications as far as this report is concerned.

Options Appraisal
Not applicable.

Contact: Anne Baldock	Title: Group Manager – Housing Advice	Tel: 020 8227 5186 Fax: 020 8227 5630 Minicom: 020 8227 5755 e-mail: anne.baldock@lbbd.gov.uk

1.   Background

1.1   In February 2008, the Audit Commission carried out an inspection of the Housing Advice Service under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999.

1.2   The Housing Advice Service is one of the Council's most visible and high profile services and forms the cornerstone to the delivery of Improving Health, Housing and Social Care. The service is responsible for the management of the housing allocations and lettings system; prevention of homelessness; the promotion of housing options; the assessment of households who may be owed a duty under homelessness legislation; and the provision of temporary accommodation and support.

1.3   The process of preparing for this Audit Commission Inspection has generated real momentum for improvement and developed a service fit to initiate tangible positive change.

2.   Audit Commission Inspection and Response

2.1   The Audit Commission concluded that the Housing Advice Service is a one star or 'fair' service with promising prospects for improvement.

2.2   The inspection report and detailed findings can be found at Appendix 1. The inspection took place during the final week of February 2008. It included a service related tour of the borough and interviews with Members, senior and middle managers, junior staff, partners and focus groups comprising new tenants and residents in temporary accommodation.

2.3   As part of the pre-inspection process a self assessment was collated on the service based on the audit commission Key Lines of Enquiry. The inspectors were

particularly complimentary about the self awareness and understanding of service priorities contained in the self assessment. They felt that the primary message contained in the self assessment is that the Council is committed to improving services and achieving excellence was endorsed and validated by talking to customers, staff and partners at all levels.

2.4   The inspectors found:

(i)   that the allocations and lettings system is transparent and well managed, and customers who are dissatisfied have access to robust review processes;

(ii)   a pro-active approach to prevention of homelessness, including: a 'Sanctuary' scheme for people experiencing domestic violence or race hate crimes; a family mediation service; a rent deposit scheme; and partnership work to prevent youth homelessness; and

(iii)   effective support for homeless people in temporary accommodation.

2.5   However, the report highlights a number of issues which need to be tackled, including:

(i)   inconsistent levels of customer service, including services for vulnerable people such as women experiencing domestic violence;

(ii)   the numbers of homeless families housed in temporary accommodation; and

(iii)   the approach to performance monitoring, improvement planning and ensuring value for money, is not clear and robust.

2.6   To help the service improve, inspectors made a number of recommendations. These include:

(i)   targeting homeless households for support with bidding for available houses;

(ii)   ensuring the homelessness strategy is thoroughly reviewed and agreed with all stakeholders and published, with opportunities for scrutiny; and

(iii)   ensuring that the service is achieving value for money by assessing unit costs and outcomes, and benchmarking these against other services.

3.   Improvement Plan

3.1   Comprehensive feedback received during the inspection and detailed in the inspection report, has provided a useful template for developing the service improvement plan for the Housing Advice Service.

3.2   The action plan will be closely monitored and the Executive Portfolio Holder regularly updated on progress. In addition, it is proposed that a progress report will be submitted to the Executive in March 2009. Management controls are being put in place to ensure the Council can be confident that the recommended improvements are made.

3.3   The report of the inspection was received at the end of May and placed on the Audit Commission website on Thursday 5 June 2008. The Audit Commission have invited the Council to submit a response to their report by Tuesday 5 August 2008, which following their agreement will be posted on the Audit Commission's website. The Council's response will be based on the Action Plan and cleared by the Portfolio Holder for Housing before submission.

3.4   The Divisional Director of Housing Services is the responsible Head of Service for ensuring achievement of the actions set out in the Action Plan and will be working closely with the Head of Housing Strategy and Property on the review of the Homelessness Strategy.

3.5   The Action Plan has been integrated into the Balanced Scorecard for the Housing Services Division.

4.   Conclusion

4.1   The Audit Commission inspectors found that the Council does ensure that housing in the borough is allocated in accordance with the priorities set out in its allocations policy, which is based on housing needs. Services for homeless people are generally good, but the Council's future strategic approach to homelessness has not been clearly developed with partners and the Council needs to ensure its commitment to high quality customer service is delivered in practice. However, the Council has a good track record of delivering improvements and has made significant investment in the service, and has therefore judged that the prospects for further improvements are promising.

5.   Consultees

5.1   The following were consulted in the preparation of this report:

Councillor Liam Smith – Housing Services Portfolio Holder
David Woods – Corporate Director of Customer Services
Stephen Clarke – Divisional Director of Housing Services
Tony McNamara – Customer Services Departmental Finance Team
Robin Hanton - Corporate Legal Services
Ken Jones – Head of Housing Strategy

Background Papers used in the preparation of the Report:
Audit Commission Inspection Report
Improvement Plan

Local Authority Housing Inspection Report

May 2008

Allocations and Homelessness

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Contents

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Local Authority Housing Inspections

The Audit Commission is an independent body responsible for ensuring that public money is spent economically, efficiently and effectively and delivers high-quality local services for the public.

Within the Audit Commission, the Housing Inspectorate inspects and monitors the performance of a number of bodies and services. These include local authority housing departments, local authorities administering Supporting People programmes, arms length management organisations and housing associations. Our key lines of enquiry (KLOEs) set out the main issues which we consider when forming our judgements on the quality of services. The KLOEs can be found on the Audit Commission's website at www.audit-commission.gov.uk/housing.

This inspection has been carried out by the Housing Inspectorate using powers under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999 and is in line with the Audit Commission's strategic regulation principles. In broad terms, these principles look to minimise the burden of regulation while maximising its impact. To meet these principles this inspection:

- is proportionate to risk and the performance of the Council;

- judges the quality of the service for service users and the value for money of the service;

- promotes further improvements in the service; and

- has cost no more than is necessary to safeguard the public interest.

Summary

1 Barking and Dagenham Council Housing Advice Service (HAS) is providing a 'fair' service with promising prospects for improvement.

2 Customers generally have good access to the service and are provided with a range of ways to contact the service and to get information. Complaints are used to improve the service, but there is insufficient customer involvement and standards of customer care are not consistently high.

3 The allocations and lettings systems are accessible and transparent with robust review processes. However, the housing register has not been reviewed since 2005 and choice is not being maximised, as the number of lets to homeless households has been comparatively low, and many applicants do not understand the bidding process.

4 Diversity monitoring is not systematic and is not effectively used. Equality and diversity planning is not sufficiently robust and the approach to meeting BME housing needs is unclear. Standards of service vary for disabled customers and victims of domestic violence, but the Council acknowledges it needs to improve and is working positively with different communities.

5 Homelessness services are effectively focused on prevention and options. Performance on all homelessness key performance indicators is strong apart from the increase in the number of families in temporary accommodation. There are good services for young people and a range of effective preventative initiatives. The service is working well with partners and private landlords, but customers in housing need are waiting too long for advice and options interviews.

6 The strategic approach to homelessness and housing needs is confused and unclear. Planning and performance reporting is not robust as plans are not SMART[1] nor agreed with customers and stakeholders.

7 There are good floating support services for vulnerable homeless households and the quality of hostel accommodation is generally good. Progress against its temporary accommodation reduction plan has been slow but is now on track. Void levels in temporary accommodation are too high.

8 The Council has delivered a range of improvements in recent years most notably in increased service access, choice-based lettings, a range of prevention initiatives, and improvements in hostel and support services for homeless households. However, a number of planned improvements have not been delivered including a reduction in the number of families in temporary accommodation and the development of a service user's network.

9 There is a good level of commitment and leadership among key elected members in respect to diversity and community cohesion issues.
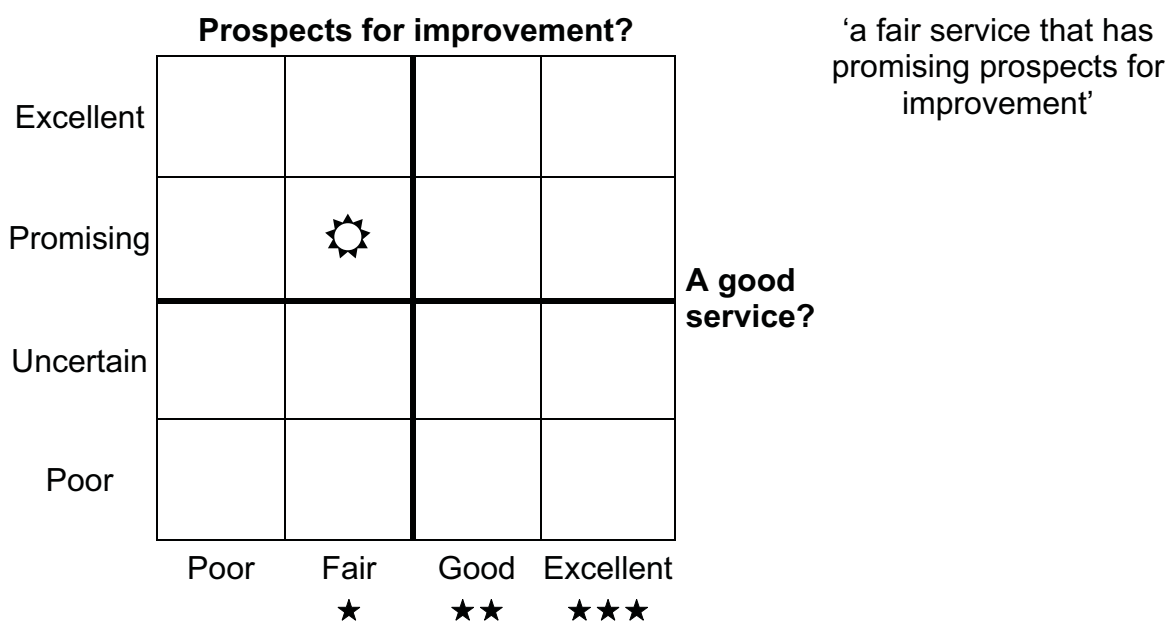
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[1] A SMART plan has objectives or targets that are specific, measurable, achievable, resourced and timed.

10   Capacity has increased through partnership working and additional external and internal investment. For example, increased housing options staff, the housing modernisation programme, a foyer scheme and the rent deposit scheme. However, capacity is limited in some areas such as the private sector and customer care and diversity training has not always been effective.

Scoring the service

11 We have assessed the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham as providing a 'fair' one-star service that has promising prospects for improvement. Our judgements are based on the evidence obtained during the inspection and are outlined below.

Figure 1   Scoring chart[2]

Prospects for improvement?

'a fair service that has promising prospects for improvement'

Excellent			
Promising	☼		
Uncertain			
Poor			
Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent

A good service?

★   ★★   ★★★

Source: Audit Commission

12 We found the service to be fair because of the following strengths.

- There is a wide range of ways for customers to contact the service, with extended opening hours and an emergency out of hours service.

- The range and quality of information available to customers is reasonable, and there is a fully accessible website.

- There are clear standards of service with opportunities for customers to give feedback and complain, and suggestions are handled well and acted upon.

- Complaints are generally dealt with effectively, and are used for learning to improve the service.

- The choice-based letting system is well managed and bids for properties can be made 24 hours a day for four days per week.

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[2] The scoring chart displays performance in two dimensions. The horizontal axis shows how good the service or function is now, on a scale ranging from no stars for a service that is poor (at the left-hand end) to three stars for an excellent service (right-hand end). The vertical axis shows the improvement prospects of the service, also on a four-point scale.

- The allocations policy is clearly written and comprehensive, and the allocations process is well managed and transparent.

- Review processes for each stage of the allocation process are robust.

- The housing advice service is focused on prevention and housing options, with proactive interventions for young people and a range of effective prevention schemes: mediation; a sanctuary scheme and a rent deposit scheme.

- There is good partnership working which has enhanced value for money.

- The quality of hostels and supported accommodation is generally good and there are good arrangements for assessing and meeting the support needs of residents.

- Investment in the service has resulted in improvements in service outcomes.

- The Council reduced the cost of its homelessness provision and has the lowest spend per head for homeless households.

13 However, there are some areas which require improvement. These include the following.

- Customer care is not of a consistently high standard across the service.

- Monitoring of customer satisfaction and service user involvement in the development of the service is limited.

- Performance against service standards is not consistently good and complaints are not responded to within target times.

- Equality and diversity planning and monitoring is not sufficiently robust.

- The response to helping those who experience domestic violence (DV) is not consistently high, and services for disabled customers are variable.

- A significant number of service users find the choice-based letting system difficult to use.

- There has been an increase in the numbers of families placed in temporary accommodation and the level of lettings to homeless households has been comparatively low.

- The housing register is not up to date.

- Re-let times for empty council property are higher than the London average.

- The strategic approach to homelessness is unclear and the Council is failing in its duty to publish its revised homelessness strategy.

- Improvement planning and performance monitoring for homelessness and housing advice services has not been robust.

- The quality of private sector licensed accommodation is variable.

- The housing advice service VFM action plan has a number of outstanding actions.

- The current ICT systems are not fit for purpose.

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

14   The service has promising prospects for improvement because:

- there is a generally good track record over three years of delivering improvements for service users, such as the choice-based lettings system; the one stop shop and call centre; a range of prevention initiatives, and the standard of hostel accommodation;

- the service has worked well in partnership to increase its capacity;

- the Council has been effective in attracting external funding for projects such the new foyer service for young people which will increase its effectiveness at preventing youth homelessness;

- there is good performance against the homelessness-related Best Value Performance Indicators (see Appendix 1);

- substantial investment is being made in the service through the housing modernisation programme as part of a corporate strategy to raise service standards;

- the service is using complaints to improve service delivery; and

- positive relationships with private landlords are being developed.

15   However, there are a number of barriers to improvement. These include:

- customer care is not of a consistently high standard and awareness of customer experience is low;

- not all targets have been met and the number of households in temporary accommodation has increased;

- homelessness action planning has been weak, and homelessness action plans are not SMART;

- capacity is limited in some areas such as private sector housing; and

- the approach to benchmarking is not fully developed.

Recommendations

16 In order to rise to the challenge of continuous improvement, organisations need inspection reports that offer practical pointers for improvement. Our recommendations identify the expected benefits for both local people and the organisation. In addition, we identify the approximate costs[3] and indicate the priority we place on each recommendation and key dates for delivering these where they are considered appropriate. In this context, the inspection team recommends that the Council shares the findings of this report with tenants and councillors and addresses all weaknesses identified in the report. The inspection team makes the following recommendations.

Recommendation
R1 *The Council should improve access to the service and customer care by:* • *ensuring that all information (including leaflets and web-based) is periodically reviewed and updated;* • *regularly monitoring customer satisfaction with all aspects of the service and using this information to inform plans for improvement;* • *ensuring staff are aware of performance against service standards and know the areas for improvement;* • *introducing more quality assurance systems such as mystery shopping and random checks; and* • *implementing plans to involve service users in the development of the service including consulting them on the location of the service.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

• customers have access to comprehensive and clear information;

• customer concerns are addressed in improvement plans; and

• the service delivers consistently high standards of customer care.

The implementation of this recommendation will have high impact with low costs. This should be implemented within six months of publication of this report.

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[3] Low cost is defined as less than 1 per cent of the annual service cost, medium cost is between 1 and 5 per cent and high cost is over 5 per cent.

Recommendation
R2   The Council should improve its approach to equality and diversity by: • *extending diversity monitoring to all service areas and to include faith, sexuality and disability;* • *analysing diversity monitoring data to develop targeted services and to inform a SMART equality and diversity service plan;* • *reviewing and updating its approach to conducting equality impact assessments, and involve service users from different communities;* • *refreshing staff training on diversity and domestic violence; and* • *setting diversity objectives for staff as part of the performance and development review process.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- the service will know the profile of its users, better understand their needs and be able to deliver more effective services; and
- customers will receive a more sensitive service from staff.

The implementation of this recommendation will have high impact with low costs. This should be implemented within nine months of publication of this report.

Recommendation
R3   The Council should improve access to and choice of social rented housing by: • *involving service users in improving information that explains how the choice-based lettings system works;* • *promoting the availability of assisted bidding and extend it to assist people in assessing whether a property is suitable for their needs;* • *reviewing the categories of applicants who receive direct offers; and* • *targeting homeless households for support with bidding.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- customers will have greater understanding of how choice-based lettings work;
- vulnerable and homeless applicants are more likely to bid and be successful; and
- applicants will have a greater choice of properties to bid for.

The implementation of this recommendation will have high impact with low costs. This should be implemented within six months of publication of this report.

Recommendation
R4 *The Council should maximise the use of available accommodation across all tenures by:*   • *reviewing its efforts to bring private sector empty property back in to use so that it meets its target;*   • *working with RSLs to minimise under-occupation of supported accommodation; and*   • *continuing to review each stage of the void management process to reduce the time it takes to re-let council housing.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- homeless households and customers in housing need will have their needs met more quickly;

- more vulnerable homeless people will receive appropriate support; and

- the Council and RSL partners will maximise rental income.

The implementation of this recommendation will have high impact with low costs. This should be implemented within six months of publication of this report.

Recommendation
R5 *The Council should improve the level and quality of housing advice by:*   • *ensuring staff training is to a level so that staff can effectively assist with complex needs;*   • *reviewing staffing arrangements and levels so that customers can receive housing options and advice interviews quickly;*   • *reviewing arrangements for assessing the housing needs of offenders who may be eligible for release; and*   • *improving the standards of case file management.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- customers, particularly those with complex needs, will receive appropriate and high quality advice and support; and

- customers threatened with homelessness, including ex- offenders, are less likely to become homeless.

The implementation of this recommendation will have high impact with low costs. This should be implemented within nine months of publication of this report.

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Recommendation
R6   *The Council should strengthen its strategic approach to managing homelessness by:*   • *ensuring the homelessness strategy and action plan are thoroughly reviewed and agreed with a wide range of stakeholders and service users, and that it is then published;*   • *producing SMART action plans to deliver the strategy;*   • *extending the homelessness forum membership to include service users and increase participation levels; and*   • *increasing the opportunity for stakeholder scrutiny through reviewing the chairing of the forum and ensuring that clear and regular written progress reports against the strategy action plans are provided.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- the Council's plans are more likely to address the needs of homeless households; and

- priorities and resources will be more effectively targeted to prevent and reduce homelessness.

The implementation of this recommendation will have high impact with low costs. This should be implemented within six months of publication of this report.

Recommendation
R7   *The Council should develop its approach to achieving value for money by:*   • *identifying all unit costs of the service, and benchmarking these against others;*   • *undertaking an analysis of benchmarking data to learn from the practice of high performers; and*   • *comparing the costs and outcomes of the various prevention initiatives with those of other local authorities and other relevant organisations.*

The expected benefits of this recommendation are:

- services will improve as the Council learns more from higher performers;

- the service will maximise outputs from partnership arrangements; and

- opportunities for efficiency savings will increase.

The implementation of this recommendation will have high impact with low costs. This should be implemented within six months of publication of this report.

17 We would like to thank the staff of the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham council who made us welcome and who met our requests efficiently and courteously.

Dates of inspection: 25 to 29 February 2008

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Report

Context

The locality

18   Barking and Dagenham is an outer London borough located about 11 miles from central London and is well served by underground, rail and road links to the city. This combined with lower than average house prices has made it an affordable location for many residents from neighbouring and inner London boroughs. The vast majority of households moving in to the Borough move from Redbridge and Newham and inner London boroughs.

19   The borough is at the heart of the Thames Gateway initiative which will bring significant regeneration and housing activity. The Barking riverside site will provide 10,800 houses with an expected 40 per cent of occupiers coming from within the borough.

20   The population is 169,199 living in 68,710 households. The borough has a higher level of older people and a higher than average number of children compared with London and nationally, however, the over 65 population is decreasing.

21   Barking and Dagenham is the 22nd most deprived borough in England with 48 per cent of the population living in the most deprived wards in England[4]. Unemployment is high at 9.2 per cent and the borough has the fourth lowest literacy rates nationally. There are high levels of teenage pregnancy and domestic violence in the borough.

22   Thirty-four per cent of households are council tenants, 3 per cent RSL tenants, 7 per cent live in private rented sector accommodation and 56 per cent are owner occupiers. Social renting is substantially above the London average

23   The average household income is the lowest in London at £22, 601 per annum, and the average house price is £247,311compared with the London average of £357,976[5]. An estimated 2.2 per cent of households cannot afford market housing and live in unsuitable housing[6]. Council and private tenants are most likely to be in housing need with 76.7 per cent of households in need currently living in social rented housing.

24   Community cohesion is a high priority for the borough and its partners as the diversity of the population is increasing faster than any other area of the country. Historically there has been a White, predominantly working-class population in most parts of the borough. Black and minority ethnic residents now make up almost one quarter of the population; an increase of 15 per cent since 2001. The pace of change has led to concerns among some sections of the White population about the allocation of housing.

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[4]   ODPM Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2007.
[5]   Land registry 2008. The England and Wales average is £186,045.
[6]   Housing Needs Survey 2005.

25   An estimated 7 per cent of all households are over crowded and 21.2 per cent are under occupied. Overcrowding particularly affects Black and minority ethnic (BME) households, with 22.9 per cent of BME households being overcrowded compared to 5.5 per cent of White households; and as elsewhere in the country, BME households also disproportionately live in private rented accommodation.

The Council

26   Barking and Dagenham is one of 33 London boroughs in the London region.

27   The Council consists of 51 Councillors and is led by a long-standing Labour administration. The 2006 elections returned 38 Labour councillors, 12 British National Party councillors, and 1 Conservative. This is the first time a single party has formed an opposition to the Labour majority.

28   The Council operates with a Leader, Executive and scrutiny model. The Executive comprises ten members, one of which holds the portfolio for housing. The scrutiny function is performed by a scrutiny board and has series of scrutiny panels consisting of both 'back bench' and opposition councillors.

29   The Council was given three stars out of a possible four, in the Audit Commission's 2007 Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).

30   The Council has responded to local concerns that housing allocations are more limited for local people by adopting a community cohesion strategy and a programme of community engagement which has involved a series of 'myth busting' presentations and articles and outreach work to explain the allocations policy and process.

The Service

31   The Council is organised into five departments: Adult and Community Services; Children's Services; Customer Services; Regeneration; and Resources. The Council's Housing Advice Service (HAS) is located in the Customer Service Department.

32   The HAS is responsible for the prevention of homelessness; the promotion of housing options; the assessment of households who may be owed a duty under homelessness legislation; the provision of temporary accommodation and support; the management of the housing allocations and lettings system.

33   80 staff are employed in the service which is overseen by the Group Manager. There are five teams: housing options, accommodation services, lettings, choice assessment and the private sector team.

34   The HAS is delivered from several locations but the main service is delivered at John Smith House in Barking, which it shares with the health service. In addition there is a One Stop Shop at the Barking Learning Centre in central Barking. General and youth outreach services or advice surgeries are delivered from a number of other locations.

How good is the service?

What has the service aimed to achieve?

35　The aims of the service are set out in key corporate documents: the corporate plan, the housing strategy 2007/10 and the homelessness strategy 2006/10.

36　The corporate plan 2005/10 has five strategic priorities:

- working in partnership to deliver community priorities (one of which is improving health, housing and social care);
- putting customers at the heart of what you do;
- delivering VFM services;
- delivering high quality services, and
- value and invest in employees.

37　The housing strategy 2007/10 has rising to the challenge of affordable housing (to meet housing need) as a theme and includes targets for:

- 80 more sanctuary schemes for victims of domestic violence;
- 9 more domestic violence refuge units;
- new 118-unit foyer scheme for 16 to 24 years olds;
- rent deposit scheme;
- reduction of empty homes by five per year, and
- establish Landlords Forum and London Landlords Accreditation Scheme.

38　The Homelessness strategy 2003 - 2008 had four key objectives:

- prevent homelessness with a target of a 5 per cent reduction year-on-year;
- increase Housing options and choice including meeting the government target of a 50 per cent reduction in the numbers of households in temporary accommodation by 2010;
- increase the supply of homes; and
- provide quality services.

These objectives have remained in the revised (unpublished) 2006/10 homelessness strategy, which has the additional aims of:

- increasing choices for homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless;
- enabling preventative approaches, which contribute to the Government's agenda to prevent homelessness;

- meeting the specific needs of particular groups, such as black and minority ethnic people, asylum seekers, travellers and gypsies, and other people with additional support needs and those experiencing domestic violence; and

- addressing immediate requirements and at the same time, plan to meet future requirements by contributing to the Housing strategy and the supporting people strategy.

39 The allocations policy has a number of aims including:

- offer applicants a more active role in choosing accommodation taking account of individual circumstances and waiting time;

- maximise the use of and efficiently let all housing stock available to the Council;

- provide applicants with sufficient information to make informed choices about opportunities for rehousing and understand the criteria and process adopted by the Council;

- offer applicants open and fair access to housing, provide choice and recognise diverse needs; and

- to reflect a balance between the housing needs of existing tenants and new tenants, whilst ensuring best use of our stock.

40 A corporate 'Done in One' strategy aims to resolve 80 per cent of all caller enquiries at the first point of contact.

Is the service meeting the needs of the local community and users?

Access and customer care

41 This is an area where there is a balance of strengths and weaknesses. Customers can access the service in a variety of ways and offices meet the needs of customers. There are clear standards of service with opportunities for customers to give feedback and complain, and suggestions are handled well and acted upon. However, customer involvement in service development is limited and satisfaction is not measured across the service. Customer care is not of a consistently high standard; there are concerns about staff being rude or insensitive to the needs of customers; advice and information given is not consistent and performance against service standard has only recently met targets and is not systematically reported to customers or staff.

