

Meeting of the

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 6 March 2007 at 7.00 p.m.

A G E N D A

VENUE

M71, 7th Floor, Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London,
E14 2BG

Members:	Deputies (if any):
Chair: Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman Vice-Chair: Councillor A A Sardar	
Councillor Simon Rouse Councillor Shahed Ali Councillor Clair Hawkins Councillor Shiria Khatun Councillor Mohammed Abdus Salique Councillor Stephanie Eaton Councillor Oliur Rahman	Councillor Louise Alexander, (Designated Deputy representing Councillor Stephanie Eaton) Councillor Shamim A. Chowdhury, (Designated Deputy representing Councillors Shahid Ali and Oliur Rahman) Councillor Peter Golds, (Designated Deputy representing Councillor Simon Rouse) Councillor Ahmed Hussain, (Designated Deputy representing Councillors Shahid Ali and Oliur Rahman) Councillor Abjol Miah, (Designated Deputy representing Councillors Shahid Ali and Oliur Rahman) Councillor Fozol Miah, (Designated Deputy representing Councillors Shahid Ali and Oliur Rahman) Councillor Ahmed Adam Omer, (Designated Deputy representing Councillors Motin Uz-Zaman, A A Sardar, Clair Hawkins, Shiria Khatun and

Mohammed Abdus Salique)
Councillor M. Shahid Ali, (Designated
Deputy representing Councillors Motin Uz-
Zaman, A A Sardar, Clair Hawkins, Shiria
Khatun and Mohammed Abdus Salique)
Councillor Alexander Heslop, (Designated
Deputy representing Councillors Motin Uz-
Zaman, A A Sardar, Clair Hawkins, Shiria
Khatun and Mohammed Abdus Salique)

[Note: The quorum for this body is 4 voting Members].

Co-opted Members:

Mr H Mueenuddin	– Muslim Community Representative
Mr D McLaughlin	– Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster Representative

If you require any further information relating to this meeting, would like to request a large print, Braille or audio version of this document, or would like to discuss access arrangements or any other special requirements, please contact: Angus Dixon, Democratic Services, Tel: 020 7364 4850, E-mail: angus.dixon@towerhamlets.gov.uk

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 6 March 2007

7.00 p.m.

SECTION ONE

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by Members, including those restricting Members from voting on the questions detailed in Section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act, 1992.

Note from the Chief Executive

In accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct, Members must declare any **personal interests** they have in any item on the agenda or as they arise during the course of the meeting. Members must orally indicate to which item their interest relates. If a Member has a personal interest he/she must also consider whether or not that interest is a **prejudicial personal interest** and take the necessary action. When considering whether or not they have a declarable interest, Members should consult pages 181 to 184 of the Council's Constitution. Please note that all Members present at a Committee meeting (in whatever capacity) are required to declare any personal or prejudicial interests.

A **personal interest** is, generally, one that would affect a Member (either directly or through a connection with a relevant person or organisation) more than other people in London, in respect of the item of business under consideration at the meeting. If a member of the public, knowing all the relevant facts, would view a Member's personal interest in the item under consideration as so substantial that it would appear likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest, then the Member has a **prejudicial personal interest**.

Consequences:

- If a Member has a **personal interest**: he/she must declare the interest but can stay, speak and vote.
- If the Member has **prejudicial personal interest**: he/she must declare the interest, cannot speak or vote on the item and must leave the room.

When declaring an interest, Members are requested to specify the nature of the interest, the particular agenda item to which the interest relates and to also specify whether the interest is of a personal or personal and prejudicial nature. This procedure is designed to assist the public's understanding of the meeting and is also designed to enable a full entry to be made in the Statutory Register of Interests which is kept by the Head of Democratic Renewal and Engagement on behalf of the Monitoring Officer.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES 1 - 8

To confirm as a correct record of the proceedings the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6th February, 2007.

4. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

To be notified at the meeting.

5. REQUESTS FOR DEPUTATIONS

The following deputation request has been received:

- (i) Christine Phillips - Housing Investment and Arms Length Management Strategies

6. SECTION ONE REPORTS 'CALLED IN'

The following Section One reports have been 'called in' from the meeting of Cabinet held on 10th January, 2007.

6.1 REPORT CALLED IN - Housing Investment Strategy 9 - 52

(Time allowed – 30 minutes)

6.2 REPORT CALLED IN - Disposal of Poplar Baths 53 - 66

(Time allocated – 30 minutes)

7. SCRUTINY SPOTLIGHT - CULTURE

There will be a presentation on the challenges and opportunities facing the Council with provision for questions and discussion.

(Time allocated – 30 minutes)

8. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

8.1 Tower Hamlets Index - Monitoring Report 67 - 108

(Time allocated – 20 minutes)

8.2 Equalities Action Plan 109 - 124

(Time allocated – 15 minutes)

8.3 Strategic Communications Report 125 - 128

(Time allocated – 15 minutes)

8.4 Members' Enquires 129 - 148

(Time allocated – 15 minutes)

9. SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT

9.1 Scrutiny Recommendation Tracking 149 - 196

(Time allocated – 15 minutes)

10. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF SECTION ONE (UNRESTRICTED) CABINET PAPERS

(Time allocated – 30 minutes).

11. ANY OTHER SECTION ONE (UNRESTRICTED) BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

In view of the contents of the remaining items on the agenda the Committee is recommended to adopt the following motion:

“That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting for the consideration of the Section Two business on the grounds that it contains information defined as Exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972.”

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL SECTION (Pink Papers)

The exempt committee papers in the agenda will contain information, which is commercially, legally or personally sensitive and should not be divulged to third parties. If you do not wish to retain these papers after the meeting, please hand them to the Committee Officer present.

13. ANY OTHER SECTION TWO (RESTRICTED) BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

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LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

HELD AT 7.00 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2007

**M71, 7TH FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT,
LONDON, E14 2BG**

Members Present:

Councillor Motin Uz-Zaman (Chair)
Councillor Simon Rouse
Councillor Shahed Ali
Councillor Clair Hawkins
Councillor Shiria Khatun
Councillor Mohammed Abdus Salique
Councillor Stephanie Eaton
Councillor Oliur Rahman
Councillor Ahmed Adam Omer

Other Councillors Present:

Councillor Tim Archer
Councillor Waiseul Islam
Councillor Sirajul Islam
Councillor Joshua Peck
Councillor Helal Abbas

Co-opted Members Present:

Mr H Mueenuddin – Muslim Community Representative

Guests Present:

–

Officers Present:

Alex Cosgrave – Corporate Director, Environment and Culture
– Corporate Director, Children's Services
– Service Head, Corporate Finance
Claire Symonds – Head of Customer Access
Michael Keating – (Service Head, Research & Scrutiny)
Graham White – (Legal Adviser)
Sara Williams – (Assistant Chief Executive)
Alan Steward – (Policy Scrutiny Manager)
Angus Dixon – (Democratic Services)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor A A Sardar, for whom Councillor Ahmed Adam Omer was deputising.

RESOLVED

That the apologies for absence be noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

3. UNRESTRICTED MINUTES

The Chair **MOVED** and it was

RESOLVED

That the Section 1 Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 9th January, 2007 be confirmed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them accordingly.

4. REQUESTS TO SUBMIT PETITIONS

No requests to submit petitions had been received.

5. REQUESTS FOR DEPUTATIONS

At the request of the Chair, Mr Dixon, Committee Clerk, informed the meeting that one deputation request had been received from Archant London with respect to East End Life.

The Chair welcomed the deputation and asked them to address the meeting. Mr Starbrook and Mr Hooker, on behalf of the deputation, presented to the Committee their belief that the consultation undertaken by the Council in regard to East End Life had been inadequate and overly restrictive in terms of the timelines imposed upon them to provide information. They further presented options with regard to Archant London taking over the publishing of East End Life, and the benefits that they believed would accrue to Council through this.

Mr Starbrook and Mr Hooker responded to a series of questions put by members covering issues such as 'sexploitation', readership and race headlines.

The Chair thanked the deputation for their attendance.

6. SECTION ONE REPORTS 'CALLED IN'

6.1 REPORT CALLED IN - East End Life Development Options

At the request of the Chair, Michael Keating, Head of Research and Scrutiny, presented the call-in procedure to the Committee.

Councillor Tim Archer for the Call-In Members outlined their main concerns, principally with regard to their belief that the report outlined far too few development options for East End Life. They considered that the options presented in the report did not allow Cabinet sufficient scope to consider concerns with the publication including that it was driving out competition, was overly political, and was being subsidised by tax payers to the equivalent of 1% of Council Tax.

Committee Members put detailed questions to the Deputy Leader, Councillor Sirajul Islam, who was substituting for the Lead Member, and Ms Sara Williams, Assistant Chief Executive, on a number of related issues including the lack of cross party material published, effective distribution of the paper around the Borough and the lack of up-to-date cost/benefit analysis.

Councillor Islam and Ms Williams responded on behalf of the Cabinet in detail on the points raised, stating that there were no barriers to cross party coverage in the paper, as stories were included on the basis of merit. They agreed that there were issues with ensuring the paper was evenly distributed throughout the Borough.

The Chair put forward his view that the paper needed to provide greater cross-party exposure as promoting Council services and activities was part of its role. The Chair stated that this could be included as part of the framework for East End Life decided by Cabinet.

MOVED by Councillor Simon Rouse and **SECONDED** by Councillor Stephanie Eaton:

“A fresh report should be tabled for full Cabinet consideration. This report should detail over and above the current report:

1. A full option set for East End Life including supporting financial impact. These options should include, but not be limited to:
 - Ceasing publication
 - Amending the format from a commercial format to simply a production of statutory and information notices, with no editorial content
 - Frequency options that should include monthly production, quarterly production in both commercial and non-commercial formats

2. An exit strategy outlining how the Council could exit East End Life with supporting timescales and financial impact.
3. The range of commercial rates that would be available to the Council should it choose to place its advertising with commercial papers. This should include rate card costs but also the likely bulk advertising negotiations that the Council believes it could obtain.
4. A more detailed consideration under section 5 of the Editorial Approach outlining how East End Life can be produced independent of Majority Group direction and ensuring balanced input from across all political groups. This should include how opposition Councillors views and opinions on Council services can be incorporated in reports.
5. The detailed budget and costs report for East End Life outlining current expenditure by accounts line. This should incorporate expenditure on temporary staff, consultants and contractors and all staff expenses, including entertainment costs.”

MOVED as an amendment by the Chair and **SECONDED** by Councillor Clair Hawkins that the motion be amended as follows:

“A fresh report should be tabled for full Cabinet consideration. This report should detail over and above the current report a more detailed consideration of how the East End Life framework can be changed to ensure that the publication reflects the activities of all Councillors and thereby ensures balanced input from across all political groups. This should include how opposition Councillors views and opinions on Council services can be incorporated in reports.”

The amendment was put to the meeting and was **LOST**.

The original motion was then put to the meeting. Four votes were recorded for the motion and four votes against the motion with one abstention. The Chair used his casting vote against the motion and the motion was therefore **LOST**.

Accordingly the Chair declared that Cabinet decision 10.12 ‘East End Life – Development Options’ (CAB120/067) would not be referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration.

6.2 REPORT CALLED IN - Review of Parking Services' Fees and Charges

Councillor Waiseul Islam for the Call-In Members outlined the main concerns that they held with the review of Parking Services, including doubts as to the effectiveness of the price of parking as a means of controlling demand for parking and to whether any increases in parking revenue as a result of any changes will be redirected towards better public transport and environmental initiatives. There were also concerns over equality and anti-poverty implications arising from the review.

Committee Members put detailed questions to the Deputy Leader, Councillor Sirajul Islam and Ms Cosgrave, Corporate Director Environment and Culture, on a number of related issues including the wider issue of insufficient parking in the Borough, emissions-based parking charges, and the impacts of removing pensioners' entitlement to free scratchcards for parking.

Councillor Sirajul Islam and Ms Alex Cosgrave responded on behalf of the Cabinet on the points raised, referring to the tabled written response document and stating that the comments made on emissions-based charging will be considered in the consultation process.

The Committee felt that there were concerns about the report and decisions by Cabinet. In particular, Members felt that in bringing the review forward, there needed to be:

- Consideration of the impact on Over 60s of the removal of free access to parking scratchcards, in particular the potential isolation of elderly people due to reduced affordability for family and friends to visit.
- Greater understanding of the equality impacts that the increased charges will have on deprived families as most do not have the same degree of access to private 'off-street' parking compared to more affluent residents and also often face more restricted public transport options due to the location of their residences.
- Commitments to genuine and wide ranging consultation on the introduction of emissions-based permit charging with analysis undertaken with regard to the financial implications across the various socio-economic groups of the community (with a view to minimising the impact on deprived residents).

The Committee were of the opinion that the Cabinet decisions should be referred back for further consideration. Accordingly, the Chair **Moved** and it was:

RESOLVED

That Cabinet be requested to agree that the implementation of the new proposed parking services' fees and charges be delayed in order to give further consideration to their concerns and alternative options.

The Committee recommend that Cabinet:

1. Reinstate the free scratchcard provision for residents over 60.
2. Request an impact assessment on the proposed increases in parking charges for less affluent residents whose requirements cannot be adequately serviced by public transport (due to location, disability, family size etc) and therefore are dependant upon private car usage.
3. Seek assurances that consultation on the potential introduction of emissions based charging for parking is supported by analysis on equality

and anti-poverty implications considering that older and family sized cars will generally face higher emissions charges.

7. BUDGET & POLICY FRAMEWORK

7.1 General Fund Revenue Budget, Council Tax and Capital Programme 2007/8

The Lead Member for Performance and Resources, Councillor Josh Peck, presented this item. Councillor Peck discussed some of the key limitations and factors within which the 2007/08 Budget had to be formulated. These limitations included the tightening financial situation that the Council faced due to Government efficiency targets, and the substantial increases in requirements for children's, and even more so adult, services.

The Committee discussed Cabinet's budget proposals. There was discussion about the use of consultants, efficiencies, the level of reserves, consultation over the budget and the interrelationship between housing allocation policies and the demand for care packages.

Members also wanted an early discussion next year on the role that Overview and Scrutiny Committee can play in ensuring the robustness of the budget.

Councillor Peck responded in detail on the points raised agreeing that it would be valuable to have the Committee involved at an earlier stage of the Budget process. Councillor Peck also agreed to send the Committee a written copy of his presentation notes.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and the Committee endorse the comments of the Lead Member regarding the need for the earlier involvement of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the budget setting process, and the Committee request that Cabinet consider this to further assist in ensuring the robustness of the budget.