42 There is a wide range of ways for customers to contact the service. The service can be accessed by 'phone via Barking and Dagenham Direct call centre; in person at John Smith House (the housing advice centre), the one stop shop and other locations; via the website and by email and there are computer kiosks for customer use to access choice-based lettings. Customers can receive advice and information easily.

43 Extended opening hours are increasing access for customers. Barking and Dagenham Direct is open from 8.00am until 8.00pm Monday to Friday with an emergency out of hours service seven days a week. The one stop shop, the Barking Learning Centre, is open until 7.00pm during the week and from 9.00am to 5.00pm on Saturdays. Customers who are unable to contact the service during standard office hours are able to access the service.

44 The contact centre provides effective access to HAS services. Staff are trained and have scripts to provide initial information on choice-based lettings and other housing issues, and can post leaflets or the *Choice Homes* magazine to customers. Performance against targets has been variable over the past year, but it is now meeting targets to answer 90 per cent of all calls and to answer 70 per cent of all calls within 20 seconds, although these targets are not particularly challenging. Customers can have good quality telephone access to services.

45 The housing advice service (HAS) service standards are clear and concise. The service standards are available in a booklet and via the website, and performance against the standards is displayed in service areas. Customers know what level of service to expect and how well the service delivers them.

46 Offices are welcoming, well equipped and fully accessible. An assigned officer 'meets and greets' customers to advise and direct them. Offices have minicom facilities, lettings kiosks, children's play areas and a water machine. Private interview rooms have panic buttons and computers. Customers have suitable facilities to meet their needs.

47 The range and quality of customer information is reasonable. A range of service information is available in reception areas and in interview rooms including leaflets, booklets, posters and magazines such as *'Choice Homes'* which advertises available property. However, some of the leaflets are not clearly set out. For example, the HAS guide to homelessness does not state it is a guide to homelessness on the front cover. Customers can be informed about most aspects of the service.

48 The website is fully accessible. It has speech enabled using specialist software, different text size, an effective search engine, and some translated information about how to access translated materials. Navigation from the homepage is easy with quick links to the HAS pages and to make comments and complaints. More customers can access the service using the website.

49 The HAS web pages are well organised but information is not comprehensive. For example, the allocations policy and recent housing advice satisfaction surveys results are available, but customers cannot apply for housing online[7] and key information such as domestic violence leaflets and the homeless persons' self-help pack are not available. Summaries of the 2003 homelessness review and strategy are available, but not the more recent homelessness review, strategy or action plan. Customers cannot access all services and may not find the information they need from the website.

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[7] This refers to customers not being able to make a housing application online via the Councils' website. Applicants can bid for available properties via the East London Lettings Company website.

50   The arrangements for dealing with complaints are generally effective. Complaints leaflets are widely available and customer complaints are responded to fairly. Responses are clearly written and explain the next stage of action. There have been 13 complaints reviewed by the Ombudsman relating to HAS services in the past three years but none have found maladministration. Complaints can be made in a range of ways all of which have been used. There is close monitoring to ensure that the complaint is dealt with appropriately, but the corporate 'Done in One' strategy has resulted in thorough but slow responses often missing target times. Only 70 per cent of complaints were responded to in target and some took up to six weeks to resolve. Customers can be confident that their complaint will be thoroughly investigated although not necessarily quickly.

51   Complaints are used to learn and improve the service. Staff provided a range of examples where service has been improved including changes to the wording in the *Choice Homes* magazine and to viewing letters. Customers can see that their complaints and suggestions do have an impact on service delivery.

52   Regular monitoring of customer satisfaction across the service is limited. Monthly exit surveys are conducted at John Smith House, but there is no satisfaction monitoring of other areas such as advice surgeries, allocations and lettings, or temporary accommodation. *Tell Us*[8] forms are available in reception areas but are not offered in other languages or formats. Exit survey findings are published and have led to improvements such as better office signage. The Council is not aware of how customers experience key areas of the service.

53   Service user involvement in the development of the service is limited. For example, service users were not involved in developing the service standards and are not involved in the homelessness forum. A commitment to develop a service user network has not been implemented. Without customer involvement the service may be out of touch with customer concerns and not focus on the right priorities.

54   The main HAS office, John Smith House, is not easy to find and waiting times are too long and not properly monitored. The office is located in a residential area and there was no consultation on the location. Underground and bus services are not in the immediate vicinity and customer parking is very limited. Frontline staff receive regular customer complaints about the location and 28 per cent of customers surveyed in December 2007 still had difficulty finding it however, the Council has plans to review how and where the service is delivered. The 15 minute waiting time target is not being met but waiting time is based on customers own perceptions as a planned automated ticketing is still to be introduced. Customers may be deterred from seeking advice, particularly those with mobility difficulties.

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[8] Tell Us is the Council's corporate scheme to gather feedback, comments and suggestions from customers.

55 Customer care is not of a consistently high standard. Some staff demonstrated a high level of customer care and are viewed as extremely helpful by customers, but this is not the case for all staff. A number of partner agencies have experienced poor customer care and interviewing practices, including sensitive inquiries being carried out at the reception or the public area, and agencies' staff and clients being treated rudely. This is consistent with our reality checks and views expressed at a service users' focus group. Customers said they are often treated like a number and are not listened to or believed. Not all customers receive a quality service and may be deterred from using the service.

56 Customer enquiries are not handled consistently, and staff knowledge is not comprehensive. Only 41 per cent of customers surveyed in 2007 said that staff resolve their enquiries effectively, against the corporate target to resolve 80 per cent of all caller enquiries at the first point of contact. Customers state that explanations of the bidding system are not clear, information varies from one officer to another, and repeat visits are often necessary to clarify information. In inspectors reality checks conflicting information was given; for example, about RSL housing and how to get a housing application form. The lack of consistency and knowledge has resulted in poor customer service which could affect customers' choices.

57 Performance against service standards is not consistently good and frontline staff are not aware of how they are performing. Performance is improving with 90 per cent of letters now being responded to within the ten-day target in November 2007. We found that calls to the call centre often relate to failure to respond in a promised timescale.

Diversity

58 In this area weaknesses outweigh strengths. There is a strong corporate commitment to equality and diversity but this has not successfully impacted at the service level. Understanding of the profile and needs of service users is limited, and diversity planning and monitoring is not robust. Monitoring data is limited, is not used to target resources and plan service improvements and does not cover sexuality and faith. Approaches to addressing particular needs are unclear. However, there has been an effort to work with different community groups, support is available for vulnerable residents and good quality interpreting and translation services are available.

59 The level of understanding of the profile of service users and potential service users is limited as diversity monitoring is not systematically carried out. Applications, homelessness decisions, award of preferences and lettings are monitored by ethnicity but this does not extend to other diversity strands such as faith, sexuality and disability. The Council acknowledges that it needs to improve its understanding of the profile of its' service users, and it has carried out some out-reach work to promote choice-based lettings, but without monitoring who is bidding, it cannot target its efforts effectively. The Council does not have a full picture of who is using the service and cannot effectively plan appropriate services.

60 Equality and diversity planning and reporting is not sufficiently robust. The departmental plan duplicates the corporate plan targets, which is incomplete and focused on processes rather than outcomes. There is no data about faith, disability or sexuality. Targets in the service plan are not based on any needs analysis, and targets to collect, analyse and act upon diversity data have not been met. The plan has been revised but progress reports against the plan have not been evidenced. Without clear outcome-focused plans that are closely monitored, the service cannot know what impact it is having in promoting equality.

61 Equality impact assessments (EIAs) are not robust and show a lack of understanding of the assessment process. The assessment of the housing strategy describes issues particular communities face but does not assess the impact of the strategy on them, and the action plan is not SMART[9]. Actions from EIAs conducted at service level are integrated into the housing improvement plan and monitored by a departmental equality and diversity group, but the targets in the plan are not SMART or challenging, for example to 'ensure service delivery meets the needs of our customers'; the associated task is to collect service user diversity data. Without robust equality impact assessments managers cannot be confident as to how their strategies and service plans will affect different communities - either positively or negatively.

62 The approach to addressing the housing needs of black and minority ethnic (BME) communities is unclear. BME households disproportionately live in private sector housing and have higher levels of homelessness and overcrowding. The housing strategy refers to a BME housing strategy, but officer's were unaware of this and state that it is incorporated in to the housing strategy; the 2006/10 homelessness strategy states that the BME housing strategy is being updated and includes a plan to provide temporary accommodation to meet BME needs but this has not been delivered. Without a clear strategic approach, the Council may not effectively address the disproportionately high levels of BME housing need.

63 Information is not consistently offered in other languages and formats such as large print, Braille or audio tape. For example, , the housing advice service booklet *A guide to homelessness* does not offer other formats but the housing options team booklet does. Both booklets have translated strap lines at the back, but the languages vary. The domestic violence booklet has fewer translated strap lines, but there is no information about other formats. Customers may not receive important information nor receive an equal level of service.

64 The housing application form does not adequately consider same-sex couples. It defines partners as a couple living as man and wife, with no reference to same-sex couples, and sexuality is not being monitored. A new form has been drafted and is to be introduced in 2008. Same-sex couples may lack confidence that their housing needs will be accurately assessed.

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[9] A SMART plan has objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, resourced and timed.

65   While a number of positive projects have been put in place, the Council's response to victims of domestic violence (DV) has a number of weaknesses. The domestic violence policy is not explicitly victim centred which reflects partner agencies concerns that some women have felt as though they are being interrogated rather than supported, and about a lack of sensitivity and awareness of both the issue and the Council's policy. The policy does not fully address issues for women living in other tenures but there are good arrangements in place to signpost to specialist agencies. High risk cases are referred to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and have regular contact from DV advocates. People escaping DV may not receive a sensitive service and may be deterred from seeking support and continue to live in fear of violence.

66   Services for disabled customers are variable. Offices and the website are accessible and BSL[10] interpreters and minicom facilities are available although rarely used, but there is a lack of suitable adapted accommodation resulting in some disabled residents in hostels being unable to move on, despite being ready to do so. Some customers feel that staff are not understanding of disability issues and random file checks found that one disabled resident was housed in a flat without adequate disabled access. The Council has a sensory impairment team that provides training and advice to housing services, but basic provision such as offering information in other formats such as Braille is not always made. This means that disabled people are not consistently receiving an equal service.

67   Equality and diversity training for staff is not fully effective. All staff attend diversity training but some concerns expressed by customers and poor quality EIAs (as outlined elsewhere) shows that its impact has been limited. The Council has produced a quick reference guide *Shall I Take My Shoes Off?* to support understanding of different cultures and faith but without effective training, customers may not receive an equal level of service.

68   Support arrangements for vulnerable people are reasonable. There are specialist services for young people, and staff can assist customers with literacy difficulties to bid for property although some customers felt that staff are not sensitive to the needs of people with dyslexia. However, the actual number of assisted bids is low with only 16 assisted bids being made between October 2007 and March 2008. There is a floating support team based at the Council's hostel and Supporting People staff work closely with vulnerable people in temporary accommodation to assist them with choice-based lettings, and floating support is available for tenants who move on from temporary accommodation.

69   There is clear leadership on diversity issues among key elected members. The Council leader holds the portfolio for equality and diversity, and there are equality champions for lesbian and gay, black and minority ethnic and disability issues. The Council has achieved level 3 of the local government equality standard. At a corporate level, diversity targets for staffing have been met, and the Council has focused on achieving diversity at management level by adopting targets for the top 5 per cent of earners, which they are close to achieving. Training is offered to Councillors in all parties but this is not always taken up.

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[10] BSL - British Sign Language

70   Good quality interpreting and translation facilities are available. There are contracts with two services which have been regularly used by staff and have provided a quick and efficient service, so customers with limited English can access the advice and services that they need.

71   The service is working positively with different communities to increase awareness of housing options and allocations, and to promote community cohesion. A 'myth busting' campaign has focused on how the allocations process works; presentations have been made to various community groups and meetings, such as a Turkish women's group, and monthly advice sessions at a Somali community centre have raised awareness of private sector housing options. The Council is also funding local community organisations to manage various community forums, such as the lesbian and gay forum, to develop capacity for shaping services. Outreach work is helping to ensure that marginalised sectors of the community receive an equal service.

Allocations and lettings

72   This is an area with a balance of strengths and weaknesses. The Council replaced a traditional points-based allocation system with a choice-based lettings system called More Choice in Lettings (MCIL) in April 2005. Registration onto the scheme is accessible and there is a clear allocations policy which customers were consulted on. The bidding and allocations process is transparent and well managed. There are robust review processes in place. However, the Council has not reviewed the housing register since 2005 and there is still a high level of customer confusion about how the bidding system works. Arrangements for short listed applicants to view properties are inflexible and choice is not yet being maximised as a significant number of properties are let as direct offers.

73   The registration scheme is open and accessible. Anybody over 16 years of age can apply for housing. There are clear criteria for excluding people from the register: for serious anti-social behaviour (ASB) or because they are subject to immigration controls. Case file reviews showed that immigration status is thoroughly checked. Exclusions for ASB have strict criteria relating to outright possession and no exclusions have been made on this ground since the MCIL system was introduced. Excluded applicants are written to and advised of their right for a review. Verifications are carried out by estates officers for transfer applicants and by assessment officers for homelessness applicants. The 28-day target for registering new applicants is met where all relevant documentation is submitted. Anyone who wants to register for housing is able to do so or receive a clear explanation as to why they are not eligible.

74   The allocations policy is clearly written and comprehensive. Customers were consulted on the policy when it was developed in 2005. It is widely available and sets out eligibility criteria, explains the categories for reasonable or additional preferences, and the circumstances and categories of applicants to whom a direct offer will be made. An assessment officer awards any preferences which are checked by a second officer for quality assurance. Additional preferences prioritise statutory homeless people and those with other urgent needs. Once the application has been assessed the applicant is written to and advised of their priority and how to bid for accommodation. Customers who have a housing need have clear information about how their needs will be assessed and what type of housing they will be considered for.

75   There are clear review procedures in place for each stage of the process. There is a comprehensive staff review manual in place. Applicants who are not satisfied with decisions relating to eligibility, award of preferences and exclusion from the register can request a review. These are undertaken by a manager who was not involved in the original award of preferences. However, the assessment letter does not advise applicants of their right to a review of the preferences awarded, as required under legislation. Applicants who feel they have not been accurately assessed can be confident of receiving a through review.

76   The allocations process is fair and transparent with a clear rationale to shortlisting and deferred applicants. A weekly list of properties is matched against priority applicants, such as adult services referrals, and the remaining properties are put in to the bidding system. The live bidding system allows applicants to check online at any point in time what their position is in terms of bidding, so they will know if they should be short listed. There are multiple checks and balances on the MCIL system to ensure that the correct allocation and offers to view are made. All reasons for deferring (skipping) an applicant are recorded on files and the applicant in question is written to and advised of the reason for omission from the viewing. The final position and waiting time of successful bids from the previous week are published in the *Choice Homes* magazine so that customers can gauge their chances of success in subsequent bids. Customers can be confident that housing is being allocated in accordance with the allocations policy.

77   The MCIL system is effectively implemented and managed. The East London Lettings Company (ELLC) manages the system under a service level agreement with the Council. Available property is advertised on the ELLC website and in the weekly magazine which can be posted directly to customers. Applicants can bid for available property over the 'phone, via the web site, by text or at a kiosk in the HAS office and other locations, although they can only bid for one property at a time and cannot withdraw a bid once it has been made, which can restrict choice; 85 per cent of bids are made online. All new applications are loaded on to the system every night which identifies an applicants eligibility, so it will not accept bids for properties that an applicant is not eligible for (for example, a single person would not be able to bid for a three-bedroom house). Bidding is open 24 hours a day from Friday until midnight on Monday. Bids are quickly reviewed and shortlists produced within the 48-hour target of the end of the bidding process. Applicants receive at least two days written notice of the viewing. Customers' bids are dealt with quickly to maximise the opportunity for letting available property.

78   Viewing arrangements are maximising opportunities to let available property. The top two shortlisted applicants are invited to the viewings. The second placed applicant waits until the first placed applicant has viewed and made a decision. This was lowered from three clients after feedback from applicants about being invited without the chance of viewing. At the viewings estates officers are able to provide information and take action which could be a deciding factor for acceptance of the property, such as raising outstanding repair jobs and clarifying housing options. Efficient viewing arrangements can reduce the length of time households remain homeless or in housing need.

79   The Council provides useful information about mutual exchanges and mobility schemes to increase choice. The tenant's handbook provides information about mutual exchanges and national mobility schemes. The Council does not maintain an exchange register nor advertise them via the MCIL system, but its website provides a hyperlink to useful government information about free exchange schemes. This is providing people in housing need with an additional way to identify suitable accommodation both within the borough and in other areas.

80   There is an effective approach to tenancy fraud. There is a specialist tenancy fraud officer who liaises with housing assessment officers, estates officers and other government agencies. Estates officers conduct annual tenancy audit visits. The Council subscribes to the national fraud initiative, and success in recovering fraudulent tenancies are featured in the *Spotlight* magazine. This approach to tenancy fraud helps to ensure that council housing is fairly allocated.

81   The Council has positive working relationships with RSL partners in respect of the nominations process. The Council has nomination agreements with eight RSLs and effectively provides appropriate nominations within agreed timescales. RSLs have good communication with the service; queries are resolved easily and officers are helpful. Good working relationships ensure that referrals and nominations are more likely to be accurate and applications processed efficiently.

82   The nominations agreement is clearly written but monitoring is not always robust. The agreement sets out responsibilities and timescales for both parties, the percentage of nomination rights for different property types, the monitoring arrangements and issues such as confidentiality of shared information. New lets are monitored by the East London housing partnership, and re-lets are monitored via review meetings with individual RSLs using CORE data. However these do not discuss the agreement in detail and are focused on development issues. One of the main RSL partners was unaware of a formal nomination agreement being in place but said there is an understanding about the percentage of stock they will provide to the Council. Nominations agreements can clarify responsibilities, but may be ineffective if they are not closely monitored.

83   Arrangements for supporting people to bid for accommodation are not robust. A Council survey found that 68 per cent of MCIL users find the system easy to use. However, focus group users found the bidding system complicated and assistance is limited to the end of the process once the applicant has chosen a property to bid on. Call centre and reception staff stated that a major part of their week is spent clarifying the system. If customers find the bidding process confusing they may be deterred from bidding and will not receive the housing they need; this will disproportionately affect vulnerable customers.

84   While the Council is offering choice, it is not yet being maximised for all customers. Lettings by direct offer have been high with one third of lets for Council and RSL nominations being made this way. Direct offers were initially being made under a major regeneration and decant programme, but now that this is complete, the level of direct lets has fallen significantly to 28 per cent. Specified categories of applicants are given priority for a direct offer, for example adult services referrals and care leavers, but if these applicants choose to exercise choice and bid for a property, they are not given priority, which acts as a deterrent to bidding. Sheltered housing is excluded from the MCIL system as the range and variation of sheltered housing has required the Council to assess the level of care provided first. There are plans to include sheltered housing in the MCIL scheme this year, and the Council is talking to partners about moving to choice for all client groups in 2008 with only referrals from the public protection and prolific offenders panels being made direct offers. This means that the MCIL scheme is not yet comprehensive and the Council is not yet maximising choice for all customers.

85   The housing register is not kept under regular review. The last major review was in 2005 despite a policy commitment to undertake annual reviews. More than 10,000 applicants are currently registered and the Council does not know how many of these still have a housing need. File checks showed that some customers had been written to for not bidding for over 12 months and were advised that they will be made a direct offer if they do not bid, which is not in keeping with the Councils policy of choice. Without regular reviews the Council cannot have an accurate picture of the level of need in the borough.

86   The level of lettings to homeless households is low when compared with other similar boroughs. In the year to date, 16 per cent of lettings (including direct lets) have been made to homeless households against an 18 per cent target. Approximately 30 per cent of lets are to existing tenants which is higher than the two of the CIPFA family group boroughs who monitor this. By failing to ensure property is let to homeless households, there is an over reliance on temporary accommodation which the Council has a target to reduce.

87   The arrangement for short listed applicants to view properties is not customer focused. Customers are not given adequate time to consider an offer of housing Staff have numerous viewings scheduled so if customers are late for the viewing they lose their position of first choice for the property; an example was given where a customer was only 15 minutes late. On viewing a property, applicants have to make up their mind immediately whether to accept the offer even if their partner has not been able to attend; customers are also not allowed to bring children to viewings. If the property has outstanding works and is not ready to let customers are still required to sign an undertaking to accept the property at the viewing. Applicants are not having a fair and equal opportunity to consider the offer or to discuss it with their partner or other household members.

88   Allocation files are not maintained to a consistent standard. Reviews of a randomly selected sample found that there was not a clear rationale as to what documents should be held on file. Photo ID, MCIL forms and current status were not held on some files. Documents were not chronologically filed and there were no cover sheets summarising actions. Some files had post-it notes attached to the front to denote 're-housed', without explanatory letters in the files. However, thorough checks had been undertaken in relation to immigration status, medical needs and home visits. Verifying information was evident and checklists of information had clarifications of actions on home visits. Poorly managed files can result in customers not receiving accurate advice and mistakes being made.

89   Re-let times for empty council property are worse than the London average. Voids re-let times have been increasing since March 2007 to 37.01 days in September 2007. This figure includes sheltered housing voids but even excluding those properties, the service is still above the 27 days target at around 30 days. Limitations in current IT systems do not allow an analysis of the level of and reasons for refusals by applicants. Without this analysis, the Council does not know how efficient its system is; inefficient letting of council property can contribute to the length of time in temporary or unsuitable accommodation for many households.

Homelessness and housing advice

90   In this area there is a balance of strengths and weaknesses. Services for homeless households are generally good with a strong focus on prevention and options. There are a range of preventative schemes often delivered in partnership, and services for young people are good. Use of temporary accommodation is high but reducing, and the quality of hostels and floating support is good. However, the strategic approach to homelessness is weak**,** and the quality of temporary accommodation is variable, with some poor examples of private sector leased accommodation. Some homeless applicants have to wait too long for an appointment and do not always receive clear and consistent housing advice.

Housing advice, homelessness prevention and options services

91   The housing advice service is well publicised and focused on prevention and housing options. Over recent years resources have been re-focused on homelessness prevention rather than assessment. There are now 15 frontline prevention staff compared to six frontline assessment staff. Homelessness preventions increased from six to nine per 1,000 households in 2006/07 which is in the top 25 per cent of all authorities. Homelessness approaches and acceptances have decreased and rough sleeping and repeat homelessness have been virtually eradicated. Information is provided on all tenures and housing options including shared ownership. 594 cases of homelessness were prevented in 2005/06. The Council is successfully reducing the number of households that become homeless each year.

92   There are proactive interventions with young people to prevent and address youth homelessness. For example, the Axe Street project out reach service for young people; the East Street advice centre, and the development of a 116-unit foyer scheme. There has been an outreach project to schools called 'Talking Heads' which is delivered with the teenage pregnancy unit to raise awareness of housing options and the allocations process. Homelessness acceptances for 16 and 17 year olds reduced from 47 per cent in 2003/04 to 17 per cent in 2005/06 against a London average of 15 per cent (but there is a higher level of young people in the borough).Young people have access to a range of support and advice to reduce the risk of becoming homelessness.

93   There are a range of effective prevention schemes in place, primarily:

- mediation for young people who have been asked to leave home. All 16 to 17 year olds approaching the service receive a home visit and can be referred to a mediation service, which can help delay eviction while appropriate supported accommodation is found. The contract is now part of a wider CLG mediation pilot and this has improved the feedback received on outcomes of mediation;

- a sanctuary scheme for people experiencing domestic violence or race hate crimes assisted 95 households in 2006/07 and 102 in the first three quarters of 2007/08. It is delivered in partnership and is available across all tenures; and

- a rent deposit scheme has been used successfully and is expanding. The scheme began in January 2007 and rehoused 131 households in just over a year. The £80,000 budget is being increased to £200,000 in 2008/09. Landlords have to register with the London Landlord Accreditation Scheme. The majority of a focus group of temporary accommodation residents were unaware of the scheme so it could be more effectively promoted.

94 Positive relationships are being developed with private landlords. The private landlords' forum was relaunched in November 2007 following a successful landlords' day with over 70 landlords attending. The forum now meets twice a year (although the 2008/10 homelessness strategy action plan says every two months), and an annual landlords' day is planned. Effective relationships with private landlords can help prevent evictions and promote good practice in the private rented sector.

95 There is good partnership working in place. For example, HAS staff work closely with the housing benefit service, the multi agency public protection agency and the prolific and other priority offender panel. Two housing benefit staff are based within the service. A number of partners reported improved working relationships and partnership networking lunches have recently been established. Partnership working can increase options for customers and help prevent homelessness.

96 Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) are used reasonably well to help prevent homelessness. Frontline staff are fully aware of DHPs as an option, and a housing benefits officer is based within the service to process DHP applications. However, the annual budgets have not been spent in full; in 2007/08 £58,199 of a £173,000 budget was not awarded.

97 Arrangements for early notification of potential cases of homelessness are not robust. There are no protocols or procedures in place to give early notification to housing options staff of possession proceedings and potential homelessness by estates officers or local RSLs. Notification is sometimes too late for any effective options work to be conducted.

98 There is a gap in prevention services for ex-offenders. Housing options staff do not visit people due to be released from custody to carry out a homelessness assessment; the youth offending team is willing to do these assessments as homelessness can delay their release, but the Council has not yet provided the required training. The Council is not maximising the use of external resources to prevent homelessness.

99 There are performance failures in the private sector housing team. It is not achieving its annual target for bringing empty properties back into use. Corporately, 16 have been achieved against a target of 20 in the year to date, but the private sector team has only achieved one against its own target of five. Inspections of private sector leased properties are only carried out if a tenant makes a complaint, and post-inspection of sanctuary scheme security works are not conducted. The Council is not ensuring that it meets minimum legal standards in bed and breakfast hotels in the borough, and may be leaving vulnerable homeless people or women at threat of domestic violence at risk.

100 Households who are threatened with homelessness are not receiving a prompt service. The target to carry out a home visit to all homeless households on the day they contact the service is not being achieved, and despite the increase in staff, there is currently a two to three-week wait for a housing options interview. These limitations mean that the service is not maximising the opportunity for early homelessness prevention.

101 The level and quality of housing advice is not consistent for all customers. The quality of housing advice has received external accreditation but in-depth housing advice casework is currently limited as some staff have not yet received comprehensive training. There is currently no capacity to staff a court advice scheme nor represent cases in court. Some focus group residents had not had clear advice and were not aware of alternative housing options. Partner agencies said that young people who are increasingly being deemed intentionally homeless without other accommodation options or helpful advice being offered.

Homelessness strategy, services and applications

102 The strategic approach to homelessness is unclear and the Council is failing in its duty to publish its revised homelessness strategy. A homelessness strategy was published in 2003 but it was not reviewed annually nor reported on to partners and stakeholders. A review was conducted in 2005 as part of the housing strategy review and a revised homelessness strategy was drafted for 2006/10 but this has not been published. Some managers are unaware of the new strategy and others stated that the homelessness strategy is now integrated into the housing strategy 2007/10; that strategy does not adequately address all the statutory requirements for a homelessness strategy. The effect of this is that service users, partners, stakeholders and staff have not got a clear understanding about the Councils strategic approach to homelessness and so cannot effectively monitor progress against plans.

103 Monitoring of the homelessness strategy and action plan is not robust. Monitoring of the plan is via the homelessness forum which meets quarterly, but the level of scrutiny is limited. The forum has not met regularly, participation levels are variable and there is no service user involvement; some partners said they are not always informed of the meetings. Detailed progress reports against the strategy and action plan are not produced. Some activities are reported through the housing advice service improvement plan but this is not SMART and is not an effective monitoring tool. Without a clear framework for reporting against the strategy and action plan and clarity about which strategy and action plan is current, managers and stakeholders cannot effectively monitor progress against plans.

104 Improvement planning for homelessness and housing advice services has not been robust. The 2003/08 homelessness strategy action plan only covered the years 2003/04 to 2005/06 and a new action plan was not put in place until 2008/10. The action plans are not SMART; for example, targets and milestones are unclear and not all actions highlighted in the strategy are included in the action plan (such as the development of a user network and the need for suitable temporary accommodation for people with disabilities). However, some of the aims such as an end to rough sleeping and an end to the use of bed and breakfast accommodation except in emergencies have been achieved.

105　Involvement of stakeholders, service users and other housing providers in the development of the strategy and action plan has been limited. There was limited involvement of service users in developing the 2003/08 homelessness strategy and in the 2005 review of the strategy. The homelessness forum was involved in a review of the homelessness strategy action plan in 2007, but this was after the new homelessness strategy had been drafted in 2006. Without full involvement of service users and other stakeholders the Council cannot be confident that it is establishing the correct priorities and allocation of resources.

106　Systems are in place to ensure that staff are regularly updated on changes in homelessness policy and case law. There is a staff homelessness procedures manual - although this was published six weeks before the inspection. Staff have access to the necessary legal text books and case law updates.

107　Homelessness assessments have not been within target. Although there has been a steady improvement in assessment times over recent years, the average time taken to issue a decision letter was 35 days in 2006/07, against a target of 33 days, which leaves homeless applicants unclear about their status and entitlement.

108　The review process is robust. All applicants are advised in writing of the outcome of the homelessness assessment and their right of review, although review letters are not in plain English. Review forms are readily available and staff are prompted to explain the review process when customers express dissatisfaction; they do not have to explicitly request a review. An independent reviews officer carries out all reviews, and 84 per cent were within the required time frame in 2006/07. Review decisions and Counsel's opinions are used for staff training. Applicants can be confident of receiving a fair assessment of their circumstances and the service uses reviews to improve accuracy of initial assessments

109　Homelessness caseloads are now at a manageable level but the quality of case file management is variable. Caseloads average 30 compared to 50 several years ago and caseworkers have sufficient uninterrupted time to carry out casework. However, handwritten notes are not always signed; the files do not always have the full case history nor always show the latest position and next steps to be taken. One case file reviewed revealed delays in correspondence being forwarded between two council offices. Poor case management can lead to poor quality advice and mistakes being made.

Temporary accommodation

110　The quality of RSL managed hostels is high. There are two hostels managed by a specialist RSL that provides 71 self contained units of supported accommodation. The standard of accommodation is good and residents receive welcome packs. There is good service user involvement and information, and a range of activities inside and outside the hostels that residents are encouraged to take part in.

111   The quality of accommodation at the Council's hostel is reasonable. The hostel at Boundary Road is in good decorative order but is not self contained - residents have to share kitchens and bathrooms. Residents do not receive a welcome pack, and there is very little service user involvement: there are no residents' meetings or satisfaction surveys (although they are planned and there has been significant investment and improvement since 2003). Informal feedback from residents is positive.

112   There are clear arrangements for assessing and meeting the support needs of people moving into temporary accommodation. Following a risk assessment the floating support team conducts a needs assessment for all households. Clients receive a prompt service being placed in temporary accommodation on the day they present. There are arrangements in place for the storage of property and there are usually fortnightly visits to clients, and support plans are reviewed quarterly.

113   The floating support team provides an effective service. There are four generalist and four specialist support officers and it is contracted to work with 100 clients. Where a household has needs that the team is unable to meet, they are referred to other support services in the borough. The team achieved positive outcomes for 97 per cent of cases in 2006/07.

114   There are effective arrangements for out-of-hours emergency cover. All three hostels have 24-hour staffing and a housing advice service officer is on call outside office hours to deal with urgent homelessness cases and other emergencies.

115   The use of temporary accommodation is now reducing from a high of 841 in June 2007 to 718 in February 2008. This is still well above the December 2004 baseline figure of 496, but the measures in place such as the preventative initiatives and recruitment of two temporary accommodation visiting officers should ensure a continuing decline. A temporary accommodation reduction strategic plan 2007/10 sets out clear monthly reduction targets from a baseline of 740 at December 2007. Monthly targets were not produced prior to this but it is on target and a reduction strategy group is monitoring progress. The Council now has a clear approach to achieving the governments' target of an overall 50 per cent reduction in the use of temporary accommodation by 2010.

116   Additional resources have assisted in reducing the use of temporary accommodation. Two officers have been employed (with CLG funding) to visit households in temporary accommodation to encourage realistic bidding for secure accommodation via the MCIL system, and to check occupancy and standards. Around 430 out of 718 households have so far been visited and there has been an increase in successful bidding as a result, so dedicated resources are ensuring that people can move out of temporary accommodation quickly.

117 The use of temporary accommodation is closely monitored. There are weekly temporary accommodation reduction meetings and a carefully balanced programme to reduce the number of private sector licensed (PSL) properties while retaining a sufficient number to offer some choice of area to residents. Work is taking place to try to ensure that PSL properties, no longer required as temporary accommodation, are available for rent-deposit scheme placements or other permanent lettings.

118 The quality of PSL accommodation is variable and there are no published letting standards. Focus group residents had been allocated properties with bare floorboards, poor quality furniture and broken essential kitchen equipment. Tenants were dissatisfied with their living conditions, with repair requests going unanswered and some having to spend their own money on refurbishments. Residents do not know what standard of service and accommodation to expect.

119 Inspection arrangements of PSL property are weak. At one property visited, there was a serious disrepair and health and safety issues. The property was a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) shared by four households; there had been no heating for over two weeks and only intermittent hot water; a power socket was off the wall with bare cables protruding; water was leaking from the bathroom to kitchen; a smoke detector had fallen from the ceiling and fire extinguishers were empty. Residents had reported these issues to the managing agent but they had not been resolved or picked up on routine visits by the agent. Residents may be exposed to health and safety risks and the Council is not meeting all its statutory duties to inspect.

120 Referral procedures to the two RSL-managed hostels are not effective. All referrals are made via the HAS, which has not always used referral forms although this has recently improved. Void levels across the two hostels consistently run at 20 per cent which has resulted in a loss of £60,000 in rental income over the life of the two hostels. Valuable temporary accommodation with support is not being fully utilised to the benefit of homeless households.

121 There is a shortage of supported housing in the borough which limits opportunities for people to move on from hostels. Residents in the two RSL-managed hostels who are ready to move on are not able to do so, and some have been there beyond the 6 to 12-month target period. Staff across the service point to a need for more supported housing in general and, in particular, the need for more dedicated housing support at the Boundary Road hostel.

Is the service delivering value for money?

122   In this area weaknesses outweigh strengths. Benchmarking is significantly under developed. Unit costs for homelessness presentations and hostel accommodation are high. There is a clear framework in place for managing value for money (VFM) but the housing advice service action plan has a number of outstanding actions. The Council has increased investment in the service which has helped prevent homelessness but it does not know how this compares with other authorities. The cost per letting of council property compares well and a housing modernisation programme is focused on improving efficiency through investment in ICT and business processes and has already increased efficiency in some areas.

How do costs compare?

123   The services' approach to benchmarking is significantly under developed. There has been limited benchmarking of complaints and homelessness with nearest neighbours but there has not been comprehensive benchmarking of costs and quality for all service areas. Where costs have been compared with other local authorities this has not been used to look at the processes behind the performance outcomes. There is a good understanding of the unit costs of temporary accommodation but not of how they compare with other councils. Because benchmarking results are not being used to inform plans for improvements, opportunities for achieving value for money may be missed.

124   A benchmarking exercise was undertaken but this only involved one neighbouring authority. While it showed that the service is performing better in a number of areas, the Council is not comparing itself with high performing authorities. Without a more comprehensive approach to benchmarking, the Council will not identify many areas for improving VFM.

125   Average costs per hostel unit are very high compared with other local authorities. Costs for hostel accommodation have increased significantly due to an increase in staffing and void levels in the hostels has resulted in a loss of £60,000 rental income over the lifetime of the two RSL managed hostels.

126   Costs per letting compares reasonably well. Using data from a national benchmarking service, the Council was ranked fourth among ten London boroughs in 2004/05 (middle quartile) with a cost per property of £23.23 against a median of £34.14.

127   The Council has a low spend per head for homeless households. Based on CIPFA statistical analysis, spending on homelessness per head was the lowest in 2005/06 which was largely achieved through the reduction in use of bed and breakfast accommodation and greater use of private sector leased property for temporary accommodation.

How is value for money managed?

128　There is a clear framework for managing value for money. An annual efficiency statement sets out key targets across the Council, with an overall efficiency target of 3 per cent for 2007/08. There are value for money (VFM) champions in each department and each service has a VFM action plan which is monitored quarterly. All managers and team leaders have received training in achieving VFM in 2007. The Council monitors progress against efficiency targets through a VFM sub-group of the corporate management team.

129　However, the housing advice service VFM action plan has a number of outstanding actions. It is still to identify how the three per cent annual efficiency savings are to be achieved across the service, identify all unit costs and undertake an analysis of benchmarking data to identify learning from others to inform best practice. The service could potentially achieve greater efficiency savings if the VFM action plan was effectively implemented.

130　Investment in the service has resulted in improvements in service outcomes, but the Council does not know if they are the most cost effective approaches. Expenditure per homeless household increased from £904.45 in 2004/05 to £1,362 in 2006/07 and there has been investment in a range of prevention initiatives such as the rent deposit scheme. Without comprehensive benchmarking the Council doesn't know if this increased expenditure is VFM.

131　The current ICT systems are not fit for purpose and result in a number of inefficiencies. For example, additional expenditure is spent on staff to undertake collation and analyses of performance data, and reports have to be produced manually. Some improvements have recently been made such as the introduction of a new record management system at the end of January 2008 which has improved the processing time for housing applications, but customer and performance information has to be manually collated from different systems. The system also limits the ability to offer more cost effective, web-based services for customers or options such as mobile working which would improve access for customers.

132　Re-let times for empty council property have increased. Void re-let times have increased since March 2007, reaching 37.01 days at September 2007. Inefficient use of council housing stock can increase the reliance on temporary accommodation, increase costs, and lose rental income.

133　The cost of homelessness provision has decreased through reducing the use of bed and breakfast accommodation, and increasing the use of private sector landlords. In 2006/07 this saved £70,000. The current efficiency target of £100,000 for the homelessness service is on target for the year-end through increased income from temporary accommodation.

134　Some efficiency savings have been made through competitive tendering. The interpreting and translation services were subject to tender which resulted in a faster service for customers and a saving of £30,000 per year in retainer fees. Competitive tendering can ensure cost effectiveness and improved services for customers.

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135   The Council has successfully kept rents paid to agents for private sector leased (PSL) properties at the same level since 2002, and there is a low level of voids in PSL properties (around one per cent). PSL property is being effectively and efficiently utilised.

136   Partnership working with other agencies has enhanced value for money through contributing to the reduction in homelessness. For example, through working with the East London housing partnership on overcrowding and under occupation; additional CLG funds to target prevention, and working with a mediation service to prevent youth homelessness.

137   Corporately, the Council has achieved efficiency gains, and it achieved level 3 for VFM in its 2007 CPA[11] assessment for the use of resources. Corporate efficiency gains through for example, reviews of back office functions such as printing services will have brought other cost savings to the service.

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[11] CPA is a corporate performance assessment, which is undertaken by the Audit Commission.

What are the prospects for improvement to the service?

What is the service track record in delivering improvement?

138   This is an area where strengths outweigh weaknesses. The Council has successfully implemented a restructuring of the service resulting in a significant change in focus from managing homelessness to preventing it. A number of improvements over the past three years have directly benefited service users. There has also been a general improvement in performance indicators. However, not all targets have been met and the number of households in temporary accommodation has not yet declined below the 2004 baseline figure.

139   In several key areas the service has effectively implemented change that has led to improvements in service delivery. In particular, refurbished hostel accommodation has resulted in a high quality of provision, underpinned by strong support services (see 'Temporary Accommodation', above). This has directly benefited service users and has helped to prevent repeat homelessness.

140   There has been a good track record in developing prevention initiatives. In particular, the rent deposit scheme, the sanctuary scheme and the youth out reach work (see 'Housing advice, homelessness prevention and options services', above). These initiatives are helping to prevent homelessness.

141   There has been a significant improvement in homelessness-related Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) over the past three years. The Council's performance is among the top 25 per cent of councils for time spent in bed and breakfasts; the number of families in hostel accommodation; homelessness prevention; number of rough sleepers and level of repeat homelessness. However, performance in respect to the percentage change in the number of families in temporary accommodation is poor and among the bottom 25 per cent (see Appendix 1 - Performance Indicators). The Council's focus on prevention is having a positive impact on homelessness.

142   The key objectives of the homelessness strategy 2003/08 have been delivered, for example, a 5 per cent reduction year-on-year in homelessness. Performance on both the number of acceptances and the number of preventions has improved with an overall reduction in the number of homelessness acceptance by more than 50 per cent in the past three years and a reduction from 49 per cent to 17 per cent for 16 to 18 year olds.

143   The Council has ended the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for families with children other than in emergency situations and has effectively eradicated rough sleeping and repeat homelessness.

144   Nearly all of the relevant housing advice service targets in the housing strategy 2007/10 have been met, including the introduction of a rent deposit scheme, and the establishment of a private landlords' forum. The development of a 118-unit foyer scheme for 16 to 24 years olds is on site and on schedule and the number of sanctuary schemes for victims of domestic violence has been exceeded. Plans to develop nine more domestic violence refuge units are, however, behind schedule which may result in an inadequate level of provision.

145   Working with a specialist RSL, 71 units of high quality supported accommodation are being provided to homeless households as well as through the Councils own hostel which has recently been refurbished.

146   The introduction of a One Stop Shop and the Barking and Dagenham Direct call centre has significantly improved access for customers and another one is planned for Dagenham at the end of 2009. The joint location of services such as health, housing benefit and the learning centre has enhanced service delivery for the customer.

147   The Council has delivered on most of its allocations policy objectives. The introduction of choice-based lettings has increased choice for applicants although the number of direct lets is still relatively high. Applicants receive good quality information about the properties available. However, many customers still do not fully understand the process and how to bid effectively and the Council is not meeting its own voids target to efficiently let its stock.

148   Despite investment at corporate and service level in delivering good customer care this has not been fully effective with variable standards of customer care being demonstrated in the housing advice service.

149   A number of targets have not been met, for example:

- the number of homeless households and vulnerable single people in temporary accommodation has increased;

- a plan to develop a service user network has not been implemented;

- the plan to bring five empty properties back in to use per year;

- response times for complaints;

- service standards have not been consistently met

- a target on the effectiveness of services to help victims of domestic violence has not been met; and

- the housing advice service VFM action plan has a number of outstanding targets and actions.

150   There are a number of issues relating to allocations and lettings where improvements have not been delivered:

- choice has not been maximised as direct offers have been high;

- the housing register has not been kept under regular review, but plans are in place to review it in July 2008;

- the level of lettings to homeless households has been comparatively low; and

- re-let times for empty council property have increased.

151   At a corporate level, there is a clear commitment and leadership on diversity, and a clear framework for managing value for money; but, there is a limited track record of effective application of these at the service level, that would have a positive impact for service users.

How well does the service manage performance?

152   This is an area where weaknesses outweigh the strengths. Although there is a clear corporate planning framework, at a service level homelessness action planning is not robust; action plans are not SMART[12] and performance management reports, though regular, are weak and not clear. There is a lack of clarity among officers about the status of the homelessness strategy and action plan. Service users are not engaged in performance planning and benchmarking is not fully developed. However, the Council does learn from other authorities and there are good working relationships between departments and between officers and members. Complaints are used to improve service delivery and there are clear arrangements in place for managing staff performance.

153   The strategic approach to addressing homelessness is unclear. The status and inter-relationship of the 2003/08 and the 2006/10 homelessness strategies; the 2008/10 homelessness strategy action plan and the housing strategy 2007/10 are not clearly understood by key managers, staff, or partners. The Council states that the 2006/10 homelessness strategy superseded the 2003/08 homelessness strategy and has been used as the working strategy since 2006, but this is not published in accordance with statutory requirements. The 2006/10 strategy was not referred to by housing advice staff and managers during the inspection nor in the Councils self-assessment; staff stated that the strategy had been incorporated in to the housing strategy. Without a clear and published homelessness strategy, the Council, partners and service users cannot be clear what the Council is aiming to achieve.

154   Improvement planning for homelessness and housing advice services has not been robust. The 2003/08 homelessness strategy had action plans for 2003/04 to 2005/06, but there was no plan for 2006/08. A new action plan was adopted for 2008/10. The action plans are not SMART: targets and milestones are unclear and not all actions in the strategy are included in the action plan, such as the development of a user network and the need for suitable temporary accommodation for people with disabilities. Annual reviews of the homelessness strategy 2003/08 have not been carried out and published.

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[12] SMART plans have objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, resourced and timed.

155 Performance monitoring structures are in place but they lack user involvement. Performance is monitored through the housing and decent homes sub group, the homelessness forum, the departmental management team, and the housing improvement board but none of these involve service users. Progress against the housing improvement plan, KPI data, service standards and more recently customer satisfaction surveys are reported on but reporting is not comprehensive; key aspects of the service are omitted such as satisfaction with temporary accommodation. There is limited opportunity for service users or stakeholders to influence targets and measure performance.

156 The housing service improvement plan is not SMART and cannot adequately measure performance. Apart from timescales there are few SMART objectives and targets against which to assess performance, and it is not focused on outcomes for residents. For example, one target is to increase the transparency of the choice-based lettings system, but there are no performance measures or targets in place. Without a SMART service improvement plan the service cannot demonstrate whether it is delivering its stated aims.

157 There are a number of policy commitments that have not been delivered. For example, the commitment to conduct annual reviews of the housing register in the allocations policy and the commitment in the homelessness strategy to annual reviews.

158 Monitoring of private sector leased properties is not robust. There are no regular meetings with the 12 agents of the 700 private sector leased properties. Agents are required to issue welcome packs and visit residents every four to six weeks, but there is no system to check that this is happening.

159 The level of awareness of day to day performance issues and how the service is experienced by its customers and others is low. For example, inspectors found significant levels of dissatisfaction with the location of John Smith House, variable levels of customer care when interviewing customers, dissatisfaction with quality of temporary accommodation, and concerns from some partners about approaches to diversity and customer care issues, of which there was no or low levels of awareness. Recent initiatives have been introduced such as monthly satisfaction exit surveys at John Smith House and Tell Us feedback forms, but without more systematic engagement of service users the Council may not be effectively targeting its efforts to improve the service.

160 The Council learns from other high performing authorities, although more could be done in this area. Officers and managers have visited another London borough to learn about their youth homelessness service, which informed the development of the youth outreach work at East Street. Officers also visited another borough when developing the rent deposit scheme. The contact centre has looked at other public and private services for examples of good practice. The Council also liaises regularly with CLG specialists to learn from good practice in homelessness prevention.

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

161   The service is using complaints to improve service delivery. There are well publicised systems for service-users to submit compliments, complaints and suggestions such as the corporate 'Tell Us' campaign, as well as via the complaints procedure. Issues identified from complaints are raised with individual officers and as general learning points in team meetings. For example, complaints from private sector leased properties have been used to identify problems with particular letting agents. Customers can see that their feedback is responded to effectively.

162   There are service level agreements in place to clarify and regulate arrangements with key partners. SLAs are in place with the Barking and Dagenham Direct call centre which is monitored through a regular liaison meeting; the East London Lettings Agency for the management of choice-based lettings and with RSL partners on the provision of temporary supported accommodation. Nomination agreements are also in place with RSL partners. SLAs set out responsibilities and targets and help to manage performance.

163   There are effective inter departmental working relationships. A joint services group meets which allows for discussion about void management and tenancy allocations. Early notification of void property to the allocations team allows for early viewing of properties. Good inter-departmental working results in a more effective service for customers.

164   There are good working relationships between officers and key members. Senior officers meet regularly with executive and shadow portfolio members and have an open and professional relationship. All councillors are briefed on current homelessness issues and there is a good level of awareness and commitment to service improvement among key councillors. Councillors from the majority and opposition parties have the opportunity to meet regularly with senior officers to discuss their issues and concerns.

165   A system of cross-party scrutiny panels involving backbench and opposition councillors scrutinise specific services, and can set up panels around specific issues of concern and question executive members and officers. There is a members' group that scrutinises complaints which resulted in an amendment to the allocations policy to include some award of priority for local connection.

166   There is a good level of commitment and leadership among key elected members in respect to diversity and community cohesion issues. There are specific diversity champions for issues relating to disability, gender, race and sexuality. Members have been actively involved at sub regional level to look at issues such as provision for victims of domestic violence, and violence within same-sex couples, and have supported community cohesion initiatives such as Unity Week.

167   The Council has shown leadership in responding to concerns about the use and allocation of housing. A 'myth busting' campaign aims to raise greater awareness and understanding of how housing resources are allocated. Regular information is provided through the *Spotlight* magazine to explain how homes are allocated, senior officers give presentations to various community groups and meetings and councillors have engaged other community leaders.

168 Arrangements for managing staff performance are generally good. Staff receive regular supervision meetings and annual appraisal reviews. Individual staff objectives and targets link back in to the service plan targets. Call centre operatives receive twice daily updates on performance against call handling targets and daily updates on individual performance.

169 Quality assurance mechanisms are used to check performance in respect to internal processes, but less for customer outcomes. Managers randomly sample case files; a second officer checks all awards of preferences in the allocations system and a manager signs off all homelessness decisions. Call centre managers regularly monitor calls and use the findings to identify training needs. However, there are no quality assurance checks on for example the quality of private sector and bed and breakfast accommodation.

170 All employees and members are required to adhere to a code of conduct which includes the requirement to disclose any interests which may conflict with the Councils' interests in a register, although some senior staff were unaware of the register so it may not be being regularly reviewed and updated.

171 There are effective mechanisms in place for staff to contribute to the development of policy and practice, although they have less involvement in the development of strategies. Staff are involved in developing the service through a well developed staff suggestion scheme with related staff awards, team meetings, briefings and working groups. There was some staff involvement in the development of the 2008/10 homelessness action plan. Staff involvement maximises their expertise and experience to bring improvements to services.

Does the service have the capacity to improve?

172 This is an area where strengths outweigh weaknesses. There is significant internal investment and re-investment of efficiency savings, including a housing modernisation programme which will increase staff competencies and performance management. There are plans in place to extend the service and effective partnerships to increase capacity and the Council has brought in significant external funding. Training for staff and members is widely available but its effectiveness is not always clear. There are some capacity issues around staffing levels particularly in the private sector team and in respect to adequate office space.

173 Significant investment is being made into the service through the housing modernisation programme. The programme takes a holistic approach to change management and has challenging and ambitious plans to deliver improvements through business review, engaging customers, building staff skills and competencies, improving the IT infrastructure and achieving a cultural shift. £7 million over five years has been committed to deliver the programme which is currently on target and which has a planned return on investment of £8 million over five years. The programme is managed via the housing modernisation board which receives monthly progress reports against the programme implementation document.