7.2 Youth Justice Plan 2007/8

The Lead Member for Children's Services, Councillor Helal Abbas, presented this item. Councillor Abbas discussed that the Youth Justice Plan was a draft and welcomed suggestions from the Committee.

The Committee sought assurances that in circumstances when parenting intervention was being considered, that the situation was critically assessed to ensure that it was being properly targeted. Furthermore, it was essential that when young people were placed in secure accommodation, particularly outside of the borough, that this was of good quality. The Committee also wanted to see more indication in the plan of the challenges that services faced in improving youth justice and the lessons learnt from one year to the next.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted and the above comments be referred to Cabinet for information.

8. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

8.1 Annual Review of Social Services Complaints Procedure 2005/06

Ms Claire Symonds, Head of Customer Access, presented the report on Social Services Complaints outlining that the Customer Access team are focussing on reducing the time taken to respond to complaints through increased liaison with other areas of the Council.

The Committee discussed with Ms Symonds benchmarking, integration of Social Care and Corporate Complaints reporting, and the non-reporting of complaints. The Committee thanked Ms Symonds for the level of detail provided within and the quality of the report, and expressed the importance of maintaining this standard in any amalgamation of the Social Care and Corporate Complaints reports.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

MOVED by the Chair, **SECONDED** by Councillor Mohammed Abdus Salique and

RESOLVED that in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 14.1.13 the meeting be extended under Rule 9 by 30 minutes.

9. SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT

9.1 Verbal Updates from Scrutiny Leads

Scrutiny Leads reported on their areas of investigation across the breadth of their portfolios. All the Leads reported good progress and thanked the officers, panels, organisations etc with whom they worked.

The Chair thanked all the Scrutiny Leads for their updates.

RESOLVED

That the verbal updates provided by Scrutiny Leads be noted.

**10. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY OF SECTION ONE (UNRESTRICTED)
CABINET PAPERS**

Four questions were tabled for consideration by Councillors Shahed Ali and Oliur Rahman regarding Cabinet 7th February, 2007 Agenda Item 7.1 'Housing Investment Strategy'.

The Committee discussed the questions and decided that subject to some minor wording changes that the questions should be put to Cabinet.

RESOLVED

That the questions as tabled be amended as per the Committee's discussion and then submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

CLOSE OF MEETING

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting at 10:10pm.

Agenda Item 6.1

Committee OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY	Date 6th March, 2007	Classification Unrestricted	Report No.	Agenda Item No. 6.1
Report of: ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE		Title: REPORT "CALLED IN" – Housing Investment Strategy (CAB 124/067)		
Originating Officer(s): Angus Dixon		Ward(s) affected: All		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The attached report of the Corporate Director of Development and Renewal, Emma Peters, and Director of Housing Management, Maureen McEleney was considered by the Cabinet on 7th February, 2007 but has been "Called In" for further consideration by Councillors Tim Archer, Phil Briscoe, Emma Jones, Peter Golds and Rupert Eckhardt in accordance with the provisions of Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee consider the contents of the attached report, review the Cabinet's provisional decisions arising and decide whether to accept them or refer the matter back to Cabinet with proposals, together with reasons.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97)

LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief description of "background paper"

**Cabinet report (CAB 124/067)
dated 7th February, 2007**

Name and telephone number of holder
and address where open to inspection

**Angus Dixon
020 7364 4850**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The attached report of the Corporate Director of Development and Renewal, Emma Peters, and Director of Housing Management, Maureen McEleney, was considered by the Cabinet on 7th February, 2007. It however has been “Called In” for further consideration by Councillors Tim Archer, Phil Briscoe, Emma Jones, Peter Golds and Rupert Eckhardt in accordance with the provisions of Part 4 of the Council’s Constitution.

3.2 The Cabinet after considering the attached report provisionally agreed:-

1. That the investment strategy set out in Section 7 of the report (CAB124/067), be agreed;
2. That the Authority set up an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) called Tower Hamlets Homes to manage the retained housing stock on its behalf;
3. That it be noted that alternative management arrangements may be put in place for areas identified for regeneration, but that depending on the timing of approval and finalisation of these arrangements, Tower Hamlets Homes may manage these on an interim basis;
4. That the establishment of a shadow board for Tower Hamlets Homes comprising 4 Council nominees, 4 resident members and 4 independent members, be agreed;
5. That the Director of Housing Management be instructed to put in place arrangements for the appointment of resident board members and independent board members after consultation with the Lead Member for Housing and Development;
6. That it be noted that the estimated costs of £335,000 for setting up Tower Hamlets Homes will be accommodated within existing Housing budgets;
7. That it be noted that staff within the Council’s Landlord Structure will be subject to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 and 2006 (TUPE); and
8. That it be noted that further reports will be brought to Cabinet setting out specific proposals in respect of areas identified for regeneration, affordable home ownership proposals and temporary to permanent accommodation proposals.

4. THE “CALL IN” REQUISITION

4.1 The reasons advanced in the “Call In” requisition are set out below:-

The Council’s plans for housing investment and stock transfer are highly charged issues in Tower Hamlets and have the potential to divide our community more than any other issue. We have a rapidly growing population combined with sharply increasing land prices that together are lowering the standard of living of a large number of people in the borough.

Tower Hamlets has undergone, and is still undergoing incredible change in terms of infrastructure, demographics, and economics. This has led to rapid growth and development and in many instances an increasing gap between elements of society. In particular this call-in notes:

- 12% of households are overcrowded whilst 25% live in unsuitable housing, at the same time the average cost of a house in the borough is £300,000.
- 62% of council owned housing stock falls below the Decent Homes Standard, requiring an immediate investment of £350m, and that a further £219m is required over the next 8 years for newly arising repair needs.
- Over the next four years the Council's currently available funding is £131m and the hoped for ALMO funds will be up to £190m. This leaves a large funding gap even with the ALMO funds, which are not guaranteed.
- 15% of ALMOs have not reached the required two star status in order to receive the extra funding, and the council is expecting set-up costs of the ALMO of £350,000.

The report produced for Cabinet lacked detail and properly worked up alternatives and contingency plans. Specifically:

- There is no detailed plan as to how the ALMO would achieve two star status, which is required in order to receive the £190m extra funding.
- There is no contingency plan should the ALMO not achieve two star status.
- There are no detailed plans as to how the Council will fund the investment gap that will still exist even if the ALMO plan is successful.

There is insufficient detail on other options mentioned and no clear recommendation or course of action on the alternative or even complimentary options in the report. For example the report mentions a number of potential estate redevelopment and regeneration options, but lacks detail on next steps and expectations.

In addition the report sets out three management options for the future of the retained estates, but provides no details on two of them. The report states that only the third option is possible without providing information on why this is the case and we feel that more information is needed before the Cabinet can make this type of decision.

The Call-in members feel that the report made to Cabinet does not adequately address the pressing housing issues facing the Borough.

Finally there has been no consultation taken with residents to date regarding the ALMO option.

5. ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ACTION

5.1 In accordance with the Committee's procedures, the "Call In" Members have provided an alternative course of action for consideration:-

"Councillors make the following recommendations:

- 1) That a decision regarding the ALMO be delayed until the residents of the existing council stock estates are consulted on whether they wish to see an ALMO created or whether they wish to remain as they are.
- 2) More details of the 3 potential options for the future management of the Council's retained estates should be provided so that members can make a much more informed decision than is currently the case.
- 3) Detailed plans should be produced showing how the ALMO would achieve its two star status, before £350,000 is spent on its inception.
- 4) More detailed and financed plans are drawn up to show how the Council will meet the funding gap that is expected even with the ALMO funds, and also what the Council's contingency will be should the ALMO not be successful in gaining two-star status.
- 5) The Council should also lobby central government for further assistance, given the fact that Tower Hamlets, as the report suggests is a unique borough with unique problems and opportunities, central government should be asked to provide further support. This further support could be relaxing the rules for the borough around borrowing for direct investment and a relaxation of the strict rules around eligibility for other Central Government grants.

6. CONSIDERATION OF THE "CALL IN"

6.1 The following procedure is to be followed for consideration of the "Call In".

- (a) Presentation of the "Call In" by one of the "Call In" Members followed by questions.
- (b) Response from the Lead Member/officers followed by questions.
- (c) General debate followed by decision.

N.B. – In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Protocols and Guidance adopted by the Committee at its meeting on 6 June, 2006, the "Call In" Members are not allowed to participate in the general debate.

6.2 It is open to the Committee to either resolve to take no action which would have the effect of endorsing the original Cabinet decisions, or the Committee could refer the matter back to the Cabinet for further consideration setting out the nature of its concerns and possibly recommending an alternative course of action.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 That the Committee consider the contents of the attached report, review the Cabinet's provisional decisions arising and decide whether to accept them or refer the matter back to Cabinet with proposals, together with reasons.

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Committee OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY	Date 6th March, 2007	Classification Unrestricted	Report No.	Agenda Item No. 6.1
Report of: ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE		Title: REPORT "CALLED IN" – Housing Investment Strategy (CAB 124/067)		
Originating Officer(s): Angus Dixon		Ward(s) affected: All		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The attached report of the Corporate Director of Development and Renewal, Emma Peters, and Director of Housing Management, Maureen McEleney was considered by the Cabinet on 7th February, 2007 but has been "Called In" for further consideration by Councillors Louise Alexander, Tim O'Flaherty, Ahmed Hussain, Dulal Uddin and Abjol Miah in accordance with the provisions of Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee consider the contents of the attached report, review the Cabinet's provisional decisions arising and decide whether to accept them or refer the matter back to Cabinet with proposals, together with reasons.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97) LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief description of "background paper"

**Cabinet report (CAB 124/067)
dated 7th February, 2007**

Name and telephone number of holder
and address where open to inspection

**Angus Dixon
020 7364 4850**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The attached report of the Corporate Director of Development and Renewal, Emma Peters, and Director of Housing Management, Maureen McEleney, was considered by the Cabinet on 7th February, 2007. It however has been “Called In” for further consideration by Councillors Louise Alexander, Tim O’Flaherty, Ahmed Hussain, Dulal Uddin and Abjol Miah in accordance with the provisions of Part 4 of the Council’s Constitution.

3.2 The Cabinet after considering the attached report provisionally agreed:-

1. That the investment strategy set out in Section 7 of the report (CAB124/067), be agreed;
2. That the Authority set up an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) called Tower Hamlets Homes to manage the retained housing stock on its behalf;
3. That it be noted that alternative management arrangements may be put in place for areas identified for regeneration, but that depending on the timing of approval and finalisation of these arrangements, Tower Hamlets Homes may manage these on an interim basis;
4. That the establishment of a shadow board for Tower Hamlets Homes comprising 4 Council nominees, 4 resident members and 4 independent members, be agreed;
5. That the Director of Housing Management be instructed to put in place arrangements for the appointment of resident board members and independent board members after consultation with the Lead Member for Housing and Development;
6. That it be noted that the estimated costs of £335,000 for setting up Tower Hamlets Homes will be accommodated within existing Housing budgets;
7. That it be noted that staff within the Council’s Landlord Structure will be subject to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 and 2006 (TUPE); and
8. That it be noted that further reports will be brought to Cabinet setting out specific proposals in respect of areas identified for regeneration, affordable home ownership proposals and temporary to permanent accommodation proposals.

4. THE “CALL IN” REQUISITION

4.1 The reasons advanced in the “Call In” requisition are set out below:-

We have to highlight two major shortcomings of this report:

1. It fails to address the real housing needs of Tower Hamlets – to improve existing and build new rented affordable homes
2. It moves to set up an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) without providing robust evidence that this will be cost-effective, generate funding from

government, deliver decent homes to the government's 2010 target, or be acceptable to tenants

1. Housing to meet real need

It is not acceptable to use the term 'affordable' as this report does repeatedly. The report itself acknowledges that almost all housing options in Tower Hamlets (including low cost homes ownership etc.) are unaffordable except for those earning more than £50,000 pa. This makes the case for far more public housing for rent – on which the report is silent, while neighbouring boroughs and ARCH (Association of authorities Retaining Council Housing) as well as the Council Housing Group, TUC and major trade unions are supporting tenants lobbying for direct investment to improve existing and build new council homes.

The Council's LDP and the Mayor have significantly different targets for affordable housing. The Council's interpretation of 'viability' in relation to the Mayor's 50% affordability target would appear to concede failure on the target. The report (5.8.4) acknowledges that the value of intermediate housing is 'limited', but proposes that this will provide 20% of 'affordable' homes, with no evidence or justification provided.

Para. 5.9.2.gives no projections for housing through section 106, although the Council's website indicates that £24 million from this source remains 'on account', and only 6 out of 67 agreements listed provide for 'affordable' housing. With key assets being sold off, which have been funded wholly or in part through the HRA, the Capital Receipts funding figures are inadequate. The figures for investment on the Ocean estate also appear to be lower than those given in the capital programme, and further (5.9.3) suggests that this funding is not available to improve homes on the Ocean estate. Key information is missing - more detail and rigour is needed if the report is to provide a basis for viable decision-making on a core council and government commitment: to ensure decent homes.

The lack of credible and consistent evidence in the report confirms the fear of many tenants that Tower Hamlets is adopting the government's 'plan B' for council housing break up through ALMO, where stock transfer proves unacceptable to tenants.

2. ALMO not the answer

If government is willing to provide £192 million of investment for council homes from on-balance sheet public funds, why is this conditional on setting up a private management company – unless full privatization is the long term goal? ALMOs are far less accountable to elected councillors. The whole point of the ALMO is to separate housing services from the council. There is little evidence that this separation leads to improved services. On the contrary, experience is that it leads to duplication and confusion, with much extra spending bringing no direct benefit to tenants: overly complicated contracts that are difficult and expensive to monitor, lack of clarity in separation of Council/ALMO functions, higher costs for inspections, logos, signage AND salaries to senior managers!

The report confirms concerns about the lack of democracy involved and the potential conflicts of interest, in the appointment of 'independent' Board members: eg the Chair of the Islington ALMO is also the Chair of Old Ford HA. Tenants are in the minority on ALMO boards. When the Waltham Forest ALMO applied to have a tenant majority on its Board, their funding was refused. When it changed its mind,

funding was approved! As with RSLs, Board members will be bound by company law to put the interests of the ALMO before that of tenants.