174   New ICT systems will be introduced across the service by the end of 2009 and some improvements have already been implemented. For example, a new system has allowed for the electronic recording and management of all documentation received by the service. This has lead to improvements for customers such as faster processing of housing application forms. The programme will also allow for an online housing applications and other web-based services, and will increase staff capacity by enabling mobile working.

175   External funding and resources have been secured. £14 million Housing Corporation funding was secured for the foyer development; the annual CLG grant has increased by £40,000 in addition to a one off £40,000 to undertake a tenancy audit of private sector leased properties. £100,000 has been allocated under the East London housing partnership to work on under occupation and over crowding. A scheme worth £70,000 in partnership with the youth offending team is employing young offenders to decorate the hostel and includes an eight-week college course and an apprenticeship with the Councils maintenance contractors. External funding sources increase capacity to deliver services.

176   The new foyer service for young people will increase the Councils effectiveness at preventing youth homelessness. Working in partnership, a 116-unit foyer project will open for 16 to 24 year olds in Barking in November 2008. This will provide accommodation, training and employment and other youth services.

177   Increased investment in the service has brought tangible benefits for service users. £125,000 efficiency savings were re-directed in to staffing resources in the Housing advice service which increased the number of housing options and advice staff to focus on homelessness prevention. £400,000 has been invested in improving communal areas in the Boundary Road hostel. From April 2008 an additional £120,000 will be invested in the rent deposit scheme to support the Councils objectives on the prevention of homelessness.

178   There are plans in place to extend access to advice and choice. For example, there are plans to provide daily advice surgeries for young people from the East Street advice centre from March 2008; to amalgamate the options and prevention roles to promote a more comprehensive approach, to open a second one stop shop in Dagenham at the end of 2009 and to include sheltered housing in the choice-based letting scheme to widen choice for older people.

179   The Council has delivered and has further ambitious plans for housing development. 940 affordable homes have been developed since 2003 and a further 425 affordable new homes are planned by 2010. Subject to mayoral approval 10,800 new homes, including 4,000 affordable homes, are planned for the development of the Barking Riverside. Increasing the supply of affordable housing will contribute to the reduction of housing need and homelessness.

180   There is a comprehensive corporate procurement strategy which the housing advice service adheres to and benefits from corporately procured back office services such as the single point agency contract for employing agency staff.

181   There is generally effective team-working across the service. Managers and staff across the various housing advice teams meet regularly and work closely together; there are joint services meetings to monitor For example, , the void process to identify where improvements can be made. There are plans for job shadowing across the service which will also improve staff understanding and inter departmental working.

182   There is a good level of commitment to and investment in staff and Member training and development. The Council was awarded Investor in People status in 2005. Staff are positive about the opportunities they have for training and development and evaluation of training is followed up at regular intervals to measure how staff perceive the effectiveness of the training on their ability to do their job. Staff have regular briefings on legislation, case law and policy issues Officers were positive about the training options. There is a management development programme in place for middle managers and many Councillors have attended the IDeA leadership academy.

183   The current ICT systems are not fit for purpose. The limited capacity and capability of the current IT system means that a number of stand alone spreadsheets have to be used to produce reliable performance monitoring information and additional staff are required to maintain these. The Council is responding to this through the investment in the modernisation programme as mentioned above.

184   There is limited long term in-depth housing advice casework at present. Some staff have not yet received comprehensive housing advice training and are not able to represent cases in court or staff a court advice scheme.

185   The private sector housing team is not fulfilling some key functions. For example, the team is not carrying out its programme of inspections of bed and breakfast hotels in the borough which is a statutory duty, nor does it carry out inspections of PSL properties unless a tenant makes a complaint. The team is also responsible for managing contractors for the sanctuary scheme works but again is not inspecting works, which are instead signed off by the resident and contractor.

186   The high level of agency staff has now been reduced. There were around 30 agency staff in 2006 out of 80 full-time equivalent posts, but this had reduced to ten in February 2008. The current round of recruitment will result in only having agency staff to cover long term sickness.

187   Sickness levels have increased and are above target. Sickness levels increased from 8.8 days per full-time equivalent employee at 31st March 2007 to 9.8 days in January 2008 (just above the corporate target of 9.5 days). Managers attended 'Improving Attendance workshops' in 2006/07 and there are monthly sickness panel meetings chaired by the Divisional Director of Housing. Increasing sickness levels reduce the capacity of staff teams to deliver services.

188   There are not enough interview rooms at John Smith House. Frontline staff stated that customers sometimes have to wait for an interview room to become available. This was also reflected in the reports from customer satisfaction surveys where customers had commented that interviews should be conducted in a confidential interview room. Staff also stated working space for staff at John Smith House was often inadequate. Inadequate office accommodation impedes effective working.

Appendix 1 – Performance indicators

Table 1   Homelessness and related performance indicators

Indicator	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	Quartile 2006/07
BVPI 183a - average number of weeks in BandB (families)	4 weeks	1 weeks	0 weeks	1st
BVPI 183b - average number of families in hostels	5	1	0	1st
BVPI 203 - percentage change in number of families placed in TA	-15%	-3%	57%	4th
BVPI 213 - cases of homelessness prevented (per 1,000 households)	N/A	6	9	1st
BVPI 214 - cases of repeat homelessness (percentage)	N/A	0%	0%	1st
BVPI 202 - number of rough sleepers	5	1	0	1st
BVPI 225 - action taken against domestic violence (percentage of answers 'yes' to checklist)	N/A	73%	91%	(Quartiles not applied)

Source: Audit Commission and CLG Best Value Performance Indicator data.

Appendix 2 – Reality checks undertaken

1   When we went on-site we carried out a number of different checks, building on the work described above, in order to get a full picture of how good the service is. These on-site reality checks were designed to gather evidence about what it is like to use the service and to see how well it works. Our reality checks included the following.

- Observing reception areas at the housing advice centre, an area housing office and the One Stop Shop.

- Exit interviews with customers at the housing advice centre and area housing office.

- Shadowing calls to Barking and Dagenham Direct Call Centre.

- File checks on allocations, homelessness assessments, complaints and staff appraisals.

- Focus group with residents of temporary accommodation.

- Focus groups with new tenants who had successfully bid for property in the past year.

- Focus groups with frontline staff.

- Focus groups with partner agencies.

- Visits to hostels and supported accommodation.

- Visits to private rented licensed temporary accommodation.

- Telephone calls to customers who had recently made a complaint.

Appendix 3 – Positive practice

'The Commission will identify and promote good practice. Every inspection will look For examples of good practice and innovation, and for creative ways to overcome barriers and resistance to change or make better use of resources.' (Seeing is Believing)

Shall I take My Shoes Off?

1 The Council has produced a quick reference guide for staff on different cultures and faiths and includes information about diet, naming systems, language and issues for home visits such as greetings, dress, gender, times of worship etc.

Talking Heads

2 The housing advice service is working with the youth services to deliver a programme of information in schools delivered by pregnant teenagers to raise understanding of housing issues among younger people and tackle misconceptions about pregnancy and housing allocations.

'Myth Busting' Work

3 In response to a rapidly changing population, the Council has undertaken a range of activities to promote community cohesion, and to provide all sections of the community with useful information about council services and how housing resources are allocated. Regular information is provided through the *Spotlight* magazine; senior officers give presentations to various community groups and meetings, and councillors have engaged other community leaders.

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Housing Advice Service Improvement Plan - Audit Commission Recommendations (2008 - 2009)

(Please note that items detailed in the 'Benefits' column refers to all tasks listed within the relevant recommendation).

Target	Task	Resources	by When	Milestones	Lead Group Manager	Responsible Officer(s)	Source	Evidence	Benefits
R1. Improve access to the service and customer care	Ensure all information (including leaflets and web based) is periodically reviewed and updated	Within HAS allocated to Policy & Reviews Officer	Dec-08	N/A	AB	JB	Audit Commission	Monthly website update 6 monthly leaflet review - April/September	Customers have access to comprehensive and clear information.
	Regularly monitor customer satisfaction with all aspects of the service and using this information to inform plans for improvement	Individual teams in HAS	Dec-08	N/A	AB	TA - DB MCIL - SS HA - JB	Audit Commission	Annual publication of MCIL survey & TA update. Monthly survey of visitors to HAS which will be published quarterly	Customer concerns are addressed in improvement plans. Service delivers consistently high standards of customer care.
	Ensure staff are aware of performance against service standards and know the areas for improvement	HAS Team Leaders	Dec-08	N/A	AB	JB/DB/PF/SS	Audit Commission	Minutes from Monthly Team Meetings & 6 monthly GM Staff Briefing	
	Introduction of more quality assurance systems such as mystery shopping and random checks	HAS Team Leaders Existing MS Contract	Dec-08	N/A	AB	JB/DB/PF/SS & PPP Team	Audit Commission	Quarterly Mystery Shopping Report to HMT	
	Implement plans to involve service users in the development of the service	Existing resources in HAS & HS	Dec-08	N/A	AB/JG	JB/DB/PF/SS/CG	Audit Commission	Service user membership of Homelessness Forum Consultation documents Executive Reports	
	Consult Service users on location of the service	Within Customer Strategy Division	Dec-08	N/A	KML	JOD	Audit Commission	Project Plan	
R2. Improve approach to equality and diversity	Extend diversity monitoring to all service areas and to include faith, sexuality and disability	Supplementary resource being identified	Mar-09	Resource identified	AB	AB	Audit Commission	Revised monitoring arrangements in place	The service will know the profile of its users, better understand their needs and be able to deliver more effective services. Customers will receive a more sensitive service from staff.
	Analyse diversity monitoring data to develop targeted services and to inform a SMART equality and diversity service plan	As above	Mar-09	As above	AB	AB	Audit Commission	Revised Service Plan	
	Review and update approach to conducting equality impact assessments, and involve service users from different communities	Existing with Corporate E&D Group	Mar-09	N/A	JO	JO	Audit Commission	Minutes of meetings. Impact assessment action plans.	
	Refresh staff training on diversity and domestic violence	Existing training resources within Housing Services	Mar-09	N/A	AB	JB/DB/PF/SS	Audit Commission	HAS Training Plan	

Target	Task	Resources	by When	Milestones	Lead Group Manager	Responsible Officer(s)	Source	Evidence	Benefits
	Set diversity objectives for staff as part of the performance and development review process	HAS Management Team	Mar-09	N/A	AB	JB/DB/PF/SS	Audit Commission	At 1:1 's, PDPs and Service Plans	
R3. Improve access to and choice of social rented housing	Involve service users in improving information that explains how the choice based lettings system works	Existing resources in Choice Assessment & Lettings Teams	Dec-08	N/A	AB	SS/PF	Audit Commission	Revised MCIL booklet and website content	Customers will have a greater understanding of how the choice based lettings work. - Vulnerable and homeless applicants are more likely to bid and be successful. - Applicants will have a greater choice of properties to bid for.
	Promote the availability of assisted bidding and extend it to assist people in assessing whether a property is suitable for their needs	Within existing resources	Dec-08	N/A	AB	SS/PF	Audit Commission	Revised allocation policy report to Executive in October 2008	
	Review the categories of applicants who receive direct offers	As above	Dec-08		AB	AB	Audit Commission	As above	
	Target homeless households for support with bidding	Existing Appraisal officers (X2)	Dec-08	Permanent recruitment to these posts	AB	DB	Audit Commission	Increased percentage of lets to homeless via bids	
R4. Maximise the use of available accommodation across all tenures	Review efforts to bring private sector empty property back into use so that it meet its target	Empty Property Officer	Dec-08	Permanent recruitment to this post	AB	JS	Audit Commission	Annual target achieved	Homeless households and customers in housing need will have their needs met more quickly. -
	Working with RSLs to minimise under occupation of supported accommodation	Existing resources within HAS Management Team and Look Ahead Housing Association.	Dec-08	N/A	AB	DB	Audit Commission	Increased occupancy of supported accommodation	More vulnerable homeless people will receive appropriate support.
	Continuing to review each stage of the void management system process, reduce the time it takes to re-let council housing	HMP and relevant Housing Officers	Dec-08	Mapping Workshop of processes to identify gaps resulting in production of vision 'to-be' maps	RW/KM	RW/KM	Audit Commission	Reduction in relet times	- The Council and RSL partners will maximise rental income.
R5. Improve the level and quality of housing advice	Ensure staff training is to a level so that staff can effectively assist with complex needs	Existing training resources within Housing Services	March 2009	Training plan agreed by HMT	AB	JB/DB/PF/SS	Audit Commission	Training evaluation	Customers, particularly those with complex needs, will receive appropriate and high quality advice and support. -
	Review staffing arrangements and levels so that customers can receive housing options and advice interviews quickly	Group Manager of HAS	March 2009	N/A	AB	AB	Audit Commission	Outcomes and recommendations from service reviews	Customers threatened with homelessness, including ex-offenders, are less likely to become homeless.

Target	Task	Resources	by When	Milestones	Lead Group Manager	Responsible Officer(s)	Source	Evidence	Benefits
	Review arrangements for assessing the housing needs of offenders who may be eligible for release	Existing resources in HAS, Probation & YO Services	March 2009	N/A	AB	AB/DH	Audit Commission	Protocols for referrals for offenders in place	
	Improve the standard of case file management	HMP	March 2009	N/A	AB/JA	PF/VW	Audit Commission	Completion of 'back scanning' on to EDMS (Anite)	
R6. Strengthen strategic approach to managing homelessness	Ensure the homelessness strategy and action plan are thoroughly reviewed and agreed with a wide range of stakeholders and service users, and that it is then published	Housing Strategy	Dec-08	N/A	JG	CG	Audit Commission	Strategy published - 31/7/08. Consultation arrangements included in development plan.	LBBD's plans are more likely to address the needs of homeless households. Priorities and resources will be more effectively targeted to prevent and reduce homelessness.
	produce SMART action plans to deliver the strategy	HAS & HS	Dec-08	N/A	AB/JG	AB/JG	Audit Commission	Strategy includes smart action plan.	
	Extend the homelessness forum membership to include service users and increase participation levels	Housing Strategy	Dec-08	N/A	AB/JG	CG	Audit Commission	Homeless Forum relaunched with new constitution	
	Increase the opportunity for stakeholder scrutiny through reviewing the chairing of the forum and ensuring that clear and regular written progress reports against the strategy action plans are provided	As above	Dec-08	N/A	AB/JG	CG	Audit Commission	As above and constitution will require third party chair on a rotating basis	
R7. Develop strategic approach to achieving value for money	Identify all unit costs of the service, and benchmark these against others	Existing resources and Housemark and sub-regional homeless group	Dec-08	N/A	AB/AMT	AB/AMT	Audit Commission	Annual Report to DMT, fed into Service Planning and BSC	Services will improve as the service learns more from higher performers.
	Undertake an analysis of benchmarking data to learn from the practice of high performers	As above	Dec-08	N/A	AB/AMT	AB/AMT	Audit Commission	As above	The service will maximise outputs from partnership arrangements.
	Compare the costs and outcomes of the various prevention initiatives with those of other local authorities and other relevant organisations	As above	Dec-08	N/A	AB/AMT	AB/AMT	Audit Commission	As above	Opportunities for efficiency savings will increase.

Key: -

AB - Anne Baldock	HAS - Housing Advice Service	JOD - Jide Olagundoye	RW - Robert W Wood
AMT - Anne-Marie Trimby	HMP - Housing Modernisation Program	KM - Kim Morgan	SS - Souman Sen
CG - Christianah George	HMT - Housing Management Team	KML - Katherine Maddock-Lyon	TA - Temporary Accommodation
DB - Doug Bannister	HS - Housing Strategy	MCIL - More Choice in Lettings	VW - Vincent Waddams
DH - Dan Hales	JB - Jan Boulton	MS - Mystery Shopping	
GM - Group Manager	JG - James Goddard	PF - Pat Flood	

Target	Task	Resources	by When	Milestones	Lead Group Manager	Responsible Officer(s)	Source	Evidence	Benefits
HA - Housing advice	JO - James Oaten	PPP - Performance, Planning & Program							

EXECUTIVE

15 JULY 2008

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Title: National Memorial to the Evacuation Appeal Fund	**For Decision**
Summary: A National Memorial Fund has been launched by the Evacuees Reunion Association. The Association is seeking to create a memorial to the World War II evacuation that will be recognised by future generations. Support for this memorial is proposed, in light of the significant numbers of Barking and Dagenham residents who were affected by the evacuation. **Wards Affected:** All	
Recommendation(s) The Executive is asked to agree a donation of £1,000 to the Evacuees Reunion Association Memorial Fund.	
Reason(s) To assist the Council in achieving its Community Priority 'Raising General Pride in the Borough'.	
Implications: **Financial:** This report proposes the donation of £1,000 to the Evacuees Reunion Association Memorial Fund. This amount can be met within existing resources. **Legal:** The Local Government Act 2000 section 2 empowers a local authority to take measures to promote the social well-being of the community. This initiative is set to achieve that aim by forming part of an ongoing programme of celebration and understanding of the historical experiences of older members of the community. Facilitating the ability to recall early experiences is known to be of assistance in strengthening memory and in addition it establishes greater understanding between generations, which is an important element of cementing community cohesion. **Risk Management:** No specific implications **Social Inclusion and Diversity:** Heritage Services has previously developed a very successful exhibition relating to evacuees from the borough, material from which will be used in the redeveloped Valence House Museum. The similarities between the experiences of evacuees and people today who have newly arrived in the borough from overseas, proved to be a powerful way of demonstrating commonalities between established and new communities in the borough. Publicity for this Memorial through the Museum's new exhibitions, and through work with schools will offer further potential to promote these commonalities, and hence support community cohesion.	

Crime and Disorder:
No specific implications

Options Appraisal:
The alternative option to that proposed in this report would be not to make a donation to the ERA Memorial Fund. Given the relatively small nature of the donation, it is considered that this would mean a lost opportunity to commemorate a period of history with significance for many of the borough's residents, and to make linkages between the Memorial and activities and exhibits in the borough.

Contact Officer: Heather Wills	Title: Head of Community Services Libraries and Heritage	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 2786 Fax: 020 8227 2241 E-mail: heather.wills@lbbd.gov.uk

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 The British evacuation of its civilians, especially children, during the Second World War, is recognised as having been the greatest social and family upheaval ever experienced in this country. With the approach of war, Barking was included in the Government Evacuation Scheme, but neighbouring Dagenham was not included.

1.2 Barking had plenty of time to prepare in the lead up to the evacuation. Many schools carried out full dress rehearsals, and some even insisted on giving the children medical inspections before they left. Evacuation began on 2nd September 1939, only 24 hours before war was declared. Schools journeyed from Upney and Barking railway stations to London for a transfer to the Somerset countryside. In total 15,000 children and pregnant women were evacuated from Barking.

1.3 After many protests at being excluded from the evacuation scheme, Dagenham was declared an evacuation area on 13th June 1939. Just 8 weeks later, and with no time for rehearsals, the Dagenham evacuees boarded paddle steamers at Ford's jetty and were transported to the East Coast Ports of Lowestoft, Felixstowe, and Yarmouth. By 3rd September 1939 17,000 adults and children had been evacuated. The reception areas were equally unprepared and evacuees often had to sleep on straw in cinemas and schools. They were then hurriedly dispersed throughout the countryside without proper records being kept of their location. Dagenham was forced to send teachers to every village in the area to find the lost evacuees

1.4 Between 1939 and 1940 there were few air raids, and many parents brought their children home. By October 1942 the systematic evacuation of children from Barking and Dagenham had stopped. However, the dangers brought by the start of the Blitz in London, and the creation of the new V1 and V2 rockets, led to a second phase of evacuation in June 1944. This time all the children, between the ages of 5 and 16, were sent inland. Special trains were laid on to take them to billets in the Midlands and the North of England.

1.5 Some evacuees were away for many years: others only for a short time. Some could never go home: perhaps because of the war they no longer had a home or parents to return to. Others did not survive the war, either through enemy action,

accidents or illness. Many are buried in the reception areas to which they were sent.

1.6   When the war in Europe came to an end in May 1945, the thoughts of people in Barking & Dagenham turned towards welcoming their evacuated children back home. But while the end of the war officially brought to a close the evacuation scheme, for many, its effects will remain with them for the rest of their lives.

2.   A National Memorial to the Evacuation of British Children in the Second World War

2.1   The Evacuees Reunion Association (ERA) was founded in 1996, with the support of the Imperial War Museum, to ensure that the true story of the evacuation would become better known and recorded for future generations. It is a non-profit making registered charity.

2.2   The Evacuees Reunion Association intends to erect a permanent memorial to the evacuation that will be recognised by generations to come. This will complement memorials such as the Cenotaph, and those which commemorate the Battle of Britain pilots, and 'Women in War'. It is aimed that schoolchildren from across the UK and beyond will visit the memorial when learning about the Second World War- in addition to thousands of teachers, historians, students, tourists and the general public. The Association is seeking to locate the memorial close to a museum that portrays British life during the Second World War, and draws large numbers of visitors interested in that part of the nation's history.

2.3   The artist and sculptor, Maurice Blik, has been commissioned to create a design for the proposed monument, which can be seen at www.evacuees.org.uk/memorial/index.asp

2.4   In view of the significant numbers of residents from Barking and Dagenham who were affected by the evacuation, it is proposed to make a donation of £1,000 to the ERA Memorial Fund.

3.   Implications

3.1   There is now a fitting opportunity to achieve what is perhaps overdue recognition of the different experiences and contributions made by the people of the borough during the Second World War.

3.2   Once the Memorial is installed, there will be potential to make linkages between the curriculum studied in the borough's schools and the Memorial. This will strengthen the significant work already being delivered by schools and the Museum working in partnership, through which children study the impact of the war on Barking and Dagenham.

3.3   As part of the redevelopment of Valence House Museum, one of the new galleries in the exhibition will include artefacts and information relating to evacuation, drawing on a significant collection of oral histories already collected from borough residents

who were evacuees. Once the Museum re-opens in Spring 2010, there will be the opportunity to promote the Memorial to its visitors.

3.4 The combination of these linked measures will support greater intergenerational contact and therefore will make a significant contribution to community cohesion.

3.5 The Divisional Director of Corporate Finance has identified that £1,000 can be identified as a contribution from the borough of Barking and Dagenham to the Memorial Fund.

4. Consultees

4.1 The following were consulted in the preparation of this report:

Cllr Fairbrass, Leader
Cllr Little, Portfolio Holder for Culture
Paul Feild Corporate Legal Services
Head of Quality & Schools Improvement
Divisional Director of Corporate Finance

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:
- 'A national memorial to the evacuation of British children in the second world war', Evacuees Reunion Association, 2008
- www.evacuees.org.uk/memorial/index.asp

THE EXECUTIVE

15 JULY 2008

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Title: Primary Capital Programme (PCP) Strategy for Change	For Decision

Summary:

This is a Government initiative to provide funding to invest in the Borough's primary schools, which will enhance the building stock and ICT investment providing the Council can demonstrate that outcomes will support improved learning environments and opportunities for the young people of the Borough.

The first activity on this pathway is to submit to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) a Strategy for Change which has to be agreed with a range of interested parties.

Wards Affected:

All Wards

Recommendations:

The Executive is recommended to agree:

(i) The Primary Strategy for Change document attached to this report;

(ii) The various funding streams to secure value for money and best outcomes for projects;

(iii) The provisional priority list of projects as set out in the document, which will be subject to annual review; and

(iv) The procurement route as set out in the 'Primary Capital Programme - Strategy for Change' document appended to the report.

Reasons:

In order to assist the Council to achieve its Community Priority "Better Education and Learning for all".

Implications:

Financial:

The project would be supported by grant funding from the DCSF based on the priorities for investment which the Council identifies in both community and voluntary aided schools. The funding is expected to be £3.74m in 2009/10, £6.12m in 2010/11, and this funding stream will then continue for a further 12 years. Details of future years' funding will be made known by DCSF as spending reviews of Government intentions are carried out. It has been indicated that where there are areas of deprivation, then allocations to local authorities could be higher. This should apply to Barking and Dagenham. Whilst there is no expectation that the Council will invest additional funding in the project, it is expected that we will maximise investment at individual school locations by joining up funding streams.

Legal:

There are no particular legal aspects which need to be considered at this time. If there are specific school reorganisation issues which require statutory consultation and a

separate decision, then this will be reported on an individual basis to the Executive.

Risk Management:
The risk to the Council is in managing the priorities identified which should be supported by this investment, as the intention would be to ensure that the maximum number of schools benefit.

Social Inclusion and Diversity:
As part of the investment proposals, it is intended to consider all Voluntary Aided and Community Schools equally in determining priorities. The programme requires that VA schools have to contribute 10% of project costs from external costs.

Part of the priorities for investment will include ensuring that buildings support inclusion and, where appropriate, comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Crime and Disorder:
There are no specific issues regarding crime and disorder. Where appropriate, the services of security advisers will be used to help design out potential for crime.

Options Appraisal:
A requirement exists for each Local Authority with responsibility for primary education to produce a Strategy for Change document.

Mike Freeman	Group Manager Asset Management & Capital	Tel: 020 8227 3492 Fax: 020 8227 3148 E-mail: mike.freeman@lbbd.gov.uk

1   Introduction and Background

1.1   The concept of the Primary Capital Programme (PCP) was originally announced in the then Chancellor's (Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP) Budget Speech in 2005.   It has taken some time to be devised as a programme for local authorities to be involved with and an extensive consultation exercise has evolved through DCSF.