ALMOs are intended, and lobbying, to become independent organisations evolving into RSLs. Established ALMOs are already talking about 'trading' with other agencies (e.g. City West Homes in Westminster). The proposed Tower Hamlets ALMO is to work with private sector partners including RSLs to build private housing for sale on estate land. Tenants have rejected transfer for this very reason on many estates - making this a flagrant abuse of democracy and further privatisation by the back door (while RSLs also being pushed to abandon 'not for profit' status: <http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/article/?id=1448562>). Tenants on estates that have voted against transfer or pulled out of the stock transfer process are rightly furious at this attempt to override them, and elected councillors should support them.

The Housing Choice ballots are deeply discredited, through abuse of voting, one-sided campaigning, rigging of the constituencies, voting in show flats and other 'dirty tricks'. It is not acceptable to compound this by abandoning any pretense at democracy in setting up an ALMO. Having failed to allow debate or scrutiny by Councillors, the Borough Wide Tenants Compact or trade unions, the report proposes to appoint hand-picked shadow board members (including tenants) and to deny once again the opportunity for a fair and democratic vote before transferring staff and the management of tenants' homes to an ALMO and out of direct council management.

Several Council publications and statements have reinforced the conclusion of the 2003 Pricewaterhouse Coopers report, that ALMO is not suitable for the housing needs of Tower Hamlets. The current national context is not good, with ALMOs set up in previous rounds have been instructed despite their objections to delay works to achieve decent homes, thus breaking promises to tenants.

The 16 Authorities which made bids in ALMO round 6 still awaiting a government decision delayed since September 2006, and one of these, LB Enfield in February 2007 suspended plans to set up an ALMO due to funding delays, saying it 'understands that the number and size of the bids exceeded Government expectations and there is not enough money to go round' (see Inside Housing <http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/article/?id=1448637>)

5. ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ACTION

5.1 In accordance with the Committee's procedures, the "Call In" Members have provided an alternative course of action for consideration:-

"Councillors make the following recommendations:

1. Further detailed evidence of
 - a) housing investment needs with updated figures
 - b) available funding from all sources which could be utilized to meet this top priority (including all HRA receipts and maximum use of other available receipts)
 - c) an assessment of all publicly owned land and other assets available for building up to 100% genuinely affordable homes for rent

- d) reassessing use of s106, planning and other processes to achieve the maximum possible affordable, environmentally-neutralised quality homes as quickly as possible

2. Redraft plans for turning council owned temporary housing to permanent without disposing of further valuable assets to RSLs. Reconsider the lessons of Newham's Local Space initiative, as this is currently under investigation.

3. Detailed reassessment of the ALMO case, and of the arguments against as well as for this option. Fair and balanced information with contributions by Councillors, the Borough-Wide Compact and trade unions, and public discussion and debate involving tenants associations, tenants and leaseholders, to report back with findings and recommendations. Commitment to a full, fair ballot before any decision to set up an ALMO is taken.

4. Discussion with ARCH, LGA and ministers on the pressing need for the Fourth Option of a level playing field on borrowing and ring-fencing all the money that belongs to council housing for reinvestment. Change is overdue and Tower Hamlets Council has a duty to add its voice to those demanding change: The ODPM Select Committee described government policy as 'dogmatic' and called for a 'level playing field' and an 'investment allowance' (ODPM Select Committee Report on Decent Homes, May 2004); the Audit Commission described existing funding arrangements as 'perverse' and recommended that government 'review the council housing subsidy system', and negative subsidy (Audit Commission, Financing Council Housing, June 2005).

Government policy is under review with the Hills report due 20 Feb, the next Comprehensive Spending Review including proposed housing investment postponed till Autumn 2007, Labour's policy forum housing working group is due to report this month, and intense pressure from Tenants, Councillors and MPs for direct investment.

6. CONSIDERATION OF THE "CALL IN"

6.1 The following procedure is to be followed for consideration of the "Call In".

- (a) Presentation of the "Call In" by one of the "Call In" Members followed by questions.
- (b) Response from the Lead Member/officers followed by questions.
- (c) General debate followed by decision.

N.B. – In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Protocols and Guidance adopted by the Committee at its meeting on 6 June, 2006, the "Call In" Members are not allowed to participate in the general debate.

6.2 It is open to the Committee to either resolve to take no action which would have the effect of endorsing the original Cabinet decisions, or the Committee could refer the matter back to the Cabinet for further consideration setting out the nature of its concerns and possibly recommending an alternative course of action.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 That the Committee consider the contents of the attached report, review the Cabinet's provisional decisions arising and decide whether to accept them or refer the matter back to Cabinet with proposals, together with reasons.

Committee	Date	Classification	Report No:	Agenda No:
Cabinet	7 th February 2007	Unrestricted	CAB 124/067	
Report of: Corporate Director of Development and Renewal, Director of Housing Management Author: Emma Peters Maureen McEleney		Title: Housing Investment Strategy Wards affected: All		

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out a vision for housing in Tower Hamlets and a revised investment strategy which will respond to the changes to the Government's Decent Homes investment programmes, maximise the funding opportunities presented by the Decent Homes Programme and create new opportunities for affordable housing in the Borough. The report outlines a range of approaches depending on different investment needs and investment opportunities for different estates and housing types within the Borough.
- 1.2 The report is set within the overall vision for housing to create long term sustainable communities, thriving markets of homes for rent and ownership, ensuring residents have access to the size and type of homes they need and to ensure the provision of decent homes and decent places for all our residents.
- 1.3 The aims of the proposals are:
- 1.3.1 To maximise and secure investment in homes for Tower Hamlets residents;

Local Government Act, 2000 (Section 97)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this Report

Brief description of "back ground papers"

Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection.

Maureen McEleney ext. 7134

- 1.3.2 To deliver investment for existing Council homes in order to achieve Decent Homes Plus and Decent Places in order to create sustainable communities;
- 1.3.3 To encourage the development of new homes for rent and low cost ownership to reduce overcrowding and address demand by working with Registered Social Landlords and developers in the Borough;
- 1.3.4 To ensure that Tower Hamlets is fully involved in regional and sub-regional developments including the Thames Gateway.
- 1.3.5 To regenerate certain estates and to remodel and transform housing in these areas.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 Agree the investment strategy set out in Section 7 of this report;
- 2.2 Agree that the Council sets up an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) called Tower Hamlets Homes to manage the retained housing stock on its behalf;
- 2.3 Note that alternative management arrangements may be put in place for areas identified for regeneration but that depending on the timing of approval and finalisation of these arrangements, Tower Hamlets Homes may manage these on an interim basis.

Subject to Cabinet agreement of recommendation 2.2 above

- 2.4 Agree to the establishment of a shadow board for Tower Hamlets Homes comprising 4 Council nominees, 4 resident members and 4 independent members;
- 2.5 Instruct the Director of Housing Management to put in place arrangements for the appointment of resident board members and independent board members in consultation with the Lead Councillor for Development and Housing.
- 2.6 Note that the estimated costs of £335,000 for setting up Tower Hamlets Homes will be accommodated within existing Housing budgets;
- 2.7 Note that staff within the Council's Landlord Structure will be subject to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 and 2006 (TUPE).
- 2.8 Note that further reports will be brought to Cabinet setting out specific proposals in respect of areas identified for regeneration, affordable home ownership proposals and temporary to permanent accommodation proposals.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In August 2006, Cabinet considered a report on the delivery of Decent Homes in the Borough and agreed to receive a further report appraising the funding opportunities for investment in the housing stock.
- 3.2 The main focus of the Councils Housing Investment Policy since 2001 has been the development of the Housing Choice transfer programme. This resulted from the Housing Stock Options Appraisal carried out by PricewaterhouseCoopers in 2000/01, which demonstrated that stock transfer offered the best route to secure the investment needed for the Council's housing stock. Since 2001, the Council has been implementing its consultation strategy, Housing Choice, designed to enable tenants in each area to consider the options for their particular area, and select partner RSL landlords for potential housing transfer
- 3.3 A further study by PricewaterhouseCooper in 2003 confirmed that the best option for investment through available government programmes of stock transfer, ALMO and PFI remained the Housing Choice programme. This study also confirmed that not all homes would transfer and that for this stock the more limited option of an ALMO was a preferred option over PFI, which was not considered to be a whole stock solution.
- 3.4 The achievements of Housing Choice have been significant for the Borough and for its residents. Through Housing Choice over £313 million of investment has been secured for the 9,610 homes that have successfully transferred to RSL's. A further £110 million is due to be secured through transfer of 3,900 homes on estates where tenants have voted in favour of transfer.
- 3.5 It is no longer possible to submit additional estates to DGLG for inclusion in the funded transfer programme as the 2006 bidding round was the last opportunity to do so. Therefore it is necessary to review the investment options that are now available for those homes that remain with the Council, including estates that will need a regeneration approach to meet their particular needs.
- 3.6 In addition to the need to achieve decent homes, the wider investment strategy seeks to address the need for affordable homes for rent and ownership to meet demand as well as the wider need to create sustainable and thriving communities. The following table illustrates the number of **affordable homes** completed in the borough since 2000:

Year	Total Completions
2000/01	595
2001/02	554
2002/03	765
2003/04	563
2004/05	583
2005/06	1007
Total	4067

- 3.7 The Local Development Framework and Area Action Plans encourage policies to enable the construction of more social housing, and affordable properties to buy through shared ownership and other schemes.
- 3.8 Proposals are also currently being developed to enable the resources used to pay for current temporary accommodation for homeless households to be used to increase supply and enable conversion to permanent accommodation over time. This will contribute to the development of sustainable communities as well as increasing supply.

4. VISION: DECENT HOMES FOR ALL NEIGHBOURHOODS

- 4.1 The vision of the Council for housing in this borough is that all its residents – of whatever income or background – can find a decent home in a decent neighbourhood across a choice of different tenure types
- 4.2 In spite of the many challenges facing the borough – where the average salary at Canary Wharf has reached £100,000 whilst 45% of the community overall is on benefits and where population is growing faster than anywhere else in the UK – that vision drives the housing investment strategy and informs our approach to neighbourhood development and management.
- 4.3 With these challenges come opportunities which make the borough unique and which allow for, and require innovation from the Council. The key opportunity is provided by the private sector, which is keen to invest in a borough whose economy is growing faster than almost anywhere else in the UK. The economic forces leading to the speedy and extensive residential development of the borough needs to be harnessed to realise our vision of decent homes in decent neighbourhoods. This ambition is grounded in the unique, dynamic reality of Tower Hamlets in the opening decade of the new millennium
- 4.4. This ambition reflects the two key themes of the Tower Hamlets Community Plan: “Living Well” - improving housing and promoting healthy living – and “Creating and Sharing Prosperity” - bringing investment into the borough and ensuring that all are residents are in a position to benefit from and contribute to growing economic prosperity.
- 4.5 To achieve this requires the Council to use and coordinate the public and private funding available, for both housing and also for health, social and community facilities and education, leisure and public realm, as the ambition is to ensure successful places as well as quality housing. It will take significant leadership by and innovation from the council to coordinate funding streams and programmes and to bring all the various partners in the private, public sectors and community sectors within a common strategy.
- 4.6 Although Decent Homes funding has been significant in and for the Borough, that investment programme cannot deliver the Borough vision by itself. Nor can, in itself, the massive private investment from the house-builders even

though they are delivering here more homes per year- and more affordable homes per year- than anywhere else in the country. A co-ordinated, strategic and partnership based approach to these different sources of investment is the key to future delivery of decent homes for all in decent neighbourhoods.

- 4.7 In conclusion, the vision for housing in the borough may be summarised as:
- Additional mixed tenure homes for families and non families alike
 - An improved, well managed public realm
 - Social and educational facilities integrated into regenerated, inclusive, cohesive neighbourhoods
 - All managed in a responsive, accessible and accountable way.
- 4.8 This will lead to the creation of modernised and refurbished homes, within a well designed environment creating safe and secure places. These will be integrated with new homes built to high standards of design achieving high levels of thermal efficiency. The range of mix and tenure will be accommodated within both traditional and modern housing types linked to and grounded in the wider community and integrated with locality based social, health and educational provision.

5 DEVELOPING THE HOUSING INVESTMENT STRATEGY

- 5.1 The proposed Investment Strategy contributes towards achieving the Local Strategic Partnership vision, established by the Community Plan, to improve the quality of life for everyone living and working in Tower Hamlets.
- 5.2 The Investment Strategy will underpin Tower Hamlets' Housing Strategy, responding to the key issues facing Tower Hamlets within the wider national, regional and sub-regional context, establishing a local approach to developing and improving homes, and housing related services.
- 5.3 The Strategy seeks to establish a clear framework for housing in Tower Hamlets based on analysis of the factors that influence current and future housing need of the borough's communities. These include:
- Growing population – largest forecast increase in London
 - Diverse population – almost half from minority ethnic communities
 - Young population – residents aged 24 to 30 make up 34% of all residents
 - High proportion of residents with special needs – estimated at 16% of all households
 - High levels of overcrowding – around 12% of all households are overcrowded
 - Homelessness – around 2,500 currently without a permanent home
 - Unemployment – in Tower Hamlets this is currently 6%, compared with 2.5% in the rest of the UK and 3.2% in London
 - Benefit Dependency of about 70% within social for rent accommodation
 - Declining proportion of social housing – from 87% in 1985 to 42% in 2005

- High cost of market housing – average cost of a home in the borough is over £300,000 (DCLG – Oct 06)
- High proportion of households on low incomes – over 43% have an annual income of below £10,000
- Condition of council owned stock – around 62% of homes falling below the Decent Homes Standard at April 2006.
- Investment need – significant gap between resources available and investment required
- High proportion of households living in unsuitable housing – estimated by the Housing Needs Survey 2004 to be 24.8%
- The increase in the number of households registered for housing – number increased by 7,000 between 1998 and 2004.

Yet at the same time:

- Average incomes in the borough have risen to £45,000 pa
- There are two jobs for every economically active person in the borough
- The Tower Hamlets economy grew faster than any other district in the UK in 2006
- There were 3,471 housing completions during the monitoring period of 2005-6, of which 29% were affordable homes
- A further 2033 affordable homes were secured through s,106 planning obligations, out of a total of 6949 housing units that were granted planning permission during the same monitoring period

5.4 Nonetheless, the Housing Needs Survey, undertaken in 2004, demonstrates the acute shortage of affordable housing in Tower Hamlets. The survey estimates that a minimum of 3,021 additional affordable homes are required each year to tackle the backlog of existing housing need and address future need. This need is exacerbated by the accelerating cost of homes in the borough; although these are still lower than in parts of London the average price of a home in Tower Hamlets stood at just over £300,000 at the end of 2006.