1.2   This process has resulted in pathfinder authorities (23 in total) submitting proposals for consideration by DCSF in 2007 and subsequently having to submit a Primary Strategy for Change (PSfC). All other local authorities are now being invited to join the programme.

2   Programme Vision and Process

2.1   The objective of the programme is :

- for Primary Schools to be fully equipped for 21st Century learning
- to be at the heart of the community
- for Children's Services to be in reach of every family
- to rebuild, remodel or refurbish at least half of primary schools
- to target to address deprivation in every authority
- to responding to population changes

2.2   The scope and timetable are as follows:

- Funding starts in 2008 and runs for around 15 years, subject to future public spending decisions
- Year 1 funding for regional pilots
- All local authorities benefit from year 2
- Primary, middle-deemed primary and primary-age special schools eligible
- Schools not receiving extra investment continue to receive annual devolved formula capital

2.3   The envisaged process which the DCSF is using is:

- LA needs to prepare a Primary Strategy for Change
- Consult on its proposals
- Submit them for DCSF's approval
- Subject to outcome, begin the design and procurement process

3   Funding

3.1   At a national level, the Government intends to commit £150m as an extra resource in 2008/09 and this will be distributed to pathfinder authorities.   From 2009/10 the investment rises to £500m when all local authorities are expected to benefit.

3.2   The allocation of resources is to be by simple formula, recognising pupil numbers and deprivation.   Barking and Dagenham's indicative allocation is:

2009/10   £3,740,824
2010/11   £6,118,824

3.3   The expectation is that there will be added impact to these funds by joining up other funding streams, both from DCSF and from other Government Department sources and any local resources.

3.4   The programme is expected to continue for 14 years, but is subject to Government spending reviews.

4   Developing a Primary Strategy for Change

4.1   In considering this issue, the Children's Services Department has taken on board the guidance issued by the DCSF and the model which they have suggested will need to be followed:

4.2   This will include the following strategic objectives:

- Securing the well-being and health of children and young people
- Safeguarding the young and vulnerable
- Achieving world class standard in education
- Closing the gap in educational achievement for children from disadvantaged families
- Ensuring young people are participating and achieving their potential (to 18 and beyond)
- Keeping children and young people on the road to success

4.3   The intention of this investment is to mirror the investment in the Borough's primary schools to that which BSF will bring to the secondary schools. In particular, the objective will be to support educational transformation and:

  • Deliver high standards in world class schools
  • Narrow achievement gaps and tackle the effect of poverty and disadvantage
  • Enhance school diversity and parental choice
  • Increase access to community services delivered by and through primary schools
  • Deliver creative, flexible designs supporting the best thinking on teaching and learning
  • Secure effective use of new technologies
  • Produce places for learning that are exciting, flexible, healthy, safe, secure and environmentally sustainable

5   Consultation

5.1   Consultation on the attached document, and this report, has been undertaken with the following:

        Cllr C Fairbrass – Leader of the Council
        Cllr J Alexander – Lead Member for Children's Services
        Diocese of Brentwood
        Diocese of Chelmsford
        Schools
        Chairs of Governors
        Parents Forum
        PCT
        Joe Chesterton – Divisional Director of Corporate Finance
        Robin Hanton – Group Manager – Corporate/Legal

6   Background Papers

6.1   The following documents have been taken into consideration in developing this report and the Primary Strategy for Change:

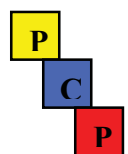 ▪ DCSF Publication – Primary Strategy for Change.

Children's Services

Every Child Matters
Primary Capital Programme

Strategy for Change

16 June 2008

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Contents

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Section 1:   The local perspective

The vision and mission of the Local Authority

We seek to help all children and young people to:

- reach or exceed national by age 11 as a crucial step on the path to success;;
- achieve excellence in their own chosen areas of intensive interest through personalised approaches to learning;
- become safe, secure, and confident in their community, maintain physical and mental health and well-being, and become good citizens;
- receive a unified upbringing through well coordinated services which communicate well with each other;
- acquire linguistic capital, so they can hold their own alongside children and young people everywhere;
- acquire social capital, so they know with whom and with what to engage, and what to avoid, and so maximise their life chances;
- achieve the necessary skills, competencies, qualifications and working habits to enjoy an active and productive working life;
- enjoy good home learning environments.

The aims of this strategy are firmly rooted in the vision set out in the Children's Plan which is fully endorsed and supported by the LA.

A brief description of the area, its people and its primary schools

Barking and Dagenham is located in East London at the heart of the Thames Gateway, approximately 11 miles from central London. The population of some 170,000 is rising rapidly. Thames Gateway development will bring at least 11,000 new homes within the next decade as part of the Barking Riverside development. The proportion of the existing population drawn from minority ethnic groups is expanding more rapidly than anywhere else in the country. A key imperative is therefore to promote community cohesion by helping children to understand others and value diversity.

The borough has forty-eight primary schools. All infant schools and primary schools have an attached nursery, and the fourteen children's centres are either on school sites, or very near to them. There are two large Church of England schools and five Catholic schools. Most of the schools are of above-average size. The smallest, which are generally in least suitable accommodation, are Catholic schools. Seven Primary Additional Resource Provisions are attached to mainstream schools catering for a range of special needs. There is one all-age special school. Schools have a very low number of surplus places owing to a rapidly increasing population. The pressure on places, particularly in the Barking area, is of concern.

Our primary schools generally produce educational standards close to national averages and above those of statistical neighbours. This is achieved in the context of a more-or-less uniformly deprived area. We have had some success in narrowing the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers.

The majority of buildings date back to the early 1930s. They are generally well-maintained. Classrooms are often too small for modern requirements. Few schools have adequate space for specialist teaching and small group work. External spaces are often limited; surfaces are unvaried and some provision for Foundation Stage classes is unimaginative. ICT systems are generally good but the underlying infrastructure does not meet the specification required in the Output Specification for the secondary Building Schools for the Future Programme.

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Section 2:   Baseline analysis

Standards, buildings and ICT

Standards and achievement

Barking and Dagenham Local Authority has worked closely in partnership with all its primary schools to raise standards and the quality of provision for all its pupils. This has been successful and is seen in a substantial improvement in results of 11 year olds since the introduction of national testing. The Local Authority has had a longstanding commitment to narrowing the achievement gap and has met with success in doing so. However, still more needs to be done to raise aspirations, particularly of white working class boys and girls.

There has been a good trajectory of improvement over a substantial period. In 2007 very good improvements were made in the Foundation Stage, in Key Stage 1 writing and mathematics and in level 3 results generally. Lord Andrew Adonis, parliamentary under secretary of state for schools and learning wrote: 'Your combined results in English and mathematics Key Stage 2 … are amongst the most improved this year.'

The overall attainment of children on entry to nursery is well below the average. Progress made across Key Stage 1 is good, leading to performance at the end of Key Stage 1 which is close to the national average at threshold levels. At Key Stage 2 results in English have risen from 71% at level 4+ in 2003 to 77% in 2007, closing the gap on the national average over that period. However, overall attainment in English is in the bottom quartile nationally and still needs improvement. Results in mathematics over the same period have risen from 69% to 76% and are satisfactory. The challenge remains to meet and exceed the national average.

Three schools currently have Key Stage 2 results at level 4+ below the 65% floor target in English and mathematics. In most cases, these difficulties are transitory. However, where weak performance is of longstanding, robust measures are taken under School Improvement Service procedures and these have met with success in particular schools. Significant pressure is used to secure improvement and approaches over holding individual schools and teachers to account are being used with rigour. The Local Authority works in strong partnership with the National Strategy, City Challenge, and other external providers to support school facing the greatest challenge, and those with weak performance. It has embraced the powers in the 2006 Act, including the opportunities provided by federations and the use of executive headteachers.

Well over half our primary phase schools, inspected since the introduction of the current framework in 2005, have been judged good or better by Ofsted. The remainder have been judged satisfactory. There are currently no schools in special measures or with a notice to improve.

The past five years have seen a dramatic rise in pupils from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds. An increasing number of these pupils have English as an additional language. This provides a new challenge for schools but BME pupils generally do well once they are settled in the area. Increased mobility and an increase in the numbers of troubled children, places some schools under strain, particularly where facilities for small group withdrawal and meetings with parents are inadequate.

The growing school population in Barking and Dagenham has placed considerable strains on schools; too many pupils now have to travel significant distances to access a place. The older buildings, which are mainly situated in the west and central parts of the borough sometimes lack the full range of specialist facilities, including libraries, ICT suites, creative development spaces and small teaching rooms. Some desirable aspects of personalisation therefore remain a challenge.

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Provision for ICT is generally good. Most schools have modern ICT suites and multimedia equipment in all or most classrooms. As part of the Primary Capital Programme we intend to develop the core infrastructure provision to match the standards and expectations of the Building Schools for the Future IT Managed Service. Significant spending on hardware, partly arising from the £13m Testbed project, now raises some issues of sustainability, which will be tackled through a replacement profile which is being developed for all schools.

Location, capacity, accessibility and school travel

This is a small borough, 5 miles across east to west and 7 miles from north to south. The original design of the borough ensured a good supply of accessible local schools. A good transport system is available on buses and underground. Throughout the borough schools remain accessible, except in the extremes of the area where transport is less available or where major roads dissect the area. Car ownership is relatively low. Faith schools are popular and some offer places to significant numbers of pupils from outside the borough. However, unpredicted population growth means school places are now under significant pressure in schools of all types. Until recently, the percentage of parents being allocated their first choice of school was above the London average. However, more recently, it has been necessary to allocated places some distance from children's homes. In the context of the poverty of this area, this makes getting to school challenging for some families. Anecdotal information from headteachers shows that there is some negative effect on attendance and punctuality.

All the Borough's schools have worked with the Borough Road Safety Team to develop a School Travel Plan, focusing on safe and green policies. Where local places are available, this works well.

The appropriateness of internal and external spaces to promote personalised learning and school management

Schools were mainly built in the 1920s and 1930s to service the housing built at that time. As a consequence the great majority reflect a time when the curriculum was much more restricted and there was no real demand for personalisation. Internal spaces in the great majority of schools are no more than adequate; despite much creativity of approach, classrooms are cramped and inflexible. There is a shortage of small rooms for consultation and group withdrawal.

A small number of schools, built more recently, have spacious and flexible teaching spaces and some have been modified to provide more capacity for personalisation. However, a small number of open-plan buildings present serious problems for teaching because of noise and distraction from elsewhere. Recent research into the effects of noise on learning show that much needs to be done to enhance the acoustic properties and soundproofing of learning spaces. This is particularly true in the few remaining open-plan buildings. We shall insist on new designs which allow for calm, quiet and focused teaching.

School offices for management and administration are generally sound and much improvement work has been devoted to this in recent years. In a few schools, the offices are poorly located, for instance in terms of greeting visitors and controlling access. In general, improvement to these areas is made effectively by the schools themselves through projects funded by devolved capital or joint funded projects with the local authority. A small number of buildings remain dull; they fail to value and inspire pupils and staff.

Some schools have introduced exciting play and learning opportunities in the external environment. More work is needed to enhance the quality and attractiveness of spaces for external play and socialisation, for instance in the Foundation Stage.

Where improvements are needed and why

Investment in recent years has focused on the main condition elements to ensure water-tightness and improve thermal performance through roof recovering, and replacement of windows, doors and boilers. This has allowed schools to use devolved capital for internal repairs and

redecoration. The Primary Capital Programme will allow us more scope to address suitability issues. Remodelling will also need investment in on other fundamental issues such as rewiring, replacing heating distribution and improving ICT distribution.

Some work has been undertaken to extend schools to respond to growing demand. This work has generally respected existing structures and has been successful. In the few more modern schools large windows are a problem which is given high priority by pupils.

Enhancing teaching and learning through the use of technology

Most schools are already well equipped with a wide range of technology, ranging from sophisticated multi-media classroom demonstration equipment, including visualisers, tablets and high quality sound installations, to dedicated computer suites. The interactive teaching toolkit provides advanced hardware and software to support whole class and group teaching. The provision is popular and effective and contributes significantly to pupils' interest and enjoyment. Schools generally have sufficient IT suites to allow for appropriate curriculum time for the subject. However, present classroom arrangements do not provide sufficient opportunity for individual use of ICT during lessons. This is reflected in the view of pupils (see Annex 3).

Headteachers rightly identify the significant revenue costs of maintaining and replacing IT equipment. Because of this, the council is keen to avoid over-investment in IT, whilst recognising its proven potential to enhance engagement and learning.

The Local Authority and schools have developed pioneering work with educational trails using mobile technology and bespoke software. Trails have been used in outside locations and in cultural sites.

Every Child Matters

Areas of deprivation

Most residents want to do well by their families. There are often strong family ties and good support networks. However, the borough is more or less uniformly deprived. Barking and Dagenham is ranked 11th out of 354 authorities on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. 14 of the 17 wards fall into the bottom 20 per cent nationally. There are few areas of moderate affluence in Chadwell Heath, Rush Green and Barking. However, these are relatively small and each abuts one or more of the deprived wards. Average household income is the lowest in London and adult basic skills are recognised as being amongst the lowest in the country. Health outcomes for residents are less favourable than in most parts of England. PCT data show children have high rates of respiratory difficulties.

Healthy schools and healthy eating

We are on track to meet Healthy Schools targets and headteachers are rising to the challenge with enthusiasm.

The council provides vigorous encouragement to schools to provide a rich and varied sporting offer and supports and arranges many tournaments and competitions. All schools have playgrounds on site and many have invested wisely to create interesting opportunities for children to play and interact with their peers, recognising that pupils require a range of different opportunities to occupy them at break times. Some schools offer only limited play space. Only 54% of schools have on-site green areas which facilitate wider sports provision. A further 11% of schools have easy access to off site provision.

There remains a need to enhance children's health and fitness by improving the provision for play, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where some facilities are cramped, dull and uninspiring. However the children's centre nurseries (which are generally planned to be shared with school nurseries) have carefully planned outdoor provision which is challenging, exciting and stimulating. Headteachers support the development of more interesting social areas for break times in key stages 1 and 2. Pupils also identify a need to make outdoor spaces more

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stimulating. Such development is also needed to support the council's priority to promote community cohesion and to improve children's health.

The school meals service has made progress in providing healthier school meals and snacks. All schools have on site kitchen facilities and food is prepared and cooked on site. Some kitchens are in need of refurbishment to support a growing demand for meals. Some work is under way to improve a small number of the worst kitchens, in response to demand for improved quality, higher volumes, and healthier choices. This Council-led and -funded initiative will run for three years but would benefit from further investment.

Not all schools have separate dining facilities and the time taken for setting up and clearing away limit the time available for physical education lessons and other curriculum use. Conversely, schools which have separate dining facilities make good use of them for physical education and for extended services. There would be merit in increasing the number of schools with separate dining facilities.

Special educational needs

Schools are well supported in providing for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. The SEN and inclusion team provides knowledgeable advice and support for schools and monitors that legal requirements, for instance in respect of annual reviews, are met.

There is some continuing need to improve schools to meet requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. Generally speaking schools have responded positively to the new requirements and have worked incrementally to improve facilities and access. A minority have very good facilities for pupils and visitors with significant disabilities, or where assisted changing of pupils is a necessity. Work has been done to ensure that such schools are situated strategically throughout the borough. This is successful in offering parents choice.

We make provision for pupils with significant learning needs through one large special school and in a number of Additional Resource Provisions attached to schools. These generally meet pupils' needs well and promote inclusion effectively.

The large special school has major expertise in autism and accepts pupils from beyond the borough's boundaries. The school was judged to be outstanding in a recent inspection and is full to capacity. Additional Resource Provisions, spread across seven schools, offers 66 specialist places for children with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD+), Behaviour, Emotional and Social difficulties, deafness, and Speech, Language and Communication needs. This range of provision for pupils with significant needs is now stretched and is barely adequate. Information from the Early Years and Childcare Service indicates that current provision will be less able to cope in future. This is partly a function of the borough's increased population. There is, therefore, an imperative to enhance provision both in mainstream schools and to provide further ARP units, for instance for children on the autistic spectrum[1]. There are plans to build a further special provision co-located with a mainstream school, as part of the Barking Riverside development.

Children's centres and other early years provision

Very good progress has been made in providing children's centres to serve our disadvantaged neighbourhood. Phase One (2004-06) saw the creation of eight centres comprised of four expanded SureStart programmes and four new centres. Phase Two (2006-08) has delivered a further six centres. Phase Three will see the creation of four more centres which will ensure l families throughout the borough will have a children's centre within walking distance. All children's centres are situated on school sites, or very close to them.

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[1] Annex 4 provides more detail on the current Additional Resource Provisions and the estimated requirements for the future.

Early years provision is good within the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector. Parental demand for sessional places is very high; there is a shortage of this type of place. Settings work very closely with a skilled team of Early Years Foundation Stage Advisory Teachers. There is a detailed and comprehensive training programme and a clear strategy for improving the qualification and skills of the workforce. This is leading to significant improvements.

Extended services in and through schools

Most schools now make provision for extended services. These are being planned coherently to supplement the children's centre offer, which is recognised as being of good quality. However, many schools lack facilities to make the best provision, particularly for wider community access. There is a lack of suitable small rooms to meet with parents, to provide health services and to provide study support. In many cases, such facilities could be provided through simple conversions or extensions, which would not be particularly expensive. This sort of facility is also needed to support some aspects of the extended schools core offer, such as evidence-based parenting programmes, on school sites. Simple conversions or extensions would offer the possibility to extend services during school holidays, so supplementing the children's centres' core offer. Barking and Dagenham's rapidly changing population has led to increasing demand for extended services that are accessible all year round. Whilst there is much work to do, we are confident of providing a coherent offer that meets the needs of the whole community.

Unmet local need for extended, youth and community services

Youth services are currently satisfactory. The council has identified the need to enhance the offer, which does not currently have the reach or the variety required. Young people's participation in positive activities has been identified as a Local Area Agreement Improvement Priority. We seek to develop a better range of youth services to meet the needs of young people, to help them develop their own interests and talents, for instance in the realms of sport and culture. There is the potential and need to make better use of primary school sites both during and outside of term time, as part of extended schools services. A recent review shows that only a small number currently offers facilities for use by the wider community.

Workforce provision, including facilities to support integrated children's services

Some promising work has been carried out with schools to create spaces offering flexible use, for instance as meeting rooms for parents, review rooms, and facilities to host visiting specialists. Work has started to develop specialist provision in six localities across the borough and this will include developing Additional Resource Provision for special educational needs.

Barking and Dagenham's developing locality structure will see more integrated working across Children's Services and beyond, and will ensure that services are shaped and developed to suit local needs. The scheme includes the co-location of key frontline staff such as Parent Support Advisers, in schools. It is important that many primary schools are better equipped to host staff from partner agencies, so ensuring maximum integration.

We recognise the positive effect of valuing staff of all kinds by providing well-planned facilities which help them to do their work well. There has been some development of very high quality in buildings of all kinds, but we recognise that there is still some way to go.

Diversity, choice and responsiveness to parents

The existing range of schools provides considerable diversity in terms of size, age-range and religious affiliation. There is a good representation of faith schools from the Christian tradition. Within the relatively high density housing of the area, most parents have several schools within walking distance. However, the present pressure on places means that the provision is not as responsive to parental preference as it should be. The great majority of parents of primary age children prefer a place at their nearest school. However, a significant shortage of capacity, particularly in the Barking area, means too many children need to travel to access a place. Headteachers tell us that this has had a negative effect on punctuality and attendance. New

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pressures are now being felt on reception class places throughout the borough, signalling that the influx of new children and families is continuing.

The seven faith schools are typically over-subscribed and admissions criteria for some of these are very tight. As a result, families from faith backgrounds often find it difficult to access the places they seek.

Surplus capacity

The Local Authority sought to maintain surplus places in primary schools at around 5%, in line with DCSF recommendations. However, unpredicted population increases mean there is now only 1% spare capacity, and in some year groups it is significantly less. Inevitably, this means that responding to parental preference is very challenging.

Anticipated demand for places

The council has commissioned studies to assess the mid- to long-term demand for school places. These studies, and the annual roll forecast, take account of both new housing developments (at Barking Riverside and elsewhere) and rapidly changing demographics on existing estates. We forecast that by 2011 there will be a requirement for 4,517 new primary school places, of which 3,827 will be in new schools and 690 pupils in existing schools. By 2017 we estimate that the pupil population will increase by some 11,000 (60%). These forecasts do not allow any surplus to provide improved parental choice. To fulfil the Local Authority's basic needs responsibility, it will be necessary to build seven new primary schools and enlarge a number of current school buildings. As a short-term measure, the Council will provide for as many new school places as possible within existing school provision. However, in many schools there is little scope for enlargement and, without additional building, demand will exceed even the newly enhanced supply by September 2010.

Work is already under way to increase the size of three schools in the Barking area. These will meet some of the short-term need but it is anticipated that property acquisition for letting will further increase demand. Planned additional capacity as part of the Barking Riverside development will help to provide greater choice and diversity.

The Local Authority is currently working with the Church of England Diocese to consider the possibility of extending faith school provision. Given the great success of school improvement approaches over a sustained period, there is no need currently to create further Trust schools, all-age academies or other types of school. This will be kept under constant review. Competitions will, of course, be held in respect of all new schools as required.

Enlarging popular schools

It has been council policy to enlarge the most popular schools. A number of schemes have been implemented over a ten-year period. There is only limited capacity further to enlarge popular schools. Most schools are already quite large[2] and sites are often cramped, with limited play space. In general, the council considers three forms of entry should be the maximum for all-through primary schools and four forms for separate infant and junior departments. Notes on recent development and potential capacity for enlargement are shown below.

- The area of greatest need for places is close to Barking town centre. Some 740 places have been created recently by enlarging one primary school, two infant schools and one junior school in recent times. All of these schools are popular and successful.
- One community school, housed in 1960s buildings has grown too large, with over 1,000 pupils drawn from the most disadvantaged community in the borough. The expansion of this school has been in direct response to the rapidly changing requirements of an incoming community. Its work is largely successful and well respected but there are serious questions about the size of the school and continuing pressure under which it finds itself. Some short-term improvements are required urgently. In time, we hope to

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[2] Annex 5 gives further information on school sizes and the predicted effect of the rapidly expanding population.

synchronise the remodelling of this provision with plans to demolish much of the 1960s high-rise accommodation which surrounds it. It is hoped to form two separate schools of medium size in order to provide slightly more places and to make the offer more personal and more personalised. This project would be partly funded by a Section 106 agreement.

- Two separate infant and junior schools on the Barking side of Dagenham have the potential for expansion. They have reasonably generous sites and would provide some further relief from the pressure on places. This is currently being explored.
- The five Catholic schools are mainly of small size. Two of these schools are of one-and-a-half form entry, which necessitates mixed-age teaching, which is sometimes difficult to manage. There would be merit in enlarging these schools in order to provide single-age teaching. The sites of these schools, near the centre of the borough, would be likely to release more places for Barking & Dagenham families.
- The two Church of England schools are full; both have been enlarged in recent years. Their sites do not allow easily for further expansion.

Conclusion

We need to continue to focus relentlessly on raising standards, narrowing and ultimately closing the gap between our disadvantaged pupils and their peers. To this end the Primary Capital Programme will be integrated with the Primary National Strategy and Local Authority initiatives. The ongoing focus on children's personal and intellectual development through will be central to this work, using *Talking to Learn* techniques[3]. A further imperative is to provide an adequate number of places to accommodate the rising population, to offer improved choice for parents, and to make sufficient provision for the growing number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. We need to enlarge teaching spaces to enhance flexibility for various groupings, personalisation and support. We need to improve physical space for learning and play and to enhance environments to promote interest, engagement physical development. We need to promote to children's health and wellbeing by improving facilities for dining and for the extended support of children and their families.

Section 3: Long-term aims

Based on the above analysis, this section sets out the Local Authority's long-term aims for educational transformation. We define transformation as moving decisively from the currently good improvement trajectory to one which is significantly better, more decisive and more pervasive.

We are determined to bring about further major improvements to the quality of education. We shall plan in detail to provide an inspiring and engaging curriculum as part of a world-class education, delivered in buildings of which the community can be proud, and which provide a focus and centre for services in each community. We shall increasingly promote first rate leadership, innovative pedagogy, and coherent support structures in order to ensure the optimum personal development and achievement of every child. The Primary Capital Programme will play a major part in this work.

Children's plan

Many of the Children's Plan aims are covered in some detail in the sections that follow. In summary, we aim to:

- equip children with the basic skills they need for life, and enable those from the least advantaged backgrounds to do as well as children anywhere;

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[3] Children's Plan, page 63

- support parents in bringing up their children, for instance through the children's centre core offer and extended services in and through schools;
- support children with gifts and talents to excel;
- enhance children's enjoyment, through the curriculum and in their leisure time;
- respond efficiently and in a seamless way to those needing additional and targeted support;
- prevent children from falling behind by intervening are the earliest possible stage, so narrowing the achievement gap.

Standards

Improving educational outcomes and narrowing the achievement gap

The Local Authority aspires to bring all schools up to the standard of the best and to learn increasingly from the most successful foreign countries, particularly those in Europe. Our reading and research show that the quality of pupils' speech in the educational context contributes very strongly to their capacity to hold their own alongside more advantaged peers.