5.5 London Context

5.5.1 In addition to the borough context the Investment Strategy needs to respond to regional requirements. The Mayor's London Plan sets out principles for new development in the Capital, including:

- Maximising the potential of each site
- Enhancing the public realm
- Contributing to the mitigation of the effects of climate change
- Respecting local context, history, character and communities
- Promoting accessibility, sustainability and adaptability
- Securing safety.

5.5.2 The London Plan estimates that east London should accommodate a minimum of 30 per cent of the total additional homes for London. It identifies Tower Hamlets as a key area with potential that will contribute to the future

planning, development and building of sustainable communities within London.

- 5.5.3 Following recommendations from the Mayor's Housing Commission in 2000 the Mayor adopted a strategic target in the *London Plan* that 50% of all additional homes should be affordable (subject to viability); within that, 70% should be social housing and 30% intermediate housing.
- 5.5.4 On 13 July 2006 the Government announced a package of proposals to enhance the Mayor of London's role in four key areas – housing, learning and skills, planning, and water and waste.
- 5.5.5 The Mayor's proposed new housing powers include a statutory Housing Strategy which is intended to provide clear strategic leadership in delivering a Housing Strategy for all tenures and all communities in London. These will complement stronger planning powers, which ensure that borough development plans and strategic development applications are in conformity with the Mayor's *London Plan*.
- The Mayor will prepare and publish a statutory Housing Strategy for London and a Strategic Housing Investment Plan, setting out the priorities to meet the housing needs of all Londoners.
 - The Mayor will decide the broad distribution of the affordable housing part of the 'Regional Housing Pot' in line with the Strategy and the Mayor will decide in broad terms how public money for new affordable housing will be spent.
- 5.5.6 In addition the Mayor will have a new duty to prepare and publish a statutory climate change and energy strategy and a climate change adaptation strategy. The Mayor aims to cut London's carbon emissions rapidly, including from residential buildings, and the new Housing Strategy will play a key role in supporting his work on climate change.
- 5.5.7 These proposals form part of a Greater London Authority Bill which has now been put forward to Parliament. The Bill sets out the duty, framework and timetable for the Mayor's Housing Strategy. The Government anticipates that the Bill will receive Royal Assent in 2007.
- 5.5.8 In the interim period, the Government has transferred the roles and responsibilities of the London Housing Board to the Mayor. The Board has ceased to exist and the Mayor will now undertake this role.
- 5.5.9 The Mayor has expressed his intention to use the new powers vigorously and has stated that housing in the capital will have a new focus and a higher priority. In particular:
- Building more homes of the right type and in the right place to meet people's diverse needs and keep the economy buoyant.

- Creating communities that are strong, inclusive and sustainable and supported by high quality social, physical and economic infrastructure.
- Ensuring that less well off Londoners can find homes they can afford that meet their needs, by improving housing opportunities, choice and mobility.
- Reducing housing's environmental impacts, ensuring they are adapted for climate change and cheaper to run through the better design of new homes and renovation of existing homes.

5.5.10 The Mayor has recently published a Consultation Paper - Towards a London Housing Strategy - that establishes seven key areas of policy that the Mayor believes should be the focus of debate over the coming months. These are areas where he believes policy or delivery needs to be strengthened. These are:

- *Putting people first*: linking the Mayor's Housing Strategy closely to and helping deliver the wider policy aims set out in the Mayor's other strategies.
- *Building more homes*: increasing housing supply and achieving the new targets set out in the revised *London Plan*.
- *Building the right homes in the right places*: making the best use of investment and utilising London's housing capacity to deliver the mix of homes London needs
- *Creating places where people want to live*: promoting good urban design and aligning housing and other investment to create an inclusive and connected city.
- *Reviewing intermediate housing*: meeting the needs of Londoners on low to middle incomes by increasing investment in intermediate housing.
- *Promoting housing choice and mobility*: ensuring all Londoners can access housing opportunities by offering more choices across London.
- *Tackling climate change*: helping reduce energy costs and reduce carbon emissions from London's homes and ensuring that homes are adapted to inevitable changes in our climate.

5.6 East London Thames Gateway Context

5.6.1 The Investment Strategy is also responsive to the sub regional context. Tower Hamlets sits at the heart of many new development opportunities in east London and the wider Thames Gateway and has a key role in delivering the Governments plans for increasing the supply of affordable housing.

5.6.2 The Thames Gateway is one of the four Growth Areas identified in the Governments Communities Plan to deliver a step change in the supply of new housing to meet the needs of London and the Southeast.

5.6.3 The London Thames Gateway Directors Board in conjunction with the Thames Gateway Partnership commissioned the London School of Economics to work with them in developing a Thames Gateway Housing Framework. The Framework recognises the importance of good social and physical infrastructure to support new development and promotes the benefits of a 'twin track' approach, placing emphasis on established communities and building out from existing town centres and communities in addition to major new development.

5.6.4 The East London Housing Partnership was launched in 2003 bringing together all boroughs in the sub-region. The Partnership is committed to the social and physical regeneration of east London, ensuring that everyone has a decent home in mixed, balanced and sustainable communities. The East London sub-region incorporates:

- London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
- Corporation of London
- London Borough of Hackney
- London Borough of Havering
- London Borough of Newham
- London Borough of Redbridge
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets
- London Borough of Waltham Forest

The Thames Gateway incorporates the above Boroughs plus:

- London Borough of Bexley
- London Borough of Lewisham
- London Borough of Greenwich

5.6.5 The East London Partnership published the East London Affordable Housing Investment Framework 2004/2005, which established agreed priorities and principles underpinning sub-regional working. The first East London Housing Strategy has been published, setting out policy priorities and related work programmes for the period until 2010. These priorities include tackling housing need and overcrowding, promoting tenure mix and choice, renewing private sector housing and making new developments places that are safe and attractive to all communities.

5.6.6 The proposed Investment Strategy therefore aims to respond to the regional and sub regional priorities by developing proposals to continue to secure decent homes as well as address unsuitable housing, tackle overcrowding and increase the supply of new homes to meet existing and future need and develop mixed and sustainable communities.

5.7 Tower Hamlets Profile

5.7.1 There has been a significant growth in the number of homes in Tower Hamlets over the last 20 years, from just over 62,000 homes in 1985 to almost 92,000 homes in 2005. Over the same period the tenure profile has changed dramatically.

Tower Hamlets Tenure Profile

Year	Council	RSL	Private
1985	79%	8%	13%
1990	63%	9%	28%
1995	51%	13%	36%
2000	36%	20%	44%
2005	24%	18%	58%

Source: Tower Hamlets Records (HIP)

5.7.2 In the mid-1980s, 87% of dwellings were within the social housing sector. Since then significant changes to the tenure profile have taken place due to the growth in private sector development, investment in regeneration and associated RSL development, stock transfer and high levels of Right to Buy sales. In the 20 year period 1985 to 2005 Tower Hamlets has gone from holding 79% of housing stock to 24%. In the same period the proportion of stock owned by registered social landlords has increased from 8% to 18%.

5.7.3 All but a small proportion of council homes are flats and maisonettes and more than one third of homes are situated in blocks of six storeys or more. Almost one-third of the Council's flatted blocks were built between the 1960s and 1980s. This has left the Council with a legacy of property and estate disrepair as well as a number of design challenges.

5.7.4 Despite the additional resources for housing investment which have been made available by the government in recent years, the aggregated low level of resources available since the early 1980s has left a significant backlog of disrepair and improvement needs. The transfer of a very large number of homes owned by the former Greater London Council in 1986 with an inadequate repair dowry increased the difficulties in maintaining stock to a satisfactory standard. The magnitude of this problem is reflected in the number of homes failing the Decent Homes Standard (DHS), estimated to be 10,897 homes (out of 17,649) at 1 April 2006.

5.8 Housing Needs

5.8.1 The Housing Needs Survey indicates the minimum number of affordable homes required to meet demand. At the time of the last survey it was estimated that 80,767 households were living in the Borough, of these almost a quarter stated that they were living in unsuitable housing. Overcrowding continues to be the primary reason why housing is unsuitable and the provision of new housing of the right size, type, location and cost is the only long-term solution to meet this need. Homelessness remains a key concern with over 60% of those presenting

as homeless having been evicted by friends or family illustrating the pressures caused by overcrowding.

- 5.8.2 The need for affordable housing is driven in part by the high cost of market housing within the Borough. Market analysis undertaken as part of the Housing Needs Survey in 2004, indicates the average price of buying a home in the Borough ranges from £162,000.00 for a 1 bedroom property through to £274,000 for a 4 bedroom home. These prices have risen – the average market house price in October 2006 was over £300,000. The cost of market rents is also very high with an average ranging from £186 to £408 per week. Just over 43% of households have an income of below £10,000 clearly highlighting the inability of many households to afford market housing.
- 5.8.3 The Housing Needs Survey estimates that 96.6% of households currently living in unsuitable housing (and wishing to move within the Borough) cannot afford market housing.
- 5.8.4 The survey also provides information about the extent to which intermediate housing, defined as housing costing more than social rent levels but below market cost, can help address housing need. Results show that whilst there is potential for some households' housing need to be met through intermediate options, the scope for this is limited. Intermediate forms of housing in the Borough are generally provided at costs close to the market levels and therefore affordability remains a key issue for the majority of households in housing need. This is particularly acute for key worker households.
- 5.8.5 In addition demographic information shows that Tower Hamlets has a rapidly growing population and that this is likely to continue, with a forecast increase of a further 20,000 in the period until 2016; the largest forecast increase of all London Boroughs.
- 5.8.6 The population is ethnically diverse with almost half from minority ethnic communities. The largest of these is the Bangladeshi community who makes up 34% of the Borough population; the largest single minority ethnic population of any London Borough. Overcrowding disproportionately affects the Bangladeshi community with 64% of households registered for transfer lacking one or more bedrooms.
- 5.8.7 Tower Hamlets has a much higher proportion of the population from younger age groups compared to both inner London and England. In addition, the elderly population is forecast to continue growing and together with the numbers of young people within the population, forming households and seeking accommodation, gives a demonstrable and increasing need for smaller homes, whilst there remains an ongoing requirement to address the need for larger homes.

5.9 Investment Context

5.9.1 In the local authority context the principal capital funding sources available are:

- Major Repairs Allowance
- Supported Capital Expenditure
- Specific Grants
- Capital Receipts/ S106

The following table sets out the estimated amount of capital funding available to Tower Hamlets for Housing for 2006/7 to 2009/10. This funding will continue to reduce mainly because a number of the funding streams are based on rented stock numbers, which are reducing.

5.9.2 Funding available

	2006/7 '000's	2007/8 '000's	2008/9 '000's	2009/10 '000's
Major Repairs Allowance	13,927	12,050	11,790	11,790
Supported Capital Expenditure	15,795	15,593	12,250	12,250
Capital Receipts & Revenue Contributions	6,522	3,100	1,000	1,500
Specific Grants	360	420	450	500
New Deal for communities *	155	500	5,000	6,750
TOTAL	36,759	31,663	30,490	32,790

* subject to a deliverable scheme for Ocean Estate being put in place.

5.9.3 Certain elements of the overall funding are for specific purposes only. In particular the Major Repairs Allowance can only be used for work to Council homes. Specific grants such as Disabled Facilities Grant must be used for the purpose allocated and NDC funding, if secured can only be used for infrastructure works to assist the NDC regeneration programme. NDC grant cannot be used to fund decent homes works to Council homes. Should an alternative regeneration programme for Ocean Estate be agreed with DCLG as set out later in this report a proportion of the Supported Capital Expenditure available to the Council will be required as match funding to the NDC Grant.

5.9.4 The immediate (Catch Up) repair needs to Council homes as at April 2006 (total tenanted stock 17,649) were estimated at just under £350m. Newly arising need over the next ten years to 2015 for these properties was estimated at a further £219m (all costs at 2006 prices).

5.9.5 This clearly illustrates the significant gap between what is required to deliver decent homes within sustainable communities, and what is currently available to the Council through its own resources. This underlines the need for imaginative solutions that harness the opportunities that exist as a result of the strong private sector market for housing development.

6 THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE FOR THE FUTURE

- 6.1 As the result of a Stock Options Appraisal in 2001 the Council agreed that stock transfer was the best option to secure the investment needed and therefore developed the Housing Choice programme, which was designed to ensure residents were able to explore the stock transfer option and ultimately to make decisions on an estate by estate basis about stock transfer to an RSL.
- 6.2 Twenty Housing Choice constituencies covering 13,500 homes have chosen to transfer under this programme bringing in over £420m of investment into these estates. This represents 40% of council homes. In addition Right to Buy has continued although this is now decreasing significantly and there has also been some limited demolition. An appendix setting out details of the current stock position in relation to Housing Choice is attached to this report. (Appendix 1)
- 6.3 However, 45 estates comprising over 21,300 homes are awaiting some form of major investment in their estates and for these the options available are set out below, together with potential options for how the development of more affordable homes can be achieved.

6.4 Regeneration Options

- 6.4.1 A key element of the investment strategy is the regeneration of estates as part of comprehensive redevelopment programmes capturing opportunities from brownfield redevelopment sites. This will enable the reconfiguration of some or parts of some estates to help provide more family homes through use of improved design to make better use of the land available.
- 6.4.2 Spatial analysis through the Local Development Framework documents, master plans, the Central Area Action Plan as well as analysis of infill opportunities on existing estates has identified a wide range of redevelopment opportunities. The adjacency of development opportunities and housing estates not only provide opportunities to achieve decent homes, but also decent places. Close configuration of development sites and housing estates provide unique opportunities to capture the value of development, deliver infrastructure improvements, provide high quality amenity space and improve design quality.
- 6.4.3 Comprehensive approaches to housing regeneration can enable estates to be reconfigured to better meet the needs of local residents as well as improve the local community. For example, blocks of less popular studio properties could be replaced with family housing to help tackle overcrowding. Appropriately phased redevelopment programmes also enable the timely implementation of infrastructure and services as well as options to decant residents to homes within the same neighbourhood during the redevelopment process.
- 6.4.4 Some estates have already been identified through existing programmes for comprehensive regeneration opportunities such as Ocean. Robin Hood Gardens also has potential opportunities associated with the redevelopment of adjacent industrial land identified in the Leaside Area Action Plan. Through the Central Area Action Plan a series of other estates and potential redevelopment sites have been identified in Mile End, Bethnal Green,

Shadwell and the Limehouse Cut. The Initial Housing and Planning Opportunities and Constraints Map in Appendix 2 highlights the relationship between possible key redevelopment areas and existing housing estates requiring investment.

- 6.4.5 The map uses a traffic light system to identify the potential for regeneration around key housing estate areas. Green identifies high levels of change and regeneration; yellow indicates areas with possibility or opportunities for some regeneration; and red indicates areas that are unlikely to have substantial changes, either because work has already been undertaken, or because of known planning constraints which limit large scale regeneration.
- 6.4.6 Overlaid, against these housing estates areas, are clusters of development sites identified in the emerging Central Area Action Plan, which are likely to undergo significant regeneration.
- 6.4.7 The map identifies opportunity areas to improve co-ordination of regeneration and investment in order to maximise the benefits for the community.
- 6.4.8 In developing the detailed investment proposals and refreshing the current stock condition survey alternative options are being developed for some blocks within estates, including blocks made up primarily of more unpopular bedsitter units. Detailed option appraisals of this potential will be needed on an estate by estate basis looking at refurbishment costs, leaseholder buyout costs, and redevelopment potential in order to assess whether or not the option is viable in each particular instance.
- 6.4.6 Mixed use schemes can include employment and enterprise elements and facilitate mixed communities tackling many factors which contribute to exclusion and multiple-deprivation. Further benefits include the potential to facilitate infrastructure such as modern community healthcare facilities or localised renewable energy projects including Combined Heat and Power facilities.
- 6.4.7 Investment in decent homes is more likely to be sustainable if the homes are in decent places that are safe, accessible, supported by modern infrastructure and services and have access to employment opportunities. It is therefore vital that housing regeneration and investment is part of a comprehensive regeneration and place-making package.

6.5 Development of a Decent Homes Plus Standard for Tower Hamlets

- 6.5.1 The Decent Homes Standard is a minimum standard set by the government and does not include a number of areas of work, including environmental and security improvements, and the repair or replacement of lifts.
- 6.5.2 Latest DCLG guidance on the delivery of Decent Homes published in June 2006 suggests it should be regarded as a standard that triggers action rather than the standard to which work should be carried out. This approach is designed to encourage a more comprehensive approach to delivering decent places and estates rather than focussing just on the physical condition of key building components.

6.5.3 Local authorities are therefore encouraged to consult with their residents and adopt a “Decent Homes Plus” standard for their areas to reflect their local priorities and to use this as a local standard to which all homes should be improved. For Tower Hamlets this process would be linked to the development of the investment programme for retained Council homes and informed by the estimates of funding that will be available.

6.6 Individual Estates

6.6.1 Key estates will need tailored solutions, including:

- Continuing Stock Transfer Option – for those estates that where sufficient progress has been achieved through the Housing Choice Programme - this option remains for a number of estates that have a place on the stock transfer programme as it remains their best option for investment. However this option is no longer available for any estate not already on the DCLG transfer programme. The Government has now ended the potential for any further transfer options that require gap funding by closing the decent homes programme.
- Ocean Estate/NDC, which will be the subject of a further report to Cabinet setting out the requirements of the DCLG rapid review of the NDC which assesses the implications for Ocean NDC’s programme of the vote against transfer in September 2006. Officers are currently working on proposals to safeguard the NDC grant and a report on the options for Ocean Estate will be presented to Cabinet in March 2007.
- English Partnerships, the Government’s national land and development agency, has acquired an area of land adjacent to the East India Dock complex and Robin Hood Gardens and have approached the Council about the potential for a joint approach to regenerating the area. Feasibility work is being undertaken by EP and Council officers, which may lead to a more detailed proposal being presented to Cabinet for decision in due course.

6.7 Low Cost Home Ownership

6.7.1 In addition to the development of an investment strategy to address the investment needed in our existing stock, and utilise land assets and development opportunities as part of this process, proposals are also being developed to put in place a Community Land Trust. This is linked to our LAA commitment to develop long term, sustainable, affordable home ownership models. The proposal is to develop a new model of affordable home ownership, targeting particularly larger family accommodation that would enable people on lower and medium incomes to remain in the borough.

6.7.2 Affordable homes to buy are needed in addition to affordable homes to rent. Although Tower Hamlets is delivering more new homes than any other borough in London (13,650 total new units between 1999 and 2005) the

majority of these are not accessible to local residents nor, looked at in isolation, do they promote “mixed communities”. In common with most of inner London there has been an emphasis on the construction of one and two bedroom flats in high density developments, that promote the concept of “young urban living”, marketed on the basis of proximity to the City or Canary Wharf; waterside locations and leisure facilities such as bars, restaurants, and private gymnasiums

- 6.7.3 The shortage of family accommodation is therefore as pronounced for middle income or affluent households as it is for the poorest residents. In consequence it can become a pattern for those planning a family, or with a growing family, to seek to leave Tower Hamlets. This could have a potential knock-on effect on different aspects of community cohesion, perhaps particularly in respect of the variety of aspirational role models available for young people, the mix of intake in schools, on models of parenting in neighbourhoods etc. These have consequences for anti social behaviour, employers’ perception of the readiness of young people for employment and can lead to a range of “social problems” becoming entrenched.
- 6.7.4 There is also a significant implication for the stability of public sector provision in inner city areas such as Tower Hamlets. The National Health Service is one of the biggest local employers, with Barts and the London NHS Trust alone employing 8000 people. The Local Authority employs nearly 6000, in its schools alone. Police, the Fire service and public transport all require employees, most of whom will be earning no more than average incomes. The housing options for all these workers within the borough are restricted; increasingly, if public sector employees in the borough want families, they cannot afford to buy in the borough. This puts pressure on transport infrastructure and affects recruitment and retention in key services.
- 6.7.5 Sites are being identified to develop an equity stake model to provide homes affordable to local residents. This offers a radical approach to the development of affordable housing for ownership and will provide a potential future model for development. The LDA has offered financial support to develop this option.
- 6.7.6 In developing the option, a number of areas need to be resolved if we are to resolve the constraints and barriers which have traditionally meant that this type of “intermediate” housing provision does not meet the needs of many Tower Hamlets residents. These include:
- Land values, particularly of public sector landholdings and the ability of the public sector to discount land values and/or to defer its receipt until the end of the development and/or to take an equity stake in lieu of a receipt.
 - Density levels and in particular maximum densities compatible with sustainable family housing.
 - Sale options tailored to the needs of local people that go beyond traditional shared ownership and shared equity models

- Longer term affordability issues such as service charges and cost in use, especially in relation to energy costs.
- Mixed tenure developments that increase choice and flexibility for householders e.g. by maximising the stair-casing potential into and out of home ownership.
- Grant implications and other costs to the public purse e.g. the impact of housing corporation grant regimes and the potential impact of tenure mix on the calls on local public services.
- Re-sale issues and the ability to maintain the public subsidy when the unit is resold.
- The way in which the development could capture the increasing land value over time.
- The need to ensure a re-sale market which gives certainty to purchasers that they can move on when required and share in the increased value of their property and contributes to the maintenance of a balanced community
- The role of RSLs in developing/managing/retaining equity in the stock.
- The role of a special purpose development partnership or other company or governance structure.
- The role of public sector partners as landowners, funders and enablers.
- Construction methods
- Energy efficiency and other sustainability measures.
- The ability to provide the opportunity for families of Tower Hamlets residents to remain in the borough e.g. 'first refusal' options

6.7.7 These issues will need to be addressed through the development of an innovative financial model or models in consultation with LDA, EP and the Housing Corporation. It is proposed to report back to Cabinet with more details in early summer 2007.

6.8 Temporary to Permanent Accommodation

- 6.8.1 Tower Hamlets in common with all councils provides temporary accommodation for homeless households. Some of this accommodation is within the Council stock and some is made up of private sector properties that are leased by the Council.
- 6.8.2 The potential to use some of this portfolio to create "temporary to permanent" homes is currently being explored to enable the permanent supply of

accommodation to be increased, to make best use of the assets available and to create sustainable communities.

- 6.8.3 In order to achieve this, a social landlord partner would be needed who would own/manage the temporary accommodation and use the rental income to enable further properties to be acquired, with a long-term business plan that would enable properties to be converted to permanent accommodation over a given period of time. This is a similar model to “Local Space” an RSL specifically set up for this purpose by Newham Council.
- 6.8.4 The GLA has recently invited London local authorities to bid for grant funding to enable temporary to permanent schemes to be developed through the Settled Homes Initiative. £30 million is being made available to help councils expand temporary to permanent settled homes initiatives where these help meet the targets of reducing the number of households in temporary accommodation. Tower Hamlets has made a bid of circa. £5 million to this initiative.
- 6.8.5 It is intended to bring a detailed report on proposals for a temporary to permanent scheme to the March Cabinet meeting.

6.9 Management Options

- 6.9.1 There are 3 potential options for the future management of the Council’s retained estates:
- Managing the homes “in house”.
 - Inviting tenders from other housing management providers under EC tendering and assessment procedures.
 - Management agreement with an Arms length Management Organisation (ALMO). This is exempt from EC procurement requirements.
- 6.9.2 Only the third option has the potential to generate additional investment to that available to the Council through existing routes. Therefore where estates do not transfer, an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) remains the next best option. It does not generate the level of resources and benefits stock transfer can bring but can lead to the delivery of decent homes through the Governments Decent homes programme.
- 6.9.3 The 2006 Decent Homes bidding round was the last round to provide a certain funding stream. Cabinet at its meeting on the 2nd August 2006 agreed to submit a bid to DCLG for £192.2m of decent homes funding through the ALMO route in order to maximise the Councils options. The result of this application is currently awaited.
- 6.9.4 Under the ALMO programme the level of investment is limited to the cost of the Decent Homes programme plus 5%. This is designed to deliver essential investment to buildings including roofs, windows etc as well as kitchens and

bathrooms which fail the decent homes criteria. Decent Homes funding is provided by additional borrowing credits to the local authority, and loan charges are recovered through Housing Revenue Account Subsidy. This funding is only available to deliver decent homes via an ALMO and cannot be used for any other purpose.

- 6.9.5 ALMOs manage council housing through a management agreement. Contracting housing management to an ALMO is very different to a transfer under Housing Choice. With an ALMO tenants remain secure tenants of the council; leaseholders remain council leaseholders; the council continues to set both housing policy and the rent and the ALMO is 100% owned by the Council. The only change is in the management arrangements for the services provided to residents, and these would continue to be closely monitored by the Council. An ALMO has an independent board made up of residents, council nominees and independent representatives who are responsible for all aspects of day to day management. Local Authority Staff transfer to the ALMO on existing terms and conditions through TUPE.
- 6.9.6 The delegation of the management of Housing stock to an ALMO needs to be agreed by the DCLG under section 27 of the Housing Act 1985. An application for consent has to set out all the arrangements under which the ALMO would manage the stock including the homes to be managed, the functions delegated, the Council's continuing role, the financial arrangements, details of how residents have been involved and consulted about the setting up of the ALMO, the Board governance arrangements, staffing arrangements and the decent homes targets and delivery arrangements.
- 6.9.7 If an ALMO is established it is subject to inspection by the Audit Commission and must achieve a minimum of two stars in order to be able to access additional funding. Successful ALMOs have brought significant focus from within to enable this to be achieved. To date 85% of ALMOs that have been inspected have achieved a 2 or 3 star rating. In addition the Council would be instrumental in setting the targets and timetables of the ALMO for achieving improvement and would have a vigorous monitoring regime to which the ALMO would have to account for its progress. This would be achieved through a Management Agreement with the ALMO and a Delivery Plan under which the Local Authority sets targets and the ALMO agrees to deliver them. If the ALMO fails to achieve the targets set, the local authority can influence change within the ALMO both through its 100% ownership of the ALMO and through its representatives on the Board. It also has the option to wind up the ALMO as a last resort.
- 6.9.8 Other investment options will arise through mapping potential redevelopment opportunities, as set out in section 6.4, which will be used to supplement the mainstream and ALMO decent homes funding by producing further regeneration opportunities to achieve lasting and sustainable regeneration.
- 6.9.9 If an ALMO was to be developed it is anticipated that the earliest opportunity to access funding would be in the spring of 2008 if the ALMO achieves a 2* rating. Potentially this could effectively double the total capital funding

available to the council to invest in its homes with an additional £21.3 million 2008/09 and £26 million in 2009/10. Total decent homes resources of £192.2m have been bid for the period 2008/9 to 2016/17. However, the amount of decent homes funding that will be made available from DCLG is uncertain. The application for S27 consent is likely to include stock that was not part of the original bid. DCLG have indicated that they would consider the funding requirements for these estates as part of their regular two yearly reviews.

6.9.10 If the ALMO does not achieve 2** at its first inspection it remains an option for the Council and the ALMO to continue to strive for 2** through re-inspection and this route has been taken by a number of ALMO's which failed to obtain 2** at the first Inspection. If the ALMO consistently fails to achieve 2** then the Council could decide to close the ALMO and absorb housing management back into the Council. However no additional funding would be available from the government and there would be little prospect of further investment for Decent Homes beyond what is currently available.

6.9.11 Other Councils have selected the option of setting up an ALMO either in whole or in part to enable them to bring their homes up to a decent standard. The following East London Councils have set up ALMOs:

Hackney
Havering
Newham
Redbridge
Waltham Forest

Of these Newham and Waltham Forest have already been inspected and both have achieved a 2 star rating from the audit commission. Hackney, Havering and Redbridge are still to be inspected.

6.9.12 A summary of the advantages and disadvantages of setting up an ALMO are set out below.

Advantages

- Potential Government Funding of up to £192.2m to bring homes up to a decent standard
- Additional incentive to provide an excellent service to residents through a focussed improvement plan and inspection process.
- Homes stay in Council ownership
- Council remains in control of all housing policy
- Council owns 100% of the ALMO and can terminate the contract with the ALMO if it fails to deliver service improvements to residents
- Council continues to set the rent
- Both Tenants and Leaseholders can have greater direct involvement by becoming ALMO board members and influencing activities
- The ALMO must account to the Council for service improvement

Disadvantages

- Additional funding is not guaranteed as it depends upon achieving a 2 star rating from the Audit Commission
- Funding is limited to “Decent Homes” plus 5% and any higher standards must be found from other resources
- There are estimated set up costs of £335,000 associated with the creation of an ALMO and negotiating the management agreement (see paragraph 6.7.14 below)

6.9.13 If the Council decides to proceed with an ALMO the following key decisions need to be made:

- **Name:** It will be necessary to agree the name in order to set up a Company, which must be established before the final Section 27 (Housing Act 1985) application to the DCLG for permission to proceed is submitted. It is proposed that the new organisation be called Tower Hamlets Homes.
- **Board Composition:** An initial shadow Board based on 4 Council Nominees, 4 Resident Nominees and 4 Independent Members is proposed. Provision will need to be made to cover any Council Nominees who were also residents. In addition, the tenure balance will need to be taken into account when determining the make-up of the resident nominations. It is intended to put in place a recruitment process for independent board members using advertising and skills analysis. Resident board members will be recruited through the resident involvement register.
- **Resident Support:** It is a requirement of the DCLG that the Council has evidence of tenants’ and leaseholders’ support for an ALMO, and of discussions held with staff about an ALMO. An ALMO is a change in management and not a change of landlord and therefore the consultation requirements are different from those for stock transfer. The DCLG guidance states that a range of consultation approaches are available to demonstrate support. Councils which have established ALMOs have used a range of the methods including, surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, meetings and ballots. For example Brent, Newham and Westminster all conducted resident surveys.