The following sections provide information on key aims and strategies for bringing about the transformation required.

Design of classrooms and other learning spaces to support the raising of standards

The ability to speak articulately and with developed vocabulary is known to benefit personal development, wider literacy standards and the capacity later, in adult life, to access public services. For the above reasons, a top priority will be to improve learning environments to support oracy and oral communication. There is increasing evidence that poor classroom acoustics and background noise, particularly extraneous speech, can stand in the way of learning for many pupils, especially those with hearing impairments, learning difficulties, or English as an additional language. Excessive noise works to the detriment of teachers and pupils alike. We shall, therefore, take particular account of Building Bulletin 93: Acoustic Design of Schools (DfEE 2003) to improve speech intelligibility and reduce environmental noise and reverberation.

In this disadvantaged community it is vital to provide early, focused intervention for pupils who fall behind, and those from families which provide limited support. We wish to see classrooms as a hub for care and support, in order to enhance personal development and achievement. We also intend to ensure children develop a sense of security, by understanding their place and relationships with others. To these ends, we shall:

- develop bigger, better designed, and acoustically improved classrooms and halls, to provide for, and support:
  - *talking to learn* approaches, involving effective whole class interaction and dialogue in various groupings;
  - guided work, where teachers work with small groups to apply what has been learnt;
  - teachers' individual engagement with pupils, which will enable them quickly to identify additional support required and to provide it;
  - good sightlines between pupils and their teachers to ensure engagement and contact;
  - seating arrangements which enable children to relate well one to another, to feel a sense of worth and security. This will build on our observations in other European countries, where the child's habitual seating position in a well-understood seating plan provides a palpable sense of security, well-developed relationships and interaction;
  - public performance to develop pride, confidence and articulacy.

Other provision to enhance learning

General improvements to pedagogy and classroom design will assist in narrowing the achievement gap for the lowest attainers. However, we shall also:

- improve the quality of Early Years provision to strengthen pupils' early developmental experiences. We shall:
  - provide greater integration with children's centre services;
  - improve outdoor play facilities to provide better space, varied surfaces and large equipment;
  - enhance indoor spaces to ensure focused work can be conducted without disturbance, and that interaction is of good quality.
- enhance provision to support focused work to tackle underachievement of specific groups, for instance in small rooms near or adjoining the standard classrooms. This will support:
  - holding pupils into the pace of learning, so enabling them to keep up through rapidly organised and well focused support;
  - time for children to talk with a sympathetic and knowledgeable adult; so they can be treated more as individuals;
  - specialist intervention in support of the extended school offer;
- enhance Additional Resource Provision to support and integrate children with learning difficulties and disabilities. This will require significant negotiation with headteachers and governing bodies. See Annex 4 for additional details.

Addressing the link between social deprivation and low achievement; using robust solution to poorly performing schools

We see reducing differences in educational outcomes as the key to ensuring more general equity. We shall therefore focus with still more determination on narrowing the achievement gap between:

- specific individuals and groups (for instance those with learning difficulties and disabilities, children in care, boys and girls, pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with general vulnerability);
- the classes of individual teachers;
- individual schools;
- the borough and national performance.

The Primary Capital Programme will be integrated into a well-established and increasingly effective approach to raising standards and narrowing the achievement gap. The work will be long-term and multi-faceted. Over time, we shall:

- gain full involvement in the national Narrowing the Gap project;
- use experienced headteachers and governors to support weaker schools, forming federations if appropriate;
- categorise schools annually and report robustly to governing bodies through the School Improvement Partner programme;
- provide robust responses to poorly performing schools, using national and local strategies and where necessary drawing on the full range of statutory powers;
- explore federated approaches where schools perform badly, and continue to make use of the full range of support provided through organisations and initiatives such as National College of School Leadership, National Leaders in Education, and City Challenge.

Relationships with secondary schools

Collaboration with secondary schools will continue to be strengthened. In particular, the advisory role played by specialist schools and strong departments will be enhanced to complement the already effective School Improvement Service. The new localities structure

will be used more formally to draw together primary and secondary schools in area clusters to support children and families. The Building Schools for the Future initiative will see three innovative all-through campuses on three sites[4] and this will clearly enhance possibilities for the Primary Capital Programme.

Every child matters

Promoting sport, exercise, social development and community cohesion

Because children's health and community cohesion are of concern, we shall:

- work vigorously to support schools in implementing the 2 + 3 hour model for physical education and sport by 2010;
- maintain and develop our extensive support for swimming[5];
- design improved external environments to promote vigorous exercise, particularly for the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- provide varied and interesting outdoor environments which will enhance children's capacity to play, learn and socialise together productively;
- create facilities which support and promote healthy eating.

Complementing investment on childcare, children's centres, early years provision and extended schools

In order to ensure integrated, family-friendly services, we shall:

- learn from the creative and innovative design of the new co-located children's centres to enhance play spaces in the school nurseries;
- develop further integration of schools with the children's centres through shared, high quality outdoor spaces;
- capitalise upon improved dining facilities to provide spaces to support the extended schools core offer;
- improve the extended school offer, including childcare, by making necessary enhancements to facilities as part of all projects.

Addressing the needs of children with special educational needs or disabilities

The expanding population and the growing numbers of children identified with learning difficulties and disabilities require an increase in specialist provision. It will be important to pool budgets in order to achieve the improvements required in the context of the Primary Capital Programme. We shall seek to provide:

- one new all-age special school, as part of the extensive Barking Riverside development;
- three eight-place units[6] to provide for children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties;
- two twelve-place units for children with Moderate Learning Difficulties(+)
- two eight-place units for children with speech, language and communication needs
- two eight-place units for children with autistic spectrum disorder

As part of all major projects, we shall seek to ensure:

- facilities are fully compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA);
- toilets are adapted to support disabled children;
- early years provision is equipped to support children who are not yet continent;
- acoustic and visual environments are of a suitable standard to support access to auditory or visual learning;

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[4] Barking Riverside, Warren and Dagenham Park
[5] Occasionally on school sites, but mainly through our well-managed and well-coordinated sports centre provision
[6] Additional Resource Provisions (ARPs), attached to mainstream primary schools

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- suitable spaces are available for children with autistic spectrum disorder;
- spaces are provided to support distressed or emotionally vulnerable children;
- outside areas are accessible, provide shade and shelter and a range of sensory learning opportunities.

Addressing childhood poverty, social deprivation and low achievement

A cornerstone of our approach to promoting economic wellbeing involves raising adults' skill levels, for instance through Family Literacy projects. These will be provided through children's centres, and in strong collaboration with Barking College and the Adult College of Barking and Dagenham. The scheme will also continue to meet the demand for affordable childcare through extended schools and children's centres and support for the private and voluntary sector. This will support parents' access to training and employment.

Diversity, choice and responsiveness to parents

Strengthening governance

We are keen to pilot new, slimmed-down governing bodies (national policy) and to provide increasingly effective training for governors. Good progress has been made in shifting the agenda increasingly towards aspects of performance. As noted above, we shall consider federation arrangements where these appear to have the capacity to be productive. See below.

Increasing diversity and choice

It has for some time been council policy to enlarge popular schools. As a result, the most popular are already very large, having already been expanded. We are currently exploring the expansion of two of the smaller faith schools to obviate half-forms of entry and provide extra capacity to satisfy parental choice. We shall continue to explore changing the governance of one primary school, where there is interest in developing faith status. Beyond this, the most obvious tenable projects are already in progress and there is little capacity for further movement. As the population expands, new estates will require new schools, which will be subject to school competitions. These are mentioned elsewhere.

How the Authority has sought parents' views

Good channels of communication are available and are used for consultation and feedback. A borough-wide Parents Board was established in October 2007. It involves 20 parent representatives from across different parent groups and is linked directly to the Children's Trust. A learning difficulties and disabilities sub-group ensures specific issues are discussed in depth. Parents also have a strong voice though governor representation, including attendance at a consultation conference. Additionally, a Parents' Forum has involved presentation and active dialogue with parents.

Buildings and ICT

School size, location, layout and design

We shall:

- ensure there are adequate places for the growing population of the borough; provide greater choice and minimise the need to travel;
- reconfigure school provision as part of the demolition and rebuilding of an estate, with a view to reducing the size of one existing school and creating a new one;
- further integrate children's centres and support the further development of extended schools, in line with the strategic plan for these projects;
- enhance classroom size to support classroom dialogue and greater flexibility in pursuit of increased personalisation of learning;
- increase the provision of small spaces to support small group and individual teaching and coaching.

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Design of classrooms and other learning spaces

This is covered under Standards (above)

Enhancing teaching and learning through technology

In order to build on the existing strengths of provision for ICT we shall:

- promote technology to support and extend agreed pedagogical approaches, including *talk to learn*;
- trial solutions and innovations through the City Learning Centre. Identify effective approaches to supporting schools and the community as a whole. Work in collaboration with stakeholders from schools and the wider community[7];
- pilot resources in schools and elsewhere to assess their suitability;
- supply recommended ICT resources through a new IT Managed service;
- work with headteacher to address sustainability issues through a five-year planned spending profile for each school;
- improve incrementally the infrastructure to meet the standards established for Building Schools for the Future;
- Support a borough-wide learning platform to provide full access to a wide range of collaboration, communication and social networking tools;
- Integrate facilities into a virtual learning environment (VLE) to gather together resources to support activities;
- complement lesson activities with opportunities for independent research, project work, exercises and assignments through a wide a range of media;
- provide facilities for assignments to be submitted and marked online;
- provide each pupil with an e-portfolio , which they retain from age 3 to 18, that can be shared with parents and carers, teachers, and the wider community;
- support personalisation, pupil interest and engagement by promoting the use of high quality sound, large-scale moving and still images, and video conferencing;
- provide access to learning materials, including homework assignments and course information;
- provide parents and carers with a wide range of information about their children's learning, achievement and attendance through secure authenticated access across the internet
- provide parents with feedback systems and online communication tools
- make use of SMS messaging and email to make urgent contact with parents, for instance in the case of absence.

Protecting the environment

Many buildings have been modernised. However, their basic construction, dating mainly from the 1930s, means they do not meet the highest standards of environmental efficiency. The council, the headteachers and pupils have a strong commitment to efficiency and sustainability. In line with this commitment, all significant projects will incorporate:

- eco-school concepts; and/or
- environmental/conservation advantages.

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[7] In line with its Harnessing Technology plan

Section four: Approach to change

Capacity building and change management

A significant turnover of headteachers (caused by retirements) is likely to invigorate the change process and the sharing of new ideas. We will engage with the National College for School Leadership, City Challenge and National Leaders in Education to establish support for developing a creative vision for individual projects. However, we shall continue to insist that all projects are guided by educational research in order that they stand the test of time. We shall therefore draw on senior officers and national experts in the field of education to ensure change is rooted in serious consideration of pedagogy alongside the broader imperatives of the Every Child Matters agenda.

Consultation and agreement

In order to identify approaches and priorities, a well-attended workshop of headteachers and governors was held on 28 March 2008. The main points to emerge appear at Annex 2 and are incorporated into this document. A number of schools used Local Authority materials to discuss their priorities and ideas with their school councils. The feedback gathered is included at Annex 3 and has been included in this document.

A planning meeting has been held with the Leader of the Council, the Lead Member with responsibility for Children's Services and the Corporate Director of Children's Services and deputy Chief Executive of the Council. The comments expressed at the meeting have been incorporated into this document. A copy of this final document was provided to this group and the Chief Executive for comment prior to submission to DCSF. The document was to have been endorsed by the Council's Executive at its meeting on 3 June. Unfortunately, Executive meetings have been cancelled because of a by election. Final approval will not, therefore be possible until July 2008.

Any proposals which are taken beyond feasibility inception will have a significant input from school staff and opportunities for pupils to have an input.

All primary schools have had a copy of the strategy for comment with an opportunity to provide further feedback. The Diocesan Directors of Education at Brentwood (Catholic) and Chelmsford (Church of England) have been asked to supply a letter of support, following discussions with them.

Copies of this document have also been made available to:

> Chairs of governing bodies
> Heads of SureStart children's centres
> Parent representatives on the Parents Forum
> Primary Care Trust

Planning, monitoring and evaluation

The Local Authority's role as commissioner of services and delivery agent for the Children's Plan

Over the last year we have significantly developed capacity in commissioning, and improved procurement. The Children's Trust has a joint overarching commissioning strategy, which ensures a joined-up approach. The Council is committed to an ambitious and coherent programme, aimed at 'building communities and transforming lives'. This involves: a borough-wide regeneration programme, educational improvement, enhanced training opportunities, job creation and improvements to housing and health. The Joint Area Review confirmed that planning is based on 'an analysis of shared needs, based on data … from a range of sources'. Approaches to consultation are now good; children and all key partners will be involved in

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planning all projects. We shall seek to involve headteachers, for instance in schools where children's centres have been built, in order to learn from their experiences. Projects and investments will be managed by the Children's Services Asset Management and Capital group in collaboration with colleagues from the School Improvement Service and the Integrated Family Support division. Projects for investment will be discussed fully and for those selected, clear objectives and intended outcomes will be set out.

Achieving educational transformation

The council has already been successful in transforming education in the borough. Visitors recognise the distinctive qualities of schools in the borough and, particularly, the focus on children's involvement in talking to learn. The process of painstaking development, based on well-researched pedagogical principles, will continue. However, as explained earlier in this document, we are now determined to accelerate the pace of improvement, particularly in terms of narrowing the achievement gap at a variety of levels.

We have had recent experience of developing plans for new and remodelled schools. We recognise the need to establish a clear vision based on pedagogical principles and the wider demands of the Every Child Matters agenda. We shall take care to involve all members of the school community in identifying curricular and pedagogical priorities alongside the Local Authority's plan for integrated extended services.

The ICT team has a national profile in leading innovation in ICT. This sometimes challenges received wisdom and has been recognised at national level, for instance through the award of funding for the £13m ICT Test Bed project which provided leading edge innovation.

Making links to early years provision and secondary education

Early Years provision is already used extensively by local secondary schools and colleges for work experience placements and block placements for childcare courses. Links have been made with creative departments in secondary schools to assist with developing garden and outdoor provision. We shall sustain and develop this work. Practical links also already exist between many primary and secondary schools and this will be enhanced with the creation of three all-age campuses (referred to above). The remodelling of the Local Authority School Improvement Service will increasingly promote the sharing ideas between primary and secondary schools, particularly through the use of Advanced Skills Teachers and Specialist Schools. Co-located services, now being established coherently in our six localities will provide for better sharing of information on individual children and their families and will promote more effective joined-up working.

Innovative approaches to design

The Children's Services Department already has a strong track record of commissioning innovative, award-winning designs for its new children's centres and has won a number of awards. These are listed at Annex 7. We shall work with the council's design staff to secure further well-designed projects, which inspire learning, stimulate young minds and develop civic pride. Where appropriate; we will make use of the council's design consultant framework, and work with the Intelligent Client Unit (Regeneration Department) to run design competitions in order to secure innovative designs for larger projects.

Choosing individual projects in pursuit of the long-term aims

We shall ensure close involvement of the School Improvement Service to focus and foremost on improving standards and raising quality. Projects will be selected using the Department's database of information from its Asset Management Plan, the priorities identified during the consultation, and the knowledge of officers across the Children's Services Department. We shall take care to bring together all available funding to secure the maximum benefit from the projects selected. For example, a school which is being expanded to provide additional school places would also attract a high priority for the Primary Capital Programme; a larger scheme

would be likely to make a higher impact on educational outcomes. This principle would also apply to Sure Start investment for children's centres and investment in extended schools. The criteria for identifying the initial projects are shown are Annex 1.

Monitoring delivery of the programme, assessing its impact and sharing good practice

Precise objectives, focusing first on improving educational attainment, will be set for each project. All commissioning will be framed in this context. An officer within the Children's Services Asset Management and Capital group monitor the relationship of each project to its objectives. This process will be monitored by the Group Manager, Asset Management and Capital. Project managers and headteachers in schools will be consulted regularly and will be asked to contribute to an end-of-project evaluation against the initial objectives. A subsequent review will be conducted with the school at the end of the first operational year to measure effectiveness. We intend to maintain the involvement of a small number of professionals to oversee projects in order that they learn from each project and share effective elements in subsequent ones. The council is keen to sustain its recent record of design excellence and the achievements of each project will be monitored closely by key councillors and the Departmental Management Team. At the end of each project, it will be reviewed to ensure that the objectives have been achieved. A subsequent review with each school will be conducted at the end of the first operational year following development to measure effectiveness.

Every child matters

The school at the heart of the community

By making links with Sure Start children's centres, supporting extended schools, and providing more places closer to children's homes, the programme will support parents' the existing feeling that primary schools are truly at the heart of their neighbourhood community. We see this as an extension of our existing provision, and not a new departure.

Extended services in and through schools

We shall continue to work in collaboration with headteachers to plan and deliver a coherent offer of extended services in and through schools. By 2010 all schools will provide access to activities that enrich, educate and enable children to live healthier, safer and more fulfilling lives. Services will be available for everyone, including children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Schools will either offer services directly, or will provide information to refer parents and children to other local providers.

Co-locating children's centres with schools

Twelve of the fourteen existing children's centres are located on or very close to primary school sites. Two are on secondary school sites but are accessible to all parents in the neighbourhood. In each case there is cross-representation on school governing bodies and centre development groups. Headteachers and school governors are actively involved in decision-making and close co-operation exists between staff in each location. We are working proactively to promote formal and informal collaboration between staff, for instance in relation to the use of the Common Assessment Framework. Joint staff development for all Early Years workers is now well established.

Approach to improving health

The local Healthy Schools programme and staff of the School Improvement Service provide schools with considerable support to continue to strengthen their provision for effective Personal, Social and Health Education (including Sex and Relationships Education and Drug Education), healthy eating, physical activity and children's emotional health and wellbeing. Through our links with the local Primary Care Trust we shall focus on important local health issues such as childhood obesity.

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Extended services in and through schools will play a significant role in improving the health of children and their families. Barking and Dagenham is seizing the opportunity to develop closer, long term working relationships with key partners to provide information and direct services to improve health outcomes.

Supporting links to early years provision

Schools already make a strong provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is now a need to make policy changes to ensure a 3-hour offer for each child across the maintained and non-maintained sectors, to harmonise policy and practice, and to establish a fairer and more transparent funding formula. This will be accomplished through partnership with representatives from the private, voluntary and independent sector and schools. We already provide coordinated cross-sector training. There are well-established practical links between children's centres and child-care providers. Training and support for all sectors is provided through one central team.

Finance

Joining up funding streams

The Asset Management and Capital Group has a good track record of finding opportunities to maximise the impact of investment. The approach of joining together various funding strands is built into established project methodology. In addition to the Primary Capital Programme funding streams we shall utilise other funding, such as £31,514,596 Basic Need Safety Valve funding, together with any allocations related to the provision of basic need. We shall draw on funding for extended schools and targeted capital funds to ensure a coherent and cohesive approach. We shall do all we can to access other sources of funding to complement projects, for instance from wider regeneration initiatives, other government initiatives, the council itself and local delivery agents including the Primary Care Trust. We shall continue to support bids to external agencies such as the Sports Council or Big Lottery. We have agreed with schools that they will, where necessary, make contributions from their share of Devolved Formula Capital or other sources they may have identified. In the case of faith schools we shall make use of the Local Authority Coordinated Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP). Any capital plan developed by the council for investment in schools will give full recognition to the implications and objectives of the Primary Capital Programme.

For voluntary aided schools there is a particular issue about the affordability of the expected 10% contribution towards projects. The Council will work with voluntary aided schools, governors, and the diocesan authorities to resolve this funding requirement, exploring alternative funding streams to help secure projects.

Procurement

Efficient procurement and securing best value for money

We shall use the full range of strategies available to use to secure projects, ensure prompt delivery with value for money, and minimise procurement costs. Available strategies include:

- undertaking competition through tenders, using shortlists derived from companies on Construction Line;
- using the council's frameworks contracts to commission consultants covering: construction, design and management; project management; quantity surveying; architectural design; surveying; and mechanical and electrical design;
- exploring construction options with the council's framework construction partners;
- utilising the Local Education Partnership currently under development for securing Building Schools for the Future investment, and likely to be in place early in 2010;
- using other construction partnering arrangements such as local LIFT arrangements.

For efficient procurement of Information and Communication Technology, we shall make use of procurement frameworks make use of the Building Schools for the Future Managed Service, which is likely to be substantially in place early in 2010.

We are unlikely to replace whole schools as part of the Primary Capital Programme. This is because buildings are generally solid and well-maintained, largely as a result of previous investment by the council and the schools themselves. It is unlikely that Private Finance Initiatives would provide a viable option for projects of the size and value envisaged.

The council will insist on using appropriate checks and balances, securing audit and financial advice as appropriate, to ensure it meets the requirements of the Office of Government Commerce, Local Government Task Force and Common Minimum Standards. The Joint Area Review noted 'good financial management capacity with good value for money'.

Design

In all projects we shall encourage and use dialogue with a wide range of stakeholders in order to arrive at the best conception. We shall seek the views and advice of those with special needs, of their representatives to ensure the best solutions. Designs will take particular note of the implications of the Disability Discrimination Act and will be based on appropriate impact assessments in order to meet the needs of minority groups. The objectives of all projects will take note of the emerging localities structure and extended schools developments. Work to secure good design will be pursued through competition, if appropriate. Under all circumstances there will be a standard requirement on designers to inspire young people in new and improved learning environments, taking careful note of what the children themselves say. Sustainability will be a key feature of all projects, having regard to the council's challenging sustainability targets. In turn, this will reduce schools' running costs, and associated maintenance. We intend that savings will support longer-term maintenance requirements.

Section five: Initial investment priorities

The specific priorities for investment during the first four years of the programme

The priorities for investment during the first four years of the project are as follows.

1.	Cambell Infant and Junior	- School expansion and some modernisation
2.	and Cambell Primary PRU	Relocation of Primary PRU and Nursery
3.	Beam Primary	- School expansion and some modernisation
4.	St Peter's Catholic Primary	- School expansion and some modernisation
5.	Gascoigne Primary	- Phase III school expansion and internal modification

The above projects will provide additional places in the hard-pressed southern part of the Local Authority, which includes the Barking Area.

Cambell Infant and Junior schools are amongst the few that have significant capacity for enlargement. Both Beam and Gascoigne primary schools will make a helpful contribution to ease the pressure on places, as will St Peter's, which will accommodate more Catholic children

and so release places in community schools. These projects already have outline plans and so can be delivered in the timescales required.

At Cambell Infant Schools the nursery is currently off-site and so is hard to manage. The outdoor facilities are limited and fail to provide suitably varied opportunities for outdoor play and exercise, despite the school's best efforts to make improvements. The relocation of the primary Pupil Referral Unit will be able to make use of the vacated nursery buildings and improve the learning environment for a small group of troubled pupils, who are currently accommodated in temporary units with little play space. This project will provide good value for money.

Gascoigne Primary School is housed partly modified open-plan buildings, which have proved unsuitable for modern teaching methods over a long period. Recent phases of work have seen the provision of new dining facilities, which have reduced disruption and provided capacity for extended school work. Phase 3 will support the refurbishment of some old areas to provide improved library facilities, reception and community interface and some much-needed small group teaching spaces. Some relatively modest modifications are likely to make a significant difference to the quality of teaching and learning. In due course, the whole site is likely to be remodelled into more manageable units as part of a project to transform the run-down estate on which it is situated.

Annexes

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Annex 1: Criteria for selecting the most urgent projects

In order to determine priorities, we shall use the following schedule and weightings

1. Supports Basic Need – value 1 to 10 – where there are issues which support the provision of new places, i.e. sufficiency, but not exclusive and must support rather than be the only financial investment.

2. Suitability – value 1 to 10 – helps to develop improved learning environment or supports replacement of existing accommodation which is causing a problem.

3. Attainment – value 1 to 10 – where there is a lack of provision which has been identified, e.g. Ofsted Inspection, that would support the raising of attainment.

4. Condition – value 1 to 10 – identified in the Children's Services Asset Management Plan as a priority to be addressed, for instance on grounds of Health and Safety.

5. Deliverability – value 1 to 10 - project can be completed in timescales identified.

Annex 2: Priorities suggested by primary headteachers and governors

A conference was held at which headteachers and governors were invited to identify the priorities for the Barking and Dagenham Primary Capital Programme which would be likely to make the greatest impact on quality and standards in their schools. About half of the primary schools in the borough were represented and so it is assumed that the priorities identified would be representative of views in the borough as a whole. The group was invited to put its priorities into order. The list below is the result of the above work. The Local Authority's comments are shown at the end of the table.