In Tower Hamlets any method selected will need to ensure that it is clear that the management of an ALMO is clearly distinct from a stock transfer. Hillingdon for example selected a survey for its ALMO explicitly because of previous stock transfer ballots and a similar approach may be appropriate for Tower Hamlets where, over the last 5 years ballots have become synonymous with transfers to Registered Social Landlords.

6.9.14 Indicative Timetable

Action	Current Timetable
1 Council Decision to establish a Shadow ALMO Board plus key delegations and a set-up budget.	February 2007
2 Appoint Council Board members	March 2007
3 Put in place arrangements to recruit independent and resident board members	March/April 2007
4 Consultation with Residents and Staff	February - July 2007
5 Determine ALMO structure and staffing	By July 2007
6 Finalise Landlord Role of ALMO and Strategic Role of Council i.e. what functions to be carried out by the ALMO & services to be provided by Council	Part of S27 application: July 2007
7 Determine Management Agreement & first year Delivery Plan – including performance criteria required of the ALMO	Part of S27 application: July 2007
8 Make Section 27 application	July 2007
9 ALMO launch date	1 st October 2007
10 Indicative Audit Commission Inspection	March/April 2008
11 Release of Decent Homes Funding (dependent on achievement of 2* status)	June 2008

6.9.15 Set Up Costs:

The estimated costs associated with setting up an ALMO in Tower Hamlets are £335,000 as set out below. These costs can be accommodated within existing budgets.

ALMO Programme Support	£75,000
Governance	£50,000
<i>This includes Board Recruitment & training,</i>	
Legal Costs	£100,000
Resident Consultation	£75,000
Miscellaneous	£35,000
TOTAL	<u>£335,000</u>

6.10 Resident Involvement

6.10.1 Residents will be fully involved in all aspects of investment, whatever the specific route for any given estate. The investment strategy will involve a range of resident involvement mechanisms tailored to meet particular needs and requirements. If an ALMO is set up by the Council it will need to develop a delivery plan for decent homes and residents would be consulted widely to define what will be covered and the setting of priorities for the works programme. In particular there would be wide consultation with residents on the scope of the decent homes plus standard within the overall framework of resource availability.

6.10.2 All regeneration schemes and other proposals will be developed within a framework of resident involvement and engagement involving a range of methods.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A FUTURE INVESTMENT STRATEGY

7.1 The proposed Housing Investment Strategy comprises the following elements, which address both new supply, and the improvement of the existing housing stock:

- New social housing through private sector development and the use of S106 agreements and government funding to help relieve overcrowding and the wider regeneration of estates'
- Regeneration of those estates where comprehensive redevelopment is the best option and the redevelopment and remodelling of some blocks on estates to create a better match of stock to needs.
- Completion of the stock transfer programme for those estates where this remains a viable option.
- Development of a Decent Homes Plus Standard for Tower Hamlets.
- Creation of the opportunity to fund a decent homes programme across our estates by setting up an Arms Length Management Organisation. This includes the identification of development opportunities to help fund the Decent Homes Plus Standard for Tower Hamlets across all estates to give residents better standards of accommodation and help to promote sustainable communities;
- Expansion of Low cost Home Ownership options for residents.
- Development of innovative ways of maximising resources to provide more settled homes for homeless households.

8 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

- 8.1 The report sets out the scale, complexity and nature of the challenge for affordable housing in the Borough. The report sets out a strategy of working with RSLs, Government, other local authorities and the private sector (directly or through s.106) to generate funding. Progress towards achieving the strategy set out in the report will be governed as much as anything else by the availability of funding to ensure its delivery.
- 8.2 The Council has insufficient resources to ensure that its own council houses meet the decent homes standard. The proposal to set up an ALMO should, once the ALMO achieves a 2* inspection, enable the Authority to attract £190m of funds to improve homes to a decent standard.
- 8.3 This will not provide funding for all the needs of neighbourhoods as the decent homes standard, and associated funding, focuses on the immediate needs of the home rather than the wider neighbourhood. Consultation on a proposed decent homes plus standard will not only need to take into account the views of the residents but also where and how the funding will be obtained to deliver such a standard.
- 8.4 As the report points out, detailed evaluations of regeneration and estate development options including financial implications will be required. Any such proposals will need to be included in the Councils investment strategy and programme for future years.
- 8.5 The existing approach to achieving Decent Homes - Housing Choice and stock transfer to RSLs - continues to be implemented and it will be some years before all the investment is completed across the Borough under this arrangement. The HRA 2007/08 and proposed General Fund budget takes into account the implication of the Housing Choice programme and it is anticipated that the impact for 2008/09 will be similarly managed as part of that year's budget setting process.
- 8.6 The proposed ALMO will have organisational and financial implications. The direct set up costs have been identified to the HRA at £335,000. Although there will inevitably be a wider impact on staffing and organisational change (such as on financial and IT systems). The HRA budget for 2007/08 provides for the direct costs: the wider changes will need to be managed and funded from within existing HRA budget and resources.
- 8.7 The ALMO has potential significant organisational and financial implications on the whole Council and on the General Fund. These will need to be carefully planned and managed. The overriding requirement is to ensure that arrangements between the ALMO and the Council are set up in such a way as to be financially efficient within the overall need to deliver improved services.
- 8.8 Each ALMO is unique and decisions will have to be made as to the most appropriate structure for Tower Hamlets, nevertheless there are basic aspects to all ALMOs for example they all have their own accounts, audit, tax liability and reporting requirements (under the Companies Act). The Council continues to operate a HRA and the Council retains income from rents and subsidies. There will be an impact on support services and systems. The

intention is to offer the ALMO the use of LBTH support services initially but the ALMO may decide in due course to make its own arrangements.

9 CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL)

- 9.1 Although there are no immediate legal implications arising from this report, the various elements of the proposed strategy all have attendant legal regimes to a greater or lesser extent. Whilst it is not necessary to detail such provisions at this stage, implementation of each element will necessitate adherence to the appropriate legal requirements.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The delivery of the objectives set out in Investment Strategy will be subject to securing external funding both from government and through partnerships with RSLs and developers. In addition decent homes funding through the ALMO route is dependant on the ALMO securing a 2 star rating from the Audit Commission.
- 10.2 Robust project planning, effective delivery plans and a service improvement plan in the case of the ALMO will therefore be put in place to ensure that objectives and appropriate timetables are met.

11 ANTI POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Poor housing conditions or lack of housing are synonymous with poverty, hence the Government's objective of bringing all homes up to a "Decent" Standard. All of the objectives set out in this report are aimed at improving the existing housing and providing new homes, which will help alleviate poverty in the Borough.

12 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 None arising directly out of this report

13 SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

- 13.1 As set out in the body of the report, the London context within which the Council will be required to deliver its Housing Investment Strategy includes a strong bias towards addressing the issue of climate change. All development, regeneration, repairs and improvements however funded will need to be delivered in this context. The recommended strategy is the vehicle to maximise housing investment in the borough, which is necessary to address greener environment issues.
- 13.2 The backlog of investment required to the Council's Housing Stock and lack of resources means that much of the Housing stock suffers from poor thermal

efficiency resulting in higher than necessary fuel usage. Only if sufficient resources are identified will it be possible to introduce improvements.

14 EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

- 14.1 In order for an ALMO to achieve a 2* inspection it is necessary to demonstrate that value for money is at the heart of the organisation. A Value For Money strategy will need to be adopted and implemented to ensure a 2* rating and as consequence access to the estimated £190m of funds. There is therefore a powerful incentive to ensure an efficient and effective ALMO. The contractual arrangement made between the Council and the ALMO may include specific value for money and efficiency targets.

APPENDICES

- 1 Current Estate Status Report
- 2 Initial LBTH Housing and Planning Opportunities and Constraints Map

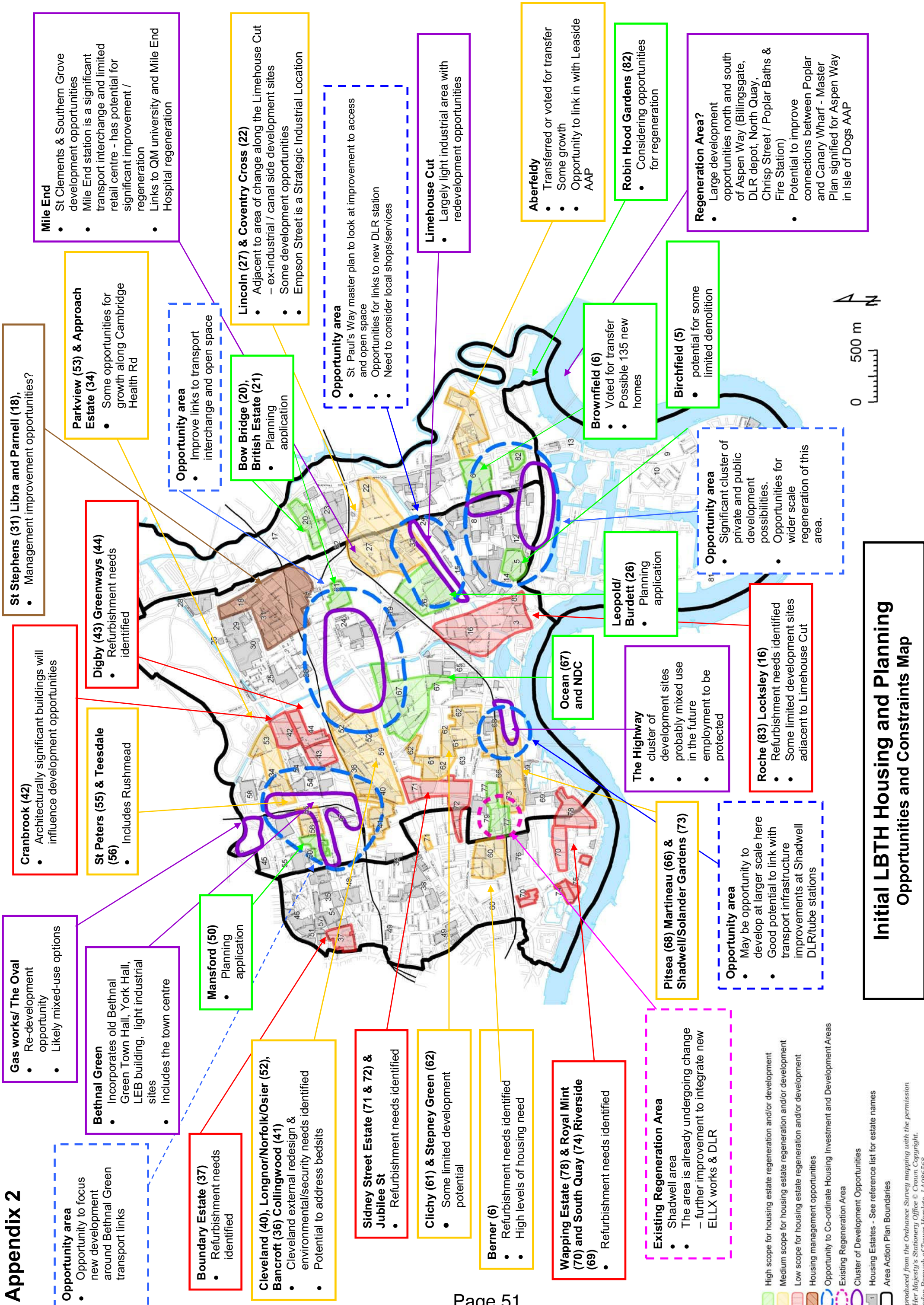
Constituency	HC Constituency No. (Map)	Area	Ward	Estates	RSL Partner	Housing Choice Stage Progress Indicator	Tenants	L/holders	Total no of properties
St. Peters	55	BG	Bethnal Green North	St Peters		In ALMO Bid	109	52	161
Wellington	58	BG	Bethnal Green North	Wellington		In ALMO Bid	228	96	324
Teesdale	56	BG	Bethnal Green North	Teesdale		In ALMO Bid	202	183	385
Mansford	50	BG	Bethnal Green North	Mansford	THCH	Transfer completed	373	317	690
Dinmont	45	BG	Bethnal Green North	Dinmont	Spatialfields	Voled for Transfer -Post Ballot - Preparing for transfer	52	54	106
Parkview&Approach	34, 53	BG	Bethnal Green North/Bethnal Green South	Approach/ Parkview	Old Ford HA	Stage 1 Formal Consultation completed	387	264	651
Bancroft	36	BG	Bethnal Green South	Bancroft		In ALMO Bid	344	218	562
Christchurch	39	BG	Bethnal Green South	Christchurch		In ALMO Bid	95	93	188
Withy House TMO	59	BG	Bethnal Green South	Withy House		In ALMO Bid	53	27	80
Collingwood	41	BG	Bethnal Green South	Collingwood		In ALMO Bid	477	399	876
Howwood	47	BG	Bethnal Green South	Howwood		In ALMO Bid	134	113	247
Cleveland	40	BG	Bethnal Green South	Cleveland		Voled No after ALMO bid was submitted	155	127	282
Longnor Norfolk and Osler	52	BG	Bethnal Green South/Mile End & Globetown	Longnor Norfolk and Osler		In ALMO Bid	307	232	539
Cranbrook	42	BG	Mile End & Globetown	Cranbrook		In ALMO Bid	366	168	534
Digby Greenways	43, 44	BG	Mile End & Globetown	Digby and Greenways	William Sutton HT	Informal consultation & preparing formal consultation documents	456	296	752
Globe Town (Formerly Rogers)	54	BG	Mile End & Globetown	Bethnal Green Estate, Brierly Gardens, Burnham Estate, Rogers Estate & Victoria Park Square	Swan	Stage 1 Formal Consultation completed	406	305	711
Chicksand East (Remainder)	38	BG	Spatialfields & Banglatown	Chicksand East (Other)		In ALMO Bid	94	96	190
Chicksand East (Pauline, Hanbury & Davenant)	38	BG	Spatialfields & Banglatown	Chicksand East (DHP)	Spatialfields	Informal consultation & preparing formal consultation documents	130	57	187
Holland	49	BG	Spatialfields & Banglatown	Holland	EastendHomes	Transfer completed	186	215	401
Chicksand West	38	BG	Spatialfields & Banglatown	Chicksand West	EastendHomes	Voled for Transfer -Post Ballot - Preparing for transfer	121	126	247
Granby-Hereford	48	BG	Weavers	Granby Hereford		In ALMO Bid	330	141	471
Avebury	35, 87	BG	Weavers	Avebury East And Avebury West	Swan	Formal Consultation documents signed off	508	238	746
Columbia	46, 51, 57	BG	Weavers	Dorset, Gascolgne/Virginia, Newling	Guinness	Stage 1 Formal Consultation completed	645	352	997
Boundary	37	BG	Weavers	Boundary	Southern Housing Group	Voled No after ALMO bid was submitted	314	215	529
Hewison Street Flats	86	BOW/NP	Bow East	Hewison St Flats	Old Ford HA	In ALMO Bid	-	40	40
Libra Parnell	18, 31	BOW/NP	Bow East	Libra Parnell	Old Ford HA	Informal consultation & preparing formal consultation documents	107	49	156
St. Stephens	18, 31	BOW/NP	Bow East/Bow West	St Stephens	Old Ford HA	Informal consultation & preparing formal consultation documents	413	262	675
Alfred-Malmesbury	17	BOW/NP	Bow East/Bow West	Malmesbury Alfred Estates	Old Ford HA	Voled No after ALMO bid was submitted	492	332	824
Parkside	25, 28, 29, 30	BOW/NP	Bow East/Bow West	Ranwell East, Ranwell West, Lakeview, Lanfranc, Lotion	Old Ford HA	Voled for Transfer -Post Ballot - Preparing for transfer	1 618	671	2,289
Rosebank Gardens	31	BOW/NP	Bow West	Rosebank Gardens		In ALMO Bid	38	37	75
Dennis CHC (Bracken House)	33	BOW/NP	Bromley by Bow	Dennis CHC		In ALMO Bid	39	36	75

Constituency	HC Constituency No. (Map)	Area	Ward	Estates	RSL Partner	Housing Choice Stage Progress Indicator	Tenants	L/holders	Total no of properties
Lincoln	27	BOW/NP	Bromley by Bow	Lincoln		In ALMO Bid	189	107	306
Coventry Cross West	22	BOW/NP	Bromley by Bow	Coventry Cross West	Poplar HARCA	Informal consultation & preparing formal consultation documents	101	56	157
Crossways	32	BOW/NP	Bromley by Bow	Crossways	Swan	Transfer completed	258	40	298
Bow Bridge	20	BOW/NP	Bromley by Bow	Bow Bridge	Poplar HARCA	Transfer completed	231	66	297
Devons	23	BOW/NP	Bromley by Bow	Devons	Poplar HARCA	Transfer completed	410	214	624
Mile End East	19, 21, 24	BOW/NP	Mile End East	Bede, British Street, Eric/Treby	EastendHomes	Transfer completed	944	533	1,477
Leopold-Burdett	26, 88	BOW/NP	Mile End East	East Leopold, West Leopold/Burdett	Poplar HARCA	Transfer completed	406	130	536
Bazely/St Mathias	4	IOD/SP	Blackwall & Cubitt Town	SPLASH estate		In ALMO Bid	263	201	464
Robin Hood Gardens	82	IOD/SP	Blackwall & Cubitt Town	SPLASH estate		In ALMO Bid but also subject to options study for regeneration with English Partnerships	203	34	237
Lansbury	8	IOD/SP	East India & Lansbury	Lansbury Estate	Poplar HARCA	Transfer completed	606	273	879
East India	1, 6, 11	IOD/SP	East India & Lansbury	Aberfeldy, Brownfield, Tevict	Poplar HARCA	Voted for Transfer-Post Ballot - Preparing for transfer	663	279	942
Birchfield House TMO	14	IOD/SP	Limehouse	Birchfield Co-op		In ALMO Bid	8	16	24
Roche	83	IOD/SP	Limehouse	Roche Estate	BGVPHA	In ALMO Bid	171	89	260
Barleymow	3	IOD/SP	Limehouse	Barleymow Estate		In ALMO Bid	169	120	289
Birchfield	5	IOD/SP	Limehouse	Birchfield Estate	Swan	Informal consultation & preparing formal consultation documents	238	112	350
Locksley	16	IOD/SP	Limehouse	Locksley		Voted No after ALMO bid was submitted	432	228	660
Will Crooks	12	IOD/SP	Limehouse/Blackwall & Cubitt Town	SPLASH estate		In ALMO Bid	207	142	349
Isle of Dogs (EastEnd Homes)	7, 84, 85	IOD/SP	Millwall/Blackwall & Cubitt Town	Westferry, Cubitt Town, Island Gardens	EastendHomes	Transfer completed	542	288	830
Isle of Dogs (Toynbee)	2, 9, 10, 81	IOD/SP	Millwall/Blackwall & Cubitt Town	Barkantine, St Johns, Millwall (Kingsbridge), Samuda	Toynbee	Transfer completed	1,255	730	1,985
Marineau	66	S/W	Shadwell	Marineau		In ALMO Bid	136	82	214
Pitsea	68	S/W	Shadwell	Pitsea		In ALMO Bid	154	108	262
Tarling West	77	S/W	Shadwell	Tarling West		In ALMO Bid	76	44	120
Watney Market	79	S/W	Shadwell	Watney Market		In ALMO Bid	89	43	133
Shadwell & Solander Gardens	73	S/W	Shadwell	Shadwell Gardens & Solander Gardens		Withdrawn from Transfer programme after ALMO bid	276	224	500
Tarling East	77	S/W	Shadwell	Tarling East	THCH	Transfer completed	74	60	134
Norton House, E1	77	S/W	Shadwell	Norton House	THCH	Transfer completed	29	38	67
Giamis	64	S/W	Shadwell	Giamis	EastendHomes	Voted for Transfer-Post Ballot - Preparing for transfer	197	151	348
Limehouse	65	S/W	St Dunstons & Stepney Green	Limehouse		In ALMO Bid	369	125	494
Ocean NDC	67	S/W	St Dunstons & Stepney Green	Ocean NDC		Separate Regeneration Strategy	1,082	483	1,565
Exmouth	63	S/W	St Dunstons & Stepney Green	Exmouth	Swan	Transfer completed	433	239	672
Clichy	61	S/W	St Dunstons & Stepney Green/Whitechapel	Clichy/Stepney Green		In ALMO Bid	301	222	523

Constituency	HC Constituency No. (Map)	Area	Ward	Estates	RSL Partner	Housing Choice Stage Progress Indicator	Tenants	L/holders	Total no of properties
Stepney Green	62	SW	St Dunstons & Stepney Green/Whitechapel	Clichy/Stepney Green		In ALMO Bid	281	255	536
Stephen & Matilda TMO	75	S/W	St Katherineines & Wapping	Matilda House		In ALMO Bid	42	91	133
Riverside	69	S/W	St Katherineines & Wapping			In ALMO Bid	142	52	194
Royal Mint	70	S/W	St Katherineines & Wapping			In ALMO Bid	137	32	169
Wapping	78	S/W	St Katherineines & Wapping			In ALMO Bid	437	316	753
South Quay TMO	74	S/W	St Katherineines & Wapping	South Quay Estate		Leasehold Enfranchisement pending - costs relate to tenants properties only	47	249	296
St. Georges	76	S/W	St Katherineines & Wapping	St. Georges	EastendHomes	Transfer completed	295	189	484
Berner	60	S/W	Whitechapel	Berner		In ALMO Bid	250	260	510
Sidney Street	71, 72	S/W	Whitechapel	Sidney Street North, Sidney Street South		In ALMO Bid	533	368	901
Sheltered blocks	80		Scattered		BGVPHA	Transfer completed	238	-	238

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Appendix 2



St Stephens (31) Libra and Parnell (18),

- Management improvement opportunities?

Cranbrook (42)

- Architecturally significant buildings will influence development opportunities

Gas works/ The Oval

- Re-development opportunity
- Likely mixed-use options

Opportunity area

- Opportunity to focus new development around Bethnal Green transport links

Bethnal Green

- Incorporates old Bethnal Green Town Hall, York Hall, LEB building, light industrial sites
- Includes the town centre

Boundary Estate (37)

- Refurbishment needs identified

Cleveland (40), Longnor/Norfolk/Osier (52), Bancroft (36) Collingwood (41)

- Cleveland external redesign & environmental/security needs identified
- Potential to address bedsits

Sidney Street Estate (71 & 72) & Jubilee St

- Refurbishment needs identified

Clichy (61) & Stepney Green (62)

- Some limited development potential

Berner (6)

- Refurbishment needs identified
- High levels of housing need

Wapping Estate (78) & Royal Mint (70) and South Quay (74) Riverside (69)

- Refurbishment needs identified

Existing Regeneration Area

- Shadwell area
- The area is already undergoing change – further improvement to integrate new ELLX works & DLR

Pitsea (68) Martineau (66) & Shadwell/Solander Gardens (73)

Opportunity area

- May be opportunity to develop at larger scale here
- Good potential to link with transport infrastructure improvements at Shadwell DLR/tube stations

The Highway

- cluster of development sites probably mixed use in the future
- employment to be protected

Roche (83) Locksley (16)

- Refurbishment needs identified
- Some limited development sites adjacent to Limehouse Cut

Leopold/Burdett (26)

- Planning application

Opportunity area

- Significant cluster of private and public development possibilities.
- Opportunities for wider scale regeneration of this area.

Brownfield (6)

- Voted for transfer
- Possible 135 new homes

Birchfield (5)

- potential for some limited demolition

Aberfeldy

- Transferred or voted for transfer
- Some growth
- Opportunity to link in with Leaside AAP

Robin Hood Gardens (82)

- Considering opportunities for regeneration

Regeneration Area?

- Large development opportunities north and south of Aspen Way (Billingsgate, DLR depot, North Quay, Chrisp Street / Poplar Baths & Fire Station)
- Potential to improve connections between Poplar and Canary Wharf - Master Plan signified for Aspen Way in Isle of Dogs AAP

Limehouse Cut

- Largely light industrial area with redevelopment opportunities

Opportunity area

- St Paul's Way master plan to look at improvement to access and open space
- Opportunities for links to new DLR station
- Need to consider local shops/services

Lincoln (27) & Coventry Cross (22)

- Adjacent to area of change along the Limehouse Cut – ex-industrial / canal side development sites
- Some development opportunities
- Empson Street is a Strategic Industrial Location

Opportunity area

- Improve links to transport interchange and open space

Bow Bridge (20), British Estate (21)

- Planning application

Parkview (53) & Approach Estate (34)

- Some opportunities for growth along Cambridge Health Rd

Mile End

- St Clements & Southern Grove development opportunities
- Mile End station is a significant transport interchange and limited retail centre - has potential for significant improvement / regeneration
- Links to QM university and Mile End Hospital regeneration

Initial LBTH Housing and Planning Opportunities and Constraints Map

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Agenda Item 6.2

Committee OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY	Date 6th March, 2007	Classification Unrestricted	Report No.	Agenda Item No. 6.2
Report of: ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE		Title: REPORT "CALLED IN" – Disposal of Poplar Baths (CAB 137/067)		
Originating Officer(s): Angus Dixon		Ward(s) affected: All		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The attached report of the Corporate Director of Environment and Culture, Alex Cosgrave, and Interim Service Head Property & Facilities Management, Ian Brown, was considered by the Cabinet on 7th February, 2007 but has been "Called In" for further consideration by Councillors Tim Archer, Phil Briscoe, Emma Jones, Peter Golds and Rupert Eckhardt in accordance with the provisions of Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee consider the contents of the attached report, review the Cabinet's provisional decisions arising and decide whether to accept them or refer the matter back to Cabinet with proposals, together with reasons.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97)

LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief description of "background paper"

**Cabinet report (CAB 137/067)
dated 7th February, 2007**

Name and telephone number of holder
and address where open to inspection

**Angus Dixon
020 7364 4850**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The attached report of the Corporate Director of Environment and Culture, Alex Cosgrave, and Interim Service Head Property & Facilities Management, Ian Brown, was considered by the Cabinet on 7th February, 2007. It however has been “Called In” for further consideration by Councillors Tim Archer, Phil Briscoe, Emma Jones, Peter Golds and Rupert Eckhardt in accordance with the provisions of Part 4 of the Council’s Constitution.

3.2 The Cabinet after considering the attached report provisionally agreed:-

1. That the disposal of the Poplar Baths site, for redevelopment on the open market, be deferred for a period of 6 months, to allow for further detailed work to be completed by Tower Hamlets Environment Trust and Swan Housing Association (on behalf of the Poplar Baths Steering Group), in partnership with the Authority and to a set of agreed milestones.

4. THE “CALL IN” REQUISITION

4.1 The reasons advanced in the “Call In” requisition are set out below:-

Poplar Baths is a landmark site for the area. Its future has been a major local issue for far longer than 2003, as stated in the report.

The baths were a campaign topic in the 2002 local elections and candidates, later councillors featured this in their campaign material.

In February and March 2003 LAP 7 held special meetings to discuss the baths. These were attended by well over 100 residents on each occasion. At the meeting held on 1 February 2003 a presentation entitled “A vision for Poplar Baths” was presented by SPLASH (South Poplar Action for Safe Housing) and a petition in support of this was launched. Contributions from the majority party councillors were supportive of preserving the baths site. This matter was considered by Cabinet and proposals withdrawn for a further LAP meeting held on 8 March 2003.

At the meeting assurances were given by councillors that there would be discussions within the community before a final decision was made.

At the March LAP meeting a planning brief was circulated, which it was understood had been deferred by Cabinet.

The report that was submitted to the Cabinet was brief and does not consider both the current and recent situation regarding disposal of this asset. The report contains a number of minor inaccuracies which could conceal a number of major inaccuracies. The baths are located in the Limehouse ward and the report suggests the wards affected are Limehouse and East India and Lansbury. In fact the baths are on the border of these wards and also Blackwall and Cubitt Town wards. At the LAP 7 meetings in February and March 2003 former councillor Julia Mainwaring- who represented Blackwall and Cubitt Town- was invited to attend and contribute to the discussion on the future of the baths and this shows that the Council was aware that this ward would be affected.