Priority area identified by headteachers and governors	Group's ranking	Local Authority comments
Larger classrooms, incorporating toilets and better storage	1	This is also a high priority for the Local Authority in terms of promoting oracy and improving pedagogy generally. Individual projects would be tailored to local circumstances.
Improved early years provision with a joined up Foundation Stage and shared play	2	This is part of existing Local Authority policy to establish Foundation Stage units and to enhance external play provision.
Quality spaces/ breakout/ small groups	3	This supports the personalisation agenda and the Local Authority policy of early intervention.
Eco-Schools to improve efficiency and children's awareness.	4	This is justified on environmental and budgetary grounds. It is in line with building regulations for new-builds and should be considered as part of all smaller projects.
Reduce current 1:30 teacher to pupil ratio to 1:25. Modify overall provision and classroom design to accommodate this.	5	Headteachers were keen to reduce ratios. Whilst this could be accomplished by remodelling buildings, the ratio suggested is not financially viable under the current funding formula, and would be likely to stand in the way of the necessary creation of additional places. The Local Authority cannot currently support this priority.
Provide better for disaffected, challenging and autistic pupils. Provide enriched, specialist teaching, for instance through Additional Resource Provision.	6	This appears to be associated with headteachers' priority 3. The Local Authority agrees that there is a need to enhance provision for children with LDD through Additional Resource Provision in primary schools.
Improve provision for recreation, play and sports - shade, social space, water, designed for purpose.	7	The Local Authority fully recognises this priority, which will assist in enhancing children's enjoyment and promoting community cohesion. Children were also keen to see these improvements.
Separate hall and dining area	8	This priority is recognised in the case of a number of schools. Better facilities of this kind would also support extended schools provision.
Parents' room and other small spaces	9	This priority relates to priority 3.
Extra multi-use spaces to enhance curriculum	10	This priority is agreed by the Local Authority. Specialist spaces are currently too limited in many schools.

Security/ entrance/ visitors	11	This work has already been undertaken in many schools, often using devolved capital. Where there are security risks, the Local Authority would support this priority.
Re-model to improve isolated areas	12	This appears to be an issue in a small number of schools. It would be likely to fall under the same umbrella as the enhancements to outdoor spaces generally.
Sustainable ICT - updates - £100k pa?	13	This appears to be a revenue issue and the available money would not go far if used for this purpose. See remarks in the main text concerning the creation of a sustainability spending profile for each school.
Disability Discrimination Act/ nappy change/ visitors - extended schools provision	14	This is a need in some schools and would sit well with plans to enhance Early Years provision. The general duty to meet DDA requirements must, in any case, be met in the short term. In a small number of cases this issue is too urgent to await funding from the Primary Capital Programme.

Annex 3: Consultation with pupils

Pupils were invited to provide their ideas through their school councils. Specifically, they were asked to reflect on the improvements they would like to see: in classrooms; around the building; and outside. Discussion was guided with some pictures and feedback was provided through headteachers. The response rate was relatively low but the sample of around 120 pupils who were directly involved is likely to be reasonably representative. Responses are shown in the tables at the end of this section.

Summary

School buildings

The most common suggestions concerned aspirations about enhanced facilities, such as specialist rooms for a wide range of individual subjects, libraries, sports halls, separate dining halls, and so on. If achievable, these would provide welcome impetus to achievement health improvement, and extended schools provision. Many of the facilities do exist in one or more of the borough's schools, as well as in secondary provision. Children seem alert to inequity of provision.

Classrooms

Suggestions were diverse but the major focus was on comfort, organisation and space, including personal space. These priorities accord with those of headteachers for better classrooms and roomier accommodation. A particular concern for children seems to be difficulties in controlling temperature and glare from the sun. These issues should be considered as part of agreed projects.

Around the school

The most frequent suggestions concerned toilets in terms of suitability and quality of provision. Other suggestions were for individual, sometimes esoteric, environmental improvements.

Outside

Suggestions were diverse. The most suggestions included improving facilities for playing sport and engaging with nature. Various improvements to sporting facilities, and natural areas were suggested. These suggestions tie in well with Local Authority priorities to enhance play, recreation and environmental awareness.

Lists of suggestions

Some attempt has been made to group suggestions. Their position does not indicate their frequency. Numbers in the right hand column shows the number of related suggestions received.

School building

A gym for PE – sports hall – purpose-built gym	4
Drama studio to be used also for choir and music – drama studio	2
School library – large library	2
Large ICT room	
Science room	
Swimming pool	
Cookery room	
Larger hall	
Separate dining hall	
Larger extended schools room – room for parents	
Have a workshop for fixing things like bikes	

A greenhouse so we can find out about bugs and insects
Meeting room for School Council
Spotlights in the hall

Classrooms

In summer the classrooms get too hot – temperature controls for each room – fans in classrooms	3
Windows that open, do not let the rain in and do not let too much sunlight in – new windows so we can see out but they don't let too much sunlight in	2
Better blinds – blinds to stop sunlight coming through	2
Larger classrooms with areas to play	3
Softer carpets, not prickly ones – large carpet area	3
Bigger storage with personal trays and lockers	
Adjustable chairs and lift-up desks – own desk, higher tables and larger chairs	2
More computers in classrooms, including laptops for each child – more computers - Improve IT: interactive whiteboard –desks that are a computer as well	4
Automatic lights	
Screen separate from board	
Talking areas to discuss problems, cosy corner	
Display cabinets for artefacts	
Different coloured walls for different year groups	
Separate areas in the classroom for different subjects	
Somewhere to store water bottles	
Suggestion boxes in each classroom	

Around the school

Coats out of corridors – bigger cloakrooms	3
More toilets for Years 1 and 2 – new toilets	2
Automatic flushing toilets/timers and air freshener	2
Separate toilets for boys and girls	
Different toilets for older and younger pupils (older pupils can see	
More toilet paper	2
Seat tissues (in toilets)	
Toilet seats do not close at the moment	
Changing rooms with showers	
A glass roof for the corridor	
Repaint the school – redecorate school	2
An automatic school bell	
Posters to remind everyone how to keep the corridors and toilets tidy	
Artists to decorate walls	
Fish tanks	
Doors between shared classrooms	
Large screen in hall	
Carpet in corridor	

Outside

Use the field more – science area – more outside learning – larger adventure trail – develop nature area and refill the pond	4

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Climbing frames and playground activities – more equipment to play with – more playground equipment	4
Football goals with nets	3
Trampoline with enclosure	2
More grass	
More sport for girls	
Permanent goals for football/basketball	
Larger playground	
Tarmac playground (less painful)	
Astroturf area for football and other sports	
Tennis courts	
Outside shelter and benches - sheltered area for working/eating – canopy to shade the children on a hot day	4
Gardening plots – vegetable garden	3
More flowers	
Shelter over our school entrance	
A bigger sign to let people know who we are	
Display motto between toilets	
Traffic warden	
Higher fencing	
Mural for the handprints of Year 6 leavers	
Swimming pool	
Tuck hop/smoothie bar in the grounds	
More bicycle sheds	
Our school outside is OK	

Annex 4:   Additional Resource Provision and plan for future expansion

Barking and Dagenham requires a range of additional specialist Additional Resource Provisions (ARPs) in order to provide specialist places for the increasing numbers of children with complex needs. Our one special school has already increased its intake significantly and is now oversubscribed. Most of the existing ARPs are full. As a result, the Local Authority is struggling to place a number of children who are either challenging or have significant learning needs.

At present Barking and Dagenham maintains 952 statements for pupils with special educational needs. 207 of these cases (primary and secondary) are placed in our one maintained special school and 103 are in our additional resourced provisions. 140 children with statements are educated in other Local Authority and non-maintained special school provision, much of it residential. Many of these placements are expensive and in some cases the placement is at a significant distance from home.

In addition to the above, a significant numbers of pupils with additional needs do not have a statement. The Authority has rigorously and successfully pursued a policy of reducing reliance on statements. All funding for all special needs is now devolved to the schools, enabling headteachers to make local decisions over provision, supported and advised by a central advisory team. In total, there are now over 2000 children assessed as requiring School Action, School Action + or a statement. Of those in primary education some 58 pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 are working at P levels but do not currently receive specialist support.

Portage and Early Years services report an increase in the numbers of children with an identified need. Health colleagues have reported an 18% increase in their Early Years notifications with 50% of the children concerned having communication and interaction difficulties. There has been a significant increase in the number of children born with Down's syndrome. Overall, the Portage service is currently supporting 35 children.

Based on the above statistics and other more detailed work, it is clear that the demand for specialist provision, either in Additional Resource Provision located in mainstream schools, or in a special school, will be significantly higher than the places currently available. Because of this, the Local Authority has identified the need to increase primary provision as soon as possible as follows.

- Three eight-place units for children with behavioural, emotional or social difficulties.
- Two twelve-place units for children with moderate learning difficulties (+)
- Two eight-place units for children with speech, language and communication needs
- Two eight-place units for children with autistic spectrum disorder

We shall seek to secure additional funding for these facilities and will integrate the provision into the improvements made as part of the Primary Capital Programme, pooling available budgets where possible to secure the best value for money from development. The projections in the following section shows that the planned enhancement of provision will not be adequate for the long term and further provision will need to be made in the medium term. Up to 2016 a further 66 ARP places are likely to be required. The position will be monitored with care over this period.

Annex 5:   Ten-year primary pupil place planning, 2006 to 2017

In 2007 the Local Authority produced the following forecast of pupil place requirements, taking into account:

- live birth rates;
- transfer & survival rates of pupils in schools and between schools;
- local house building including large-scale borough-wide regeneration;
- pressures on places in neighbouring boroughs;
- travel routes and cross-boundary movement of 3 pupils;
- local school achievements; and
- parental preferences for schools.

The council's accuracy for forecasting numbers in primary schools from 2005/07 was 99.5%. However, recent experience, where unexpected population movement and occupancy rates have come into play has cast some doubt on the forecasts. However, the data below is based on the best data available and gives some indications of projected population increases.

New housing is predicted to be one of the largest factors contributing to increased demand for pupil places over the next ten years and beyond. The council's preferred pupil yield model was developed by external consultants (Hunt Dobson Stringer) in 2004/05. This provides a forecast of 5885 (from 18,042 net houses) up to the academic year 2016/17. However, a more conservative view is presented below, drawn from Edaw & Bevan Brittan study of the current data. This provides a median figure drawn from various formulae such as LLBD HDS, GLA model, and Thames Gateway Average. In practice, the rise between 2006 and 2011 has accelerated more quickly than anticipated.

Table 1

Cumulative increase in 0-4 year olds population generated by new housing

By 2016/17	0-1 Yrs	1-2 Yrs	2-3 Yrs	3-4 Yrs	Total 0-4 Yrs
Barking Town Centre Area	116	116	116	116	465
South Riverside Area	239	239	239	239	957
Eastern Area	57	57	57	57	226
North and Central Area	114	114	114	114	457
Total	**526**	**526**	**526**	**526**	**2104**

Table 2

Cumulative increase in 4 – 10 year old population as generated by new housing

4 - 10 year olds	By 2006	By 2011	By 2016	By 2027
Barking Town Centre Area	65	468	639	725
South Riverside Area	0	558	1338	2663
Eastern Area	77	126	318	482
North and Central Area	137	500	646	767
Borough Wide Total	**279**	**1652**	**2941**	**4637**

Additional demand and provision of additional places

Our approach is focused at initially offsetting demand for school places with the existing supply of school places within the borough. It is also anticipated that improved results and enhancement programmes in local schools may continue to make Local Authority schools more attractive. However, changes in other Local Authorities' performance and provision might also be expected to make an impact on our figures. There is no information on such changes at present.

The demand pressures within the Local Authority schools will also affect the residential school population.

The overall Local Authority population for children aged 4 to 11 (reception to Year 6) is forecast to rise by 11595 pupils over the next 10 years. The following tables provide forecasts for individual schools for total numbers between reception and Year 6. The forecasts take into account an increased capacity of a total of 540 places created for the 2007/08 intake. However, recent experience shows that almost all schools reached capacity in 2008 and that the demand for reception class places is likely to exceed demand in September 2008.

The orange shading in the table shows the year when the schools were predicted to exceed admission capacity. Green shading shows the years where the admission capacity is being increased. The overall shading of rows shows the four areas of the borough as follows.

Barking Town Centre Area	
South Riverside Area	
Eastern Area	
North and Central Area	

Table 3

Reception to Year 6 Forecasts by school: 2006/07 to 2016/17

School	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Becontree	377	386	395	423	423	423	423	473	599	642	680
Cambell I	255	261	261	363	363	363	363	363	366	383	401
Cambell J	376	376	377	483	483	483	483	483	483	485	504
Dorothy Barley I	335	336	336	339	339	401	421	441	458	474	490
Dorothy Barley J	411	424	430	451	458	465	477	494	517	548	573
Five Elms	391	378	378	381	381	461	486	518	553	593	628
Furze I	316	328	336	339	368	392	409	427	444	459	475
Warren J	448	446	440	451	451	451	475	491	513	541	564
Godwin	408	419	420	423	480	504	527	558	591	628	662
Grafton I	310	321	324	327	327	395	422	449	465	481	497
Grafton J	418	422	420	435	442	455	473	490	522	560	593
Henry Green	406	406	406	409	409	487	511	542	577	618	655
Marks Gate I	204	188	198	273	273	312	324	340	356	372	387
Marks Gate J	246	260	238	255	255	255	283	310	350	391	407
Monteagle	553	580	598	612	612	699	731	761	794	829	863
Parsloes	410	392	392	395	395	506	533	563	597	632	666
Roding	365	371	378	381	381	463	492	527	563	600	633
Southwood	407	415	420	423	423	503	532	563	601	640	678
St Joseph's C (Barking)	202	209	210	213	256	277	296	320	348	378	407
St Teresa C	177	185	196	199	243	268	290	318	349	380	407
St. Vincent's C	206	210	210	213	284	313	342	376	415	456	496
Valence I	167	156	186	194	209	226	241	256	273	289	305
Valence J	237	236	241	255	255	266	276	291	311	334	355
Eastbury Primary	199	490	614	633	633	633	633	633	633	633	633
Gascoigne	844	869	898	948	948	974	1062	1097	1118	1166	1198
Manor I	361	366	360	363	412	428	441	454	474	492	510
Manor J	485	494	480	483	515	526	539	556	574	594	612
Northbury I	270	277	357	366	366	366	366	366	385	403	420
Northbury J	357	365	472	483	483	483	483	483	483	483	483
Ripple I	169	213	234	237	237	237	251	265	285	304	323
Ripple Jun	357	352	352	355	395	408	428	452	480	512	542

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St Josephs C (Dagenham)	308	308	308	311	399	432	456	486	520	556	590
St Margaret's CE	413	420	420	423	501	532	560	594	633	672	711
Beam	372	378	378	381	415	432	457	486	521	560	596
Hunters Hall	579	587	599	633	638	687	718	759	795	832	867
John Perry	390	392	392	394	454	485	518	551	589	626	662
Marsh Green	195	196	203	212	237	259	286	315	349	384	418
Richard Alibon	412	406	406	408	475	497	524	558	596	635	674
Rush Green I	222	258	293	338	364	383	402	421	438	455	471
Rush Green J	361	359	337	350	350	377	419	475	505	531	556
St Peter's C	296	300	308	310	346	371	398	427	462	499	534
Leys	307	311	321	394	394	414	456	501	540	578	615
Thomas Arnold	335	342	359	394	426	454	486	532	571	611	646
Village I	240	242	243	245	276	297	319	340	358	374	391
William Bellamy I	234	271	313	338	376	394	412	432	449	466	483
William Bellamy J	361	355	338	410	410	410	430	482	504	529	553
William Ford CE J	332	332	332	338	338	344	357	357	354	354	354
Thames View I	258	270	270	272	388	388	492	630	730	816	918
Thames View J	324	272	272	324	427	427	607	737	837	999	1118
Total	16606	17131	17649	18580	19714	21005	22308	23742	25230	26777	28201

On the above basis, the total number of pupils will rise each year. It will increase from the current 16606 pupils (2006/07) to 28201 pupils (2016/17). There is anticipated to be a demand for additional 11595 places over this period. In practice, the rate of change has been more rapid that the above predictions suggest.

Special educational needs forecasts

Mainstream schools by 2016 to 2017

Estimates show that the demand for special educational needs (SEN) places in mainstream schools will increase by 2016/17 to 1404 places between reception and Year 6. Of these, 146 are likely to require Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARPs). A further 836 pupils are classed as Type 5. It is estimated that for every six pupils forecast as Type 5, one Additional Resourced Provision place will be required taking into account the multi-use of the facilities. This means a total provision of 139 places will be required.

Special Schools by 2016 to 17

The table below provides the forecast of the demand for R-Y6 places in special schools by 2016/17. This has been derived from a 0.91 ratio (below the national rate) based on the forecast total school population.

Table 4

Special Schools Places 2016/17

	Total	R-Y6	Y7-11	16-19
Special school capacity				
Trinity	200	80	102	18
Barking Riverside (new provision)	224	80	102	42
	424	160	204	60
Demand for special needs Places 2016/17	421	160	204	57

On the above basis, the special school provision will just cope with the estimated demand, with very few surplus places.

Annex 6:   Map of the borough and its schools

Primary Schools

ID	NAME	TYPE
1	Cambell Infants School	INFANT
2	Dorothy Barley Infants School	INFANT
3	Valence Infants School	INFANT
4	Thames View Infants School	INFANT
5	Eastbury Infants School	INFANT
6	Furze Infants School	INFANT
7	Ripple Infants School	INFANT
8	Village Infants School	INFANT
9	Marks Gate Infants School	INFANT
10	Manor Infants School	INFANT
11	William Bellamy Infants School	INFANT
12	Rush Green Infants School	INFANT
13	Northbury Infants School	INFANT
14	Grafton Infants School	INFANT
15	Cambell Junior School	JUNIOR
16	Dorothy Barley Junior School	JUNIOR
17	Manor Junior School	JUNIOR
18	Marks Gate Junior School	JUNIOR
19	Ripple Junior School	JUNIOR
20	Rush Green Junior School	JUNIOR
21	Thames View Junior School	JUNIOR
22	Valence Junior School	JUNIOR
23	Warren Junior School	JUNIOR
24	William Bellamy Junior School	JUNIOR
25	William Ford C of E Junior School	JUNIOR
26	Northbury Junior School	JUNIOR
27	Grafton Junior School	JUNIOR
28	Beam Primary School	PRIMARY
29	Becontree Primary School	PRIMARY
30	Five Elms Primary School	PRIMARY
31	Gascoigne Primary School	PRIMARY
32	Godwin Primary School	PRIMARY
33	Henry Green Primary School	PRIMARY
34	Hunters Hall Primary School	PRIMARY
35	John Perry Primary School	PRIMARY
36	Marsh Green Primary School	PRIMARY
37	Monteagle Primary School	PRIMARY
38	Parsloes Primary School	PRIMARY
39	Richard Alibon Primary School	PRIMARY
40	Roding Primary School	PRIMARY
41	Southwood Primary School	PRIMARY
42	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Dagenham)	PRIMARY
43	St Margaret's C of E Primary School	PRIMARY
44	St Peter's Catholic Primary School	PRIMARY
45	St Teresa's Catholic Primary School	PRIMARY
46	St Vincent's Catholic Primary School	PRIMARY
47	Leys Primary School	PRIMARY
48	Thomas Arnold Primary School	PRIMARY
49	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School (Barking)	PRIMARY

Childrens Centres

ID	NAME
1	Abbey
2	Becontree
3	William Bellamy
4	John Perry
5	Castle Green
6	Sue Bramley
7	Gascoigne
8	Wellgate
9	Leys
10	Marsh Green
11	Eastbury
12	Furze
13	Sydney Russell
14	Ford Road

Legend

\#   Children's Centres

Schools

TYPE

● INFANT
● JUNIOR
● PRIMARY

Primary Schools and Children's Centres in LBBD

Annex 7:   Awards for recent projects

The following notes show the recognition the council has received for a number of its recent projects.

John Perry Children's Centre

- Society of Chief Architects of Local Authorities (SCALA) Civic Building of the Year Award November 2007. The centre was commended as being an exemplar piece of public architecture. SCALA is committed to 'achieving the highest possible standards in the development, design, construction and management of the public sector estate.
- The British Construction Industry Special Local Authority Project Award 2006
- Short listed for Prime Minister's Better Public Building award 2006
- Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Award for architecture 2006
- American Institute of Architects (AIA) Award 2006

William Bellamy Children's Centre

- Winner of the British Council of School Environment Awards for Inspiring Design.
- Royal Institute of British Architects Regional Award (London) for being one of Britain's best buildings.
- Contender for Royal Institute of British Architects national awards to be held at the end of June 2008.

Becontree Children's Centre

- Short listed for a Civic Trust Award
- Chosen as a Department for Children, Schools and Families design exemplar for excellence in education design.

Abbey Children's Centre

- Commendation from the Civic Trust in 2006.
- Short listed by the Royal Institute of British Architects for an Urban Space design award.

Jo Richardson Community School

Jo Richardson Community School has received much national attention for its innovative use of light and space, and for its design which focuses first on pedagogical principals and also supports easy circulation and supervision. The campus is a genuine community resource and is regularly used as an exemplar of extended provision.

SureStart Centres

Barking and Dagenham was congratulated by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) for its Sure Start centres and for insisting on the importance of good architecture and urban design and raising standards for the future (January 2007)

50 top clients

Barking and Dagenham was identified as number 17 of the top fifty clients in the RIBA journal (Nov 06). Judges said that Barking and Dagenham was 'most interesting, and rare as a borough in its bold attitude towards commissioning lively buildings'.

PRIMARY CAPITAL PROGRAMME　　　　　ANNEX 8
ALLOCATION PRIORITIES

Please input your Local Authority three digit Identification number here >　　　301

Barking and Dagenham

Overall Output Assumptions

Number of primary schools.	Number of schools that Local Authority has already reported as modernised since 1997	Assessment of number of schools that need to be rebuilt / taken out of use.	Assessment of number of schools that need to be refurbished.
48	30	None	30

Balance of PCP Grant and PFI (Capex) Capital

(See Guidance Notes)

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
PCP Allocation	All	All	All
Of Which PFI Credits	None	None	None

Barking and Dagenham

Ref No.		DCSF NO	Project Type	Est. Start Date	Est. Finish Date	Est. Cost	How Funded	+25% Surplus Places	No. Additional places	No. places removed	Deprivation	Standards	Condition	Other School Improvement Support	New extended and community services	Sustainability / efficient use of energy	New Facilities.	ICT	SEN Provision	Interface with PFI	Additional comments/notes
1	Cambell Infant School	301/2001	3. Extension	Apr-2009	Feb-2010	£650,000	1;3;7	No	90	None	Yes	N/A	No	7. None required	3. Extended School provision	Not yet known		1	3	N/A	No
2	Cambell Junior School (including PRU)	301/2000	7. Refurb < 50%/Minor works	Jul-2009	Sep-2009	£250,000	3	No	No additional places	None	Yes	Yes	Yes	7. None required	5. Other Services	Not yet known		1	3	2	No	Linked to project number 1.
3	Cambell Infant School	301/2001	7. Refurb < 50%/Minor works	Jul-2009	Jul-2010	£1,500,000	3;7;2	No	13 FTE nursery places	None	Yes	N/A	Yes	7. None required	3. Extended School provision	Yes		7	3	N/A	No	Linked to project number 1. A replacement for demountable building.
4	Beam Primary	301/2024	4. Extension + refurb	Apr-2009	Mar-2011	£4,000,000	2;3;11	No	210	None	Yes	No	Yes	7. None required	3. Extended School provision	Not yet known		1;6;7	3;4	3?	No	Project includes some refurbishment
5	St Peter's Catholic Primary School	301/3503	3. Extension	Jul-2009	May-2010	£1,000,000	2;3;11;12	No	105	None	Yes	No	No	7. None required	3. Extended School provision	No		1;6	3	N/A	No	Project includes internal alterations to improve access and interface with the community.
6	Gascoigne Primary	301/2075	7. Refurb < 50%/Minor works	Apr-2009	Jul-2009	£350,000	3	No	No additional places	None	Yes	Yes	No	7. None required	3. Extended School provision	No		6;7	3	N/A	No
7	Village Infant School	301/2060	7. Refurb < 50%/Minor works	Jul-2009	Jan-2011	£2,000,000	3;11	No	No additional places	None	Yes	N/A	Yes	7. None required	3. Extended School provision	No		1;6;7	3	N/A	No	Project relates to suitability changes to improve learning environment.
8	St Vincent's Catholic Primary School	301/3506	3. Extension	Oct-2009	Jul-2011	£3,000,000	3;11;12	No	No additional places	None	Yes	No	Yes	7. None required	3. Extended School provision	No		6;7;1	3	N/A	No	Project relates to suitability changes to improve learning environment, particularly expanding classroom areas.

Notes: Please insert name of school wherever possible. For projects beyond the CSR period, the following No. description of the project will suffice. Please refer to guidance notes before completing this proforma.

Ref No.	DCSF No	Project Type	Est. Start Date	Est. Finish Date	Est. Cost	How Funded	+25% Surplus Places	No. Additional places	No. places removed	Deprivation	Standards	Condition	Other School Improvement Support	New extended and community services	Sustainability / efficient use of energy	New Facilities.	ICT	SEN Provision	Interface with PFI	Additional comments/notes
1		Primary School for expansion and major refurbishment	4 Extension + refurb	Apr-2011	Jul-2013	£5,000,000	1;2;3;7;11	No	210	None	Yes	No	Yes	7 None required	3 Extended School provision	Not yet known	14;6	3	2	No
2		Primary School for expansion and major refurbishment	4 Extension + refurb	Apr-2011	Jul-2013	£4,000,000	1;2;3;7;11	No	210	None	Yes	No	No	7 None required	3 Extended School provision	Not yet known	1;6	3	N/A	No
3		Primary School for expansion and major refurbishment	4 Extension + refurb	Apr-2011	Jul-2013	£4,500,000	1;2;3;7;11	No	210	None	Yes	No	No	7 None required	3 Extended School provision	Not yet known	14;6	3	N/A	No
4		Primary School for expansion and major refurbishment	4 Extension + refurb	Apr-2011	Jul-2013	£4,000,000	1;2;3;7;11;12	No	105	None	Yes	No	Yes	7 None required	4 Community Use	Not yet known	1;6;7	3	N/A	No

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THE EXECUTIVE

15 JULY 2008

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Title: Dagenham Park Community School – Consultation on Change of Status	FOR DECISION

Summary:

As part of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Strategy for Change (SfC) it was agreed to develop the possibility of Dagenham Park becoming a school with a religious character. Some initial discussions have now taken place with the Governors and the Director of Education at the Church of England Diocese of Chelmsford.