We would highlight the following issues both in relation to the incomplete and misleading nature of the report and also broader issues related to Poplar Baths:

- a) Local residents remain in the dark as to what will actually happen.
- b) Despite the six month respite, the report considered by Cabinet glossed over the historic status of the building and what conditions the authority would put in place to protect it.
- c) There was no recognition of the concerns of local people regarding the future of the baths as expressed at the February and March 2003 LAP 7 meetings.
- d) The report needs far more detail if the public are to be re-assured that this six month grace is not merely a cosmetic exercise.

5. ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ACTION

5.1 In accordance with the Committee's procedures, the "Call In" Members have provided an alternative course of action for consideration:-

"Councillors make the following recommendations:

- 1) 1 A new meeting on the future of Poplar Baths should be held to allow members of the public to place their concerns about the issue before Council officers and to insure that any future course of action undertaken on the baths has the backing of the public.
- 2) Discussions with THET and Swan Housing should continue in the hopes that the original proposals that had the support of a wide section of the community can be brought to fruition.
- 3) Given the Councils commitments to the 2012 Olympic Games, all options that can preserve the use of the swimming facilities in Poplar Baths should be examined before the Council accepts that there is no alternative to the open market approach.

6. CONSIDERATION OF THE "CALL IN"

6.1 The following procedure is to be followed for consideration of the "Call In".

- (a) Presentation of the "Call In" by one of the "Call In" Members followed by questions.
- (b) Response from the Lead Member/officers followed by questions.
- (c) General debate followed by decision.

N.B. – In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Protocols and Guidance adopted by the Committee at its meeting on 6 June, 2006, the "Call In" Members are not allowed to participate in the general debate.

- 6.2 It is open to the Committee to either resolve to take no action which would have the effect of endorsing the original Cabinet decisions, or the Committee could refer the matter back to the Cabinet for further consideration setting out the nature of its concerns and possibly recommending an alternative course of action.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 That the Committee consider the contents of the attached report, review the Cabinet's provisional decisions arising and decide whether to accept them or refer the matter back to Cabinet with proposals, together with reasons.

Committee OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY	Date 6th March, 2007	Classification Unrestricted	Report No.	Agenda Item No. 6.2
Report of: ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE		Title: REPORT "CALLED IN" – Disposal of Poplar Baths (CAB 137/067)		
Originating Officer(s): Angus Dixon		Ward(s) affected: All		

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The attached report of the Corporate Director of Environment and Culture, Alex Cosgrave, and Interim Service Head Property & Facilities Management, Ian Brown, was considered by the Cabinet on 7th February, 2007 but has been "Called In" for further consideration by Councillors Mamun Rashid, Fozol Miah, Lufta Begum, Dulal Uddin and Abjol Miah in accordance with the provisions of Part 4 of the Council's Constitution.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Committee consider the contents of the attached report, review the Cabinet's provisional decisions arising and decide whether to accept them or refer the matter back to Cabinet with proposals, together with reasons.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97)

LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Brief description of "background paper"

**Cabinet report (CAB 137/067)
dated 7th February, 2007**

Name and telephone number of holder
and address where open to inspection

**Angus Dixon
020 7364 4850**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The attached report of the Corporate Director of Environment and Culture, Alex Cosgrave, and Interim Service Head Property & Facilities Management, Ian Brown, was considered by the Cabinet on 7th February, 2007. It however has been “Called In” for further consideration by Councillors Mamun Rashid, Fozol Miah, Lufta Begum, Dulal Uddin and Abjol Miah in accordance with the provisions of Part 4 of the Council’s Constitution.

3.2 The Cabinet after considering the attached report provisionally agreed:-

1. That the disposal of the Poplar Baths site, for redevelopment on the open market, be deferred for a period of 6 months, to allow for further detailed work to be completed by Tower Hamlets Environment Trust and Swan Housing Association (on behalf of the Poplar Baths Steering Group), in partnership with the Authority and to a set of agreed milestones.

4. THE “CALL IN” REQUISITION

4.1 The reasons advanced in the “Call In” requisition are set out below:-

It is unacceptable to sell this valuable local facility. The six months delay in disposal is welcome, but the passive failure of the Council to work for a constructive outcome is elaborated in the report.

The Council needs to give a clear, unequivocal commitment to the people of Poplar that it will work with all necessary partners and agencies to ensure that a swimming pool is reopened on the current site. Anything less will be a betrayal of local people and the sporting principles of the Olympics as we approach 2012. Any further delay and uncertainty will also serve to emphasise the appalling mismanagement of this issue by the Council over the last decade.

5. ALTERNATIVE COURSE OF ACTION

5.1 In accordance with the Committee’s procedures, the “Call In” Members have provided an alternative course of action for consideration:-

“Councillors make the following recommendations:

1. The Council must actively pursue the desired outcome of reopening the pool at Poplar Baths as a leisure facility for the local community.
2. To this end, grant a temporary licence to the Environment Trust (or another committed partner) of up to two years. This will have the dual effect of allowing the organisation time and access to seriously undertake the project and deter potential speculative development interest.

6. CONSIDERATION OF THE “CALL IN”

6.1 The following procedure is to be followed for consideration of the “Call In”.

- (a) Presentation of the “Call In” by one of the “Call In” Members followed by questions.
- (b) Response from the Lead Member/officers followed by questions.
- (c) General debate followed by decision.

N.B. – In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Protocols and Guidance adopted by the Committee at its meeting on 6 June, 2006, the “Call In” Members are not allowed to participate in the general debate.

- 6.2 It is open to the Committee to either resolve to take no action which would have the effect of endorsing the original Cabinet decisions, or the Committee could refer the matter back to the Cabinet for further consideration setting out the nature of its concerns and possibly recommending an alternative course of action.

7. RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 That the Committee consider the contents of the attached report, review the Cabinet’s provisional decisions arising and decide whether to accept them or refer the matter back to Cabinet with proposals, together with reasons.

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Committee: Cabinet	Date: 7 th February 2007	Classification: Unrestricted	Report No: CAB137/067	Agenda Item:
Report of: Corporate Director Environment & Culture Originating officer(s) Ian Brown – Interim Service Head Property & Facilities Management		Title: Disposal of Poplar Baths Wards Affected: Limehouse, East India and Lansbury		

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval to dispose of the Poplar baths site for redevelopment on the open market.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is recommended to:-

- 2.1 Agree the disposal of the Poplar Baths site for redevelopment on the open market.

Local Government Act, 2000 (Section 97) List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

Brief description of "back ground papers" holder and address where open to inspection.

Name and telephone number of

To be completed by author

To be completed by author ext. 4240

3. BACKGROUND

Poplar Baths was opened in 1934, having been designed by Horley Heckford, Borough Engineer of the London Borough of Poplar. The building contained two swimming pools, Turkish baths, slipper baths and spectator facilities in a large building facing East India Dock Road.

The main pool has a roof supported by elliptical concrete arches and the interior has mosaic floors and tile work noted for their design. This led to parts of the building being Listed as Grade II in January 2001.

The site is bounded by East India Dock Road, Poplar Baths Street, Lawless Street and Grove Villas and extends to 8,230 sq m. Poplar Fire Station lies to the west and All Saints DLR Station lies in a cutting to the east. There is housing to the south of the building and a major road to the north.

The building closed as a baths facility in 1987/88, following a steadily declining number of people using the facilities and the deterioration of both building fabric and plant.

In 1988, it was converted for use by the Construction Industry Training Board, including the infilling of the pools and the installation of windows and parking spaces.

The CITB use finished in 2000, and the building has been empty since that time, with the exception of a small recording studio and an office used by a local charity. Since 2000, the Council has had to bear the cost of essential maintenance and security at the baths. Deterioration of the structure is starting to increase significantly, given its very limited occupancy and use. This will inevitably lead to significant expense in due course in having to repair or replace key construction elements of the building.

3.2 Community interest in the future of the baths, was kindled in April 2003, when a petition requesting that no decision be taken on the future of the baths, without community consultation, was noted by Cabinet.

3.3 Since that time Tower Hamlets Environment Trust (THET) and Swan Housing, on behalf of the Poplar Baths Steering Group, worked on a community based re-use and development model. Proposals for development of the swimming baths site were submitted to officers in late 2005. The proposals included a requirement for funding a viability gap through grant or "open market" funding. In February 2006, further information was requested from the THET and Swan Housing in relation to issues of risk and achievability in their proposals.

3.4 The proposals comprise:-

- Restoration of the main pool and the creation of a leisure facility within the building.
- The building of 130 affordable homes the creation of 3,500 square metres of affordable workspace on the site.
- The creation of 3,500 square metres of affordable workspace on the site.

3.5 The THET and Swan Housing proposals are for a long lease from the Council at £nil consideration. The last mixed use valuation of the site was £1.1 million.

4. FURTHER EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

4.1 Meetings have taken place with THET and Swan Housing where the concerns about the proposals have been reviewed. In particular there have been major concerns relative to:

- (a) Build costs
- (b) Running costs
- (c) Income forecasts
- (d) Sustainable demand for the pool provision
- (e) Governance
- (f) Realisation of funding for the viability gap
- (g) Planning brief non-compliance

4.2 There is an acknowledgement from THET and Swan Housing that more work is needed to arrive at a robust business plan for their outline proposals. However, they have been unwilling, to date, to commit to any further work until the Council was prepared to enter into an eighteen month exclusive option to acquire the site agreement with them, during which time they would finalise the business plan, inclusive of securing the viability gap funding for the scheme.

4.3 Given the paucity of the original proposals and the unwillingness of THET and Swan Housing to do any further work without the exclusivity agreement an impasse has been reached. Given the still unresolved risks and concerns outlined in 4.1, entering into the exclusivity agreement cannot be recommended. The available alternatives on this are to now consider an open market approach, which will see this asset working viably in some shape or form in the near future.

5. OBSERVATIONS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

5.1 This report outlines the current position regarding discussions which have taken place with THET and the Swan Housing on behalf of

Poplar Baths Steering Group in relation to the future of Poplar Baths. As outlined in section 3.1 these discussions and detailed evaluation of proposals have indicated significant concern regarding their viability. As detailed in paragraph 4.3 these discussions and on-going evaluation have now reached an impasse and as a consequence, it is now proposed to dispose of the site for redevelopment on the open market.

5.2 In accordance with the Council's Financial Procedures CR10 Cabinet are therefore requested to declare the site surplus to requirements and agree to its disposal.

5.3 If Cabinet agree to this proposal, this will result in disposal at market rate which will result in a capital receipt accruing, which will be 100% useable and will be incorporated into the Capital Programme and utilised to finance further investment to the Council's asset base.

6. CONCURRENT REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (LEGAL SERVICES)

6.1 The Council has a legal duty to achieve the best price reasonably obtainable on sale of land. An open market sale meets this requirement.

7 EFFICIENCY STATEMENT

7.1 Poplar Baths has lain idle for a considerable period of time, bringing it back into use as quickly as possible will give the Council a viable sustainable asset.

8. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Any redevelopment of the site will take into account equitable and accessible service requirements.

9. ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Development of the site will increase employment prospects. Whatever the final development proposal, the investment will help to achieve improved local facilities accessible to local communities.

10. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT

10.1 Recent building regulations sustainability enhancements will apply to the redevelopment.

11. RISK ASSESSMENT

11.1 Consideration of open market offers will include price, financial references and anti-money laundering processes.

12 APPENDICES

12.1 None

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Agenda Item 8.1

COMMITTEE Overview and Scrutiny	DATE 5 February 2007	CLASSIFICATION Unrestricted	REPORT NO.	AGENDA ITEM 8.1
REPORT OF: Assistant Chief Executive		TITLE: TOWER HAMLETS INDEX - MONITORING REPORT		
ORIGINATING OFFICER(S): Sara Williams Louise Russell		WARD(S) AFFECTED: N/A		

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report introduces the fourth in-year monitoring report for the Tower Hamlets Index 2006/07. Appendix 1 provides an overview of performance and comments on each indicator, Appendix 2 provides charts for a better overview of the performance trends over time and Appendix 3 lists which lead member is responsible for which indicator. This is the fourth report containing the new indicators for Tower Hamlets Index 2006-11 that reflect the new Strategic Plan and Local Area Agreement.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Committee notes and comments on the performance as identified in paragraphs 4 of this report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97) LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE DRAFTING OF THIS REPORT	
Brief description of background papers: Tower Hamlets Index Monitoring Reports Strategic Plan 2006/07 Best Value Performance Plan 2005/06	Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection: Sara Williams, 020 7364 4771 Mulberry Place, 6th Floor

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Tower Hamlets Index consists of key Strategic Plan indicators through which we measure progress towards the Council's 12 strategic Objectives
- 3.2 The Tower Hamlets Index has been designed as a tool for Corporate Directors and their staff to accelerate improvement or sustain excellent performance in priority areas. It enables Members to monitor the overall rate of improvement across the council.
- 3.3 Each directorate has set annual targets to assist the Council in reaching its ambition of being one of the top 2 performers in Inner London, and in the top 6 in Greater London by 2006. These targets are integrated into the service planning,

team planning and performance management arrangements within each directorate.

- 3.4 We undertake an annual assessment of our ranking on all Tower Hamlets Index indicators which are Best Value Performance Indicators and which enable comparisons with other authorities. We monitor our performance monthly on a wider suite of Index indicators which includes local PIs for which national comparisons are not available. The bi-monthly Index excludes all indicators for which data is available only annually. In some cases proxy indicators replace the annual indicators – for example, school attendance instead of annual test and examination result indicators.

4. **CURRENT PERFORMANCE**

- 4.1 Performance against the bi-monthly Tower Hamlets Index indicators for the period October - November 2007 is set out in Appendix 1

4.2.1 **How we are doing**

- 4.2.2 Currently **22** of the performance indicators are on track to achieve their end of year target (GREEN). Areas where performance is well above the estimated level for the end of September target are as follows:

- LAP attendance – Bangladeshi residents
- LAP attendance – young people (16-25)
- LAP attendance – BME residents
- Increased number of under 18s accessing treatment
- Number of people aged 24 and under in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance (and not on New Deal) helped into paid employment
- Number of businesses/social enterprises assisted to improve their performance

- 4.2.3 A total of **8** indicators are not meeting their half yearly target (RED). Indicators that are significantly below their estimate are:

- Major planning applications determined within 13 weeks.
- Recycling rates