This change would require that all land and buildings currently designated for use by the Dagenham Park Community School would need to be invested in a trust or charitable foundation, but to be returned to the Council in the event that they are no longer required for school purposes.

This report seeks the agreement of the Executive to engage in a wider dialogue with a range of stakeholders now that there is an appropriate Memorandum of Understanding which can be put in place.

Wards Affected:
All Wards

Recommendations:

The Executive is asked to agree:

(i)   The consultation process for Dagenham Park Community School to become a voluntary controlled school as referred to Section 4 of the report; and,

(ii)   The principles of the 'Memorandum of Understanding' as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Reasons:

In order to assist the Council to achieve its Community Priority "Better Education and Learning for all"

Implications:

Financial:

The proposed change of status of Dagenham Park Community School would not materially change the financial liabilities for the school. As a voluntary controlled school, rather than voluntary aided, the Council would retain much of its responsibilities.

The investment in the school under BSF would not change and the plans would move forward as originally intended in the SfC.

Legal:

Full consultation and joint working with the Council's own in-house legal team has

lead to the development of the project to date, including the production of discussion papers for Governors and the drafting of the Memorandum of Understanding.

It is a requirement to progress this proposal that there is a consultation process and a formal notice published in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and DCSF guidance.

Risk Management:
The problems associated with this project from a risk management perspective are that parents will exercise and express a preference for no change and the process which is being adopted would allow for extensive consultation to take in views of not just current, but future parents and the local community.

The second issue relates to the need to have a dialogue with the Office of the Schools' Commission (OSC) about these changes, as the Secretary of State for the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) would need to approve the proposals. The initial contact with OSC indicates that they would welcome the opportunity to offer a more diverse range of provision, which this proposal will deliver.

Social Inclusion and Diversity:
The proposal responds positively to the requirements of OSC to give parents the opportunity to express a preference for their children to attend different types of schools.

Crime and Disorder:
There are no specific crime and disorder issues, but the Executive is asked to note:

▪   As part of the re-design of the school, appropriate consultation will take place with design and security advisers to ensure that the new building is secure and links to community needs and adhesion.

Options Appraisal:
This has been explored through the BSF proposals.

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| Paul Feild | Principal Corporate Solicitor | Tel: 020 8227 3133
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1   Introduction and Background

1.1   As part of the BSF proposals through discussion with the OSC and the preparation of our SfC, it has been agreed in principle that Barking and Dagenham will explore opportunities for a more diverse range of school provision. In particular, it has been agreed that the LA would enter into discussion both with Governors and the Diocese of Chelmsford about a possible change of status for Dagenham Park Community School.

1.2 Some initial discussions have resulted in a positive response from both Governors and the Diocese and the Executive is now being asked to allow that dialogue to progress further.

1.3 The Law does not enable us to change the existing maintained school to a Church of England (CofE) school. The Local Authority (LA) has to close the School and it must then be reopened as a new school. Both steps will need the consent of the Secretary of State for the DCSF (Secretary of State).

As the intention is to establish a CofE school, there is no need to go through a full competition. This needs the Secretary of State's consent. The LA will need to make the case for the school.

1.4 The vision is that the school is going to be a CofE run school and it will work in partnership with the LA and be part of the BSF programme.

2 The Start-up Process

2.1 The establishment of the new school will require that the LA discontinues the existing school and that the CofE (as promoters) establishes a new school.

2.2 To make this a reality, although the legislation formally puts the responsibility in terms of the LA and the promoters, both will have to work together in tandem.

2.3 This means the proposals for discontinuance will clearly have to set out at the same time the case for the establishment of the CofE School as a suitable replacement. Secondly the promoters will need to seek the consent of the Secretary of State to publish proposals without a competition.

3 Memorandum of Understanding

3.1 The Secretary of State's Guidance makes plain the need to ensure there is clarity in terms of roles and support to the proposals between the promoters and the LA. This will need to be evidenced in seeking the Secretary of State's consent. It is recommended that the parties could best establish their commitment to working together and their respective roles by the entering into a Memorandum of Understanding. A draft Memorandum of Understanding prepared by the Council's in-house legal team is attached for agreement. The Diocese of Chelmsford has already agreed to this document in principle and content.

4 Consultation

4.1 The requirement for consultation on both closure and promotion of a new school is extensive. The statutory Guidance Closing a Maintained Mainstream School sets out the procedure in paragraphs 1.2 to 1.6. There is also a statutory duty to consult pupils. The Guidance advises that where proposals are interrelated they should be published as a single notice or the link made clear.

5   **The Best Option for Dagenham Park - Voluntary Controlled School**

5.1   In accordance with legal advice received and the discussion with Governors and the Diocese, it is felt that the best option for Dagenham Park would be for it to become a Voluntary Controlled Church of England School.

5.2   The implications for this are set out in the following paragraphs:

5.2.1   Staffing - The LA continues to employ staff. This removes issues such as the Transfer of Undertaking Regulations and questions around staffing terms and conditions, pensions and union recognition.

5.2.2   Admissions - The LA continues to regulate the school's admissions.

5.2.3   Standards - The LA continues to carry out the school inspections.

5.2.4   The property situation is simplified - The LA is obliged to provide the school site. The LA will have to transfer property on trust but not the playing fields or other land.

5.2.5   Flexibility - This arrangement presents flexibility in that it is possible to move to voluntary aided at a later date should that be considered to be the right direction.

5.3   Once the Secretary of State's consent is received:

5.3.1   Obtain capital funding. (If the proposals form part of BSF funding, this will be provided through the programme, as in this case);

5.3.2   Consult interested parties as specified taking into account views expressed.
-      prepare and publish proposals; and
-      wait for comments/objections.

5.3.3   Consider proposals on the basis of their educational merits and what they have to offer parents and the local community;

5.3.4   Receive a decision; and,

5.3.5   Implement the finalised proposals.

6   **The Characteristics of Schools with a Religious Character**

6.1   Schools with a religious character have particular characteristics that distinguish them from other voluntary or foundation schools:

6.1.1   Instrument of Government - Schools with a religious character have a faith-based ethos that is written into the school's Instrument of Government.

6.1.2   Religious Education (RE) and Collective Worship - In voluntary controlled, foundation and trust schools RE is taught to the locally agreed syllabus. In all three types of school collective worship is conducted according to the tenets of the faith.

6.1.3 Staff Appointments - Voluntary controlled schools with a religious character require that in appointing a headteacher the governing body of a voluntary controlled school may take into account applicants' commitment to the school's religious ethos.

7 Admissions

7.1 For voluntary controlled schools, the admissions authority remains with the local authority – this is a major difference from a voluntary aided school.

7.2 It is possible for a voluntary controlled school to give admission priority to children of their faith, but in practice this does not happen generally because of the role of the local authority.

8 Religious Character Designation - the Criteria

8.1 The Secretary of State may designate a school as a religious character if it meets at least one of the following conditions:

- At least one member of the governing body is appointed as a foundation governor to represent the interests of a religion or religious denomination;

- If the school should close, the premises will be disposed of for the benefit of one or more religions or religious denominations;

- The Trust which owns the site has made it available on the condition that the school provides education in accordance with the tenets of the faith.

9 Inspection of Religious Education

9.1 Once the school is designated by the Secretary of State as having a religious character, it will become subject to further periodic inspections pursuant to section 48 of the Education Act 2005 ("2005 Act") on the provision of denominational education. These inspections are in addition to the section 5 inspections of the 2005 Act and are the responsibility of the foundation governors, subject to consultation with a prescribed person for the denomination.

9.2 The religious inspections will be tasked to determine:

- how well does the school, through its distinctive Christian character, meet the needs of all learners?
- what is the impact of collective worship on the school community?
- how effective is the religious education?
- how effective are the leadership and management of the school as a church school?

10 Education plan information

10.1 The DCSF advises if the proposed school is close to an authority border, or one that will draw pupils from a wide geographical area, the proposals must consider

school place planning information and the children's and young people's plan for neighbouring authorities.

11 Faith information

11.1 If the school is to give priority to applicants of a particular faith or denomination there must be an assessment of the likely demand for places from parents of that faith, and information from the Diocese is being gathered.

12 Information about other schools

12.1 The proposals should take account of other schools in the area (independent as well as maintained) that cater for the same age range as the school. In determining the extent to which these other schools meet current demand there should be consideration of:

- Their type – religious character, single sex, specialist, etc;
- Their location;
- The number of places they provide.

13 Other

13.1 The proposals will need to provide convincing evidence from parents, community groups and/or independent surveys that establish the proposed school is sustainable in the longer term.

In coming to a decision the Secretary of State will consider:

- existing range of local provision – types of school, size, specialisms, etc;
- local standards;
- whether there is an urgent need for the new school;
- parental preferences.

14 Publication

14.1 The details of the proposals must be published in the form of a statutory notice:

- in at least one local newspaper;
- posted at the main entrance of any school(s) named in the proposals in a conspicuous place in the area served by the school (for example the local library, community centre or post office);
- if the school is to be foundation, Trust or voluntary controlled:
- whether the C of E or the LA will establish the school if both are to be involved, the extent to which both will implement the proposals.

15 Governing Bodies of Schools with a Religious character

15.1 If the school is to have a religious character the governing body must apply to the Secretary of State for the school to be designated as such. If it is to become Church of England or Roman Catholic it must get prior approval from the appropriate diocesan authority.

	Voluntary controlled & foundation schools
Parent governors	At least a third of the total
Staff governors	At least two places, but no more than a third of the total, including the head teacher
LA appointed governors	At least one place but no more than a fifth of the total
Community governors	At least a tenth of the total
Foundation governors (partnership governors if the school has no foundation)	At least two places but no more than a quarter of the total

15.2 Foundation and partnership governors - foundation governors are appointed by the school's founding body, church or other organisation named in the school's instrument of government. If the school has a religious character the foundation governors must preserve and develop this. They must also ensure compliance with the Trust deed, if there is one. If a foundation school has no foundation or equivalent body, the foundation governors are replaced by partnership governors appointed by the governing body after a nomination process.

16   Timetable

16.1 To a greater extent, the LA is in the hands of both the Office of the Schools' Commissioner and the Secretary of State to support these proposals.   The need to get approvals - as set out in Section 5 of this report - could be complex, but if this report is approved then officers can proceed.

16.2 As an indication, it would be proposed to aim for a change of status for September 2009. However, this relies heavily on approvals being in place by Autumn 2008, so that parents are aware of the impending change before expressing a preference for their children at that time.

17   Consultation

17.1 The following have been consulted on the production of this report:

Cllr Liam Smith   Deputy Leader and Chair of Governors, Dagenham Park School
Cllr Pat Twomey   Elected Member and Member of Dagenham Park Governing Body
Joe Chesterton   Divisional Director of Corporate Finance
Jennifer Dearing   Corporate Director of Regeneration
Robin Hanton   Group Manager Corporate/Legal

18   Background Papers

Education and Inspection Act 2006
Education Act 2005
DCSF – Guidance: Closing a Maintained Mainstream School

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Dated   **2008**

(1)   **London Borough of Barking and Dagenham**

(2)   **The Chelmsford Diocese Board of Finance**

Memorandum of Understanding
in respect of
Dagenham Park School
Conversion to a
Voluntary Controlled Church of England School

CONTENTS

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING is made on   2008

BETWEEN

The Parties:

(1)   **London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (the "Local Authority")** of Civic Centre, Rainham Road North, Dagenham, RM10 7BN to include any successors, including statutory successors;

(2)   **The Chelmsford Diocese Board of Finance (the "Diocese[d1]")**

BACKGROUND

The Parties are proposing to form a collaboration for the purposes of the conversion of Dagenham Park School from a community school to the status of a Church of England voluntary controlled school comprised of the school based at the site known as:

1.   Dagenham Park School, School Road Dagenham

in pursuance of the Objectives outlined below in Clause 1.

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MoU") sets out the proposed outline terms of the Collaboration.   It is not legally binding pending formal agreement(s) being drawn up to give legal effect to the necessary steps of property and separate funding arrangements. This Project will form part of the Building Schools for the Future ("BSF") program with the aim to increase diversity in secondary education.

The purpose of the Collaboration is to work together and join skills, assets and public sector and Church of England investment to optimise the establishment of a Voluntary Controlled Church of England Secondary School and to ensure that all processes are dealt with as expeditiously as possible in order to achieve the objectives of the MOU.

AGREEMENT

The Parties will work together in good faith to achieve the Objectives set out in Clause 1 below as quickly as is feasible.

This MoU is confidential to the Parties and their advisers.

1.   **OBJECTIVES OF THE COLLABORATION**

1.1   The Objectives of the Collaboration are to:

    1.1.1   Establish a successful partnership of the Local Authority and the Church of England working together to serve the bests interest of the community;

    1.1.2   Close the maintained mainstream community school known as Dagenham Park located at School Road Dagenham;

    1.1.3   Establish a new school on the site of the said Dagenham Park School being a voluntary controlled Church of England Secondary School;

    1.1.4   Raise standards, by working together to raise standards, extended schools objectives e.g. community use of school assets;

    1.1.5   Deliver greater diversity in education to the highest standard;

    1.1.6   Create educational opportunities for Local children and people;

    1.1.7   Establish a school following the mainstream tenets of the Anglican faith with school assemblies and acts of worship balanced with respect for other traditions and cultures with understanding that time to time students may choose not to participate for cultural or religious reasons in some faith activities;

    1.1.8   work to a target date of September 2009 as the commencement date for forms of entry.

1.2   The Projects to be undertaken as a result of the Collaboration will include the following (as may be varied by the removal and/or addition of projects from time to time by the prior written unanimous agreement of the Parties):

    1.2.1   The application to the Secretary of State seeking the closure of Dagenham Park School on the sole basis that it will be a necessary step to establish a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School on the said site;

1.2.2   That the Diocese will make the necessary application to set up a school outside a competition pursuant to the Education and Inspections Act 2006;

1.2.3   That the form of school management will be as a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School;

1.2.4   That the Local Authority will be the employer and pensions administrator of all staff both teaching and non teaching;

1.2.5   That all existing and new employees will be eligible to remain or to join the Local Authority's pension scheme;

1.2.6   That the Local Authority will carry out the necessary inspections of education delivery and standards;

1.2.7   That the Local Authority will be the admissions authority;

1.2.8   Appropriate land[d2] will be transferred under a Trust Deed [d3]to the Diocese to be the premises for the Controlled School

2.   PARAMETERS OF ACTIVITY

2.1   In accordance with the objectives the parties will work together in partnership and in as open and clear communication as will be possible under their respective regulatory frameworks balance with the need from time to time to have full and frank discussions on a confidential basis.

2.2   The Local Authority will commit the Site to the Collaboration in a manner to be agreed.

2.3   The local Authority will appoint a Professional Team to include amongst others: educationalists, costs consultants, property advisers, solicitors and designers and planners and such other professional advisers from time to time as they consider necessary to achieve the Objectives set out in clause 1.

2.4   The Church of England will appoint a Professional Team to include amongst others: educationalists, property advisers, solicitors and designers and planners and such other professional advisers from time to time as they consider necessary to achieve the Objectives set out in clause 1.

2.5   The parties agree that the Professional Teams will (subject to considerations of professional conflicts of interest) seek to work as seamlessly as possible to the objectives set out in clause 1c with a commitment to exchange of information and subject only to commercial, local government, and Church of England Governance interests and Data Protection Act considerations.

2.6   The Local Authority will use their best endeavours subject to always complying with local government obligations to secure funding (both internally sourced and externally) to support the work and the proposed outcomes.

2.7   The Diocese will use their best endeavours subject to always complying with Church of England governance obligations to secure funding (both internally sourced and externally) to support the work and the proposed outcomes.

2.8   The Local Authority will make available their framework panels and funding subject to internal approvals being gained.

3.   **RESOURCES**

3.1   The Local Authority will commit the Site to the Collaboration. In addition, where the Local Authority can secure the internal and external funding towards the desired outcomes then that funding will be committed towards the Collaboration and notified in writing (to include email) to the other signatories as soon as possible.

3.2   Resources from the Diocese will include CofE research and data to support the transfer.

3.3   There will be a Projects Team made up of representatives from the Local Authority, C of E and appropriate consultants which will progress delivery to meet the Collaboration's Objectives, as directed by the Barking and Dagenham Building Schools for the Future's Project Board. The Project Team will have sufficient authority to deliver the Project by means of a programme endorsed by the Project Board.

3.4   The Local Authority will (subject to internal approval being obtained) commit to using its BSF Team to work on the delivery of the objectives.

3.5   The Diocese will commit the following personnel resources on a part time basis: the Director or a Senior Manager and / or similar personnel. Additional staff may be brought in for specific tasks.

4. GOVERNANCE

4.1 There will be established a shadow/ temporary governing body to assist the transfer process[d4]. <mark>The CofE would have two governors on such a body</mark>.

4.2 The BSF Team will report to the BSF Working Group comprising Local Authority representatives not less than once in each calendar month on the progress of the objectives. This group will be chaired by the Local Authority's Director of Children's Services acting as the Project Sponsor.

4.3 The BSF Steering Group will report to the BSF Projects Board on progress as an item on the BSF Project Board Agenda

5. OUTPUTS

The output is to establish a fully functioning Church of England Voluntary controlled Secondary School ready to take formal entry in September 2009

6. TERMINATION

This MOU between the Parties is to remain in force for a period of five (5) years from the date hereof. The MOU may be terminated at an earlier point in time only by prior written unanimous agreement of all Parties.

7. APPLICABILITY OF MoU

The content of the MOU will be reviewed annually by the Projects Team in relation to emerging policies and priorities to ensure its applicability.

8. GOVERNING LAW AND JURISDICTION

This MOU is (and all negotiations and any legal agreements prepared in connection with the Collaboration will be) governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of England and Wales.

Each party hereby confirms its agreement to the terms contained in this MOU.

………………………………………………………………..

Duly authorised for and on behalf of the Chelmsford Diocese Board of Finance

……………………………………………………………….

Duly authorised for and on behalf of London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

(the Local Authority)

THE EXECUTIVE

15 JULY 2008

**REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF
CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Title: Expansion of Ripple Infant School	For Decision

Summary:
This report presents a proposal for the expansion of Ripple Infant School with effect from 1 September 2008. The benefits of this proposal will be to increase school places in the infant age range in order to meet the increasing demand for school places. This increase in demand for school places is being caused by the regeneration of Barking Town Centre and the extended area of Barking and changes in demographics.

Wards Affected: Eastbury Ward

Recommendation(s)
The Executive is recommended to agree the expansion of Ripple Infant School from a two form to a three form entry Infant School with effect from the start of the Autumn Term 2008 as detailed in the report.

Reason(s)
To assist the Council in achieving its Community Priority 'Better Education and Learning for All' and increase the number of primary aged school places.

Implications:

Financial:
The cost of the accommodation to provide space for the additional pupils will be approximately £145,000 in total. Whilst we await the following actual costs, best estimates have been used for the cost of new foundations, media connection, traffic management and professional fees. Some of this has already been incurred to make changes to existing demountables on site together with the former Caretaker's house. This budget cost will be a charge against a capital grant from the DCSF from the Basic Need Safety Valve funding secured in 2006. At present, there is £1.790m of the capital grant not yet assigned to school projects, so the £0.145m call on this grant form this project is affordable.

Legal:
The proposals have been published in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the required procedural and implementation arrangements are being followed.

Risk Management:
We need to make provision as a statutory obligation for additional pupil places in the Borough and these proposals mitigate the risk of failing to provide suitable numbers of places for pupils' learning.

Social Inclusion and Diversity:
In accordance with Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, the Council has introduced a Policy Proofing process to assess the impacts of **all new and revised policies** in terms of race equality, gender, disability, sexuality, faith, age and community cohesion.

The outcome of the impact assessment insofar as this report is concerned is that these

proposals would ensure that pupils have better access to education provision in the primary sector and are able to attend schools around the centre of Barking, rather than being dispersed across the borough.

Crime and Disorder:
No specific implications.

Options Appraisal:

1.	Do nothing	- This would not be possible due to the legal and statutory obligations placed on the Council.
2.	Adapt existing building	- This was rejected due to the disruption it would cause to the existing school life together with the unknown costs and likelihood of this being an option that would be too expensive.
3.	New build	- This option would be too expensive and funding for a new build is not available. Further, this would not be delivered for September 2008, which is when the school places are needed.
4.	Extension (recommended option)	- This provides places for September 2008 and there is cost certainty.

Contact Officer: Mike Freeman	Title: Group Manager- Asset Management and Capital	Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 3492 Fax: 020 8227 3362 E-mail: mike.freeman@lbbd.gov.uk

1.   Introduction and Background

1.1   With the regeneration of Barking Town Centre and extended area of Barking, new homes are being created, being replaced or being refurbished. This investment is attracting more families to the area and with this comes demand for more school places, particularly in the primary school sector. There is also an element of demographic change which is having an impact as properties built for families are once again being occupied by families. The proposed expansion of Ripple Infant School is therefore in response to both existing and potential (forecast) demand.

1.2   In order to accommodate the additional Year 2 class from September 2008 a new demountable classroom is being procured at a cost of £53,649. Due to the restrictive size of this school's site, the brick shelter that forms part of the playground is to be demolished and the demountable classroom moved into its place. The demountable classroom is to be delivered during the school summer holidays.

1.3   Provision of additional classrooms for the schools temporary expansion (Phase I) to Reception Year and Year One from September 2007 was made by:

a. The partial refurbishment of an existing demountable that was being used for the After School Club (ASC). The ASC has now been moved to the dining hall.

b. Converting the Junior IT demountable into a classroom. The IT suite has been moved into the vacant caretaker's house.

1.4 Phase I of the expansion has cost approximately £35,000 and has been partly met through the Basic Need Safety Valve Funding. Both the Infant and Junior schools have contributed to the costs from their delegated budget. The junior school has contributed approximately £4,000 towards the cost of making changes to the caretaker's house. The Infant school has contributed towards the IT costs.

1.5 The ongoing revenue costs of running the proposed school expansion will be funded through the ringfenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This is allocated to authorities on the basis of actual pupil numbers and will therefore take account of the increase in the school population.

2. Current Position

2.1 This increase in pupil population has taken an upward turn over the last 18 months and from last September Ripple Infant School found themselves with additional pupils wanting to attend the school. Ripple Infant School is popular with parents, as is Ripple Junior School, and both schools have waiting lists. In response to this need for additional school places, the school was expanded by 2 classes on a temporary basis from September 2007 by admitting an additional class of up to 30 pupils at Reception age and likewise for Year 1. This has meant Reception Year and Year 1 have moved up from two forms of entry to three forms of entry whilst Year 2 had remained at two forms of entry.

3. Consultation Process

3.1 As part of the consultation process, a meeting of the governing body of the school was held on 5 March 2008 at which the governors agreed to support the proposal to expand the school permanently from two to three forms of entry from 01 September 2008 subject to accommodation provision being made available which met with their requirements.

3.2 Letters were sent to Parents, Carers and Guardians of Pupils, Staff and Governors of Ripple Infant School informing them of the proposal to expand the school and the reasons for this.

3.3 The council have published a formal notice to change the current schools' structure with effect from the start of the Autumn Term, 1 September 2008 with a new standard admission number of 90 pupils in each year group. The notice was published in the local press on 9 April 2008 and copies of the notice were displayed in Ripple Infant and Junior Schools and Barking Library. The notice period expired on 6 May 2008.

4. Responses to the Consultation Process

4.1 No responses were received regarding the published notice.

4.2 A further meeting was held with the Governing Body on 22 April 2008 to discuss the outcomes and progress of the consultation process and the development of the project in terms of providing the new demountable. Governors have expressed a view that the new demountable classroom needs to be sited so that it is less intrusive into the play space, at the School which is very limited, and a revised

submission has been made to Development Control for consideration. The second aspect was a concern about the available toilet facilities in the School as the School will be taking some 90 pupils more than it was designed for. Within the new demountable unit it is proposed to provide two toilet cubicles plus an access toilet but this is still not sufficient and discussions are ongoing with the architect about providing additional toilets linked to the classrooms outside the main building. This will have to be a separate planning application. The cost of this has been included in the overall costing of £145,000.

5. Implications

5.1 The benefits seen in this proposal is the creation of 90 additional primary school places during a period of rapid population growth in the borough. This will assist the Council in fulfilling its duty to provide every child in the borough with a school place.

6. Consultees

6.1 The following were consulted in the preparation of this report:

Cllr Jeanne Alexander   - Lead Member
Robin Hanton   - Group Manager – Corporate Legal Department
Joe Chesterton   - Divisional Director Corporate Finance
David Tully   - Group Manager – Children's Finance (Interim)
David Rosenthal   - Principle Inspector – Children's Services
Paul Kelly   - Group Manager – Admissions and Attendance
Paul Ansell   - Procurement Officer
Antoinette Antoinne   - Internal Communications Officer
Chidi Okwesilieze   - Human Resource Officer

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

1. Legislation which allows this – Education and Inspections Act 2006.
2. Consultation Letter dated 17 March 2008
3. Notice published 9 April 2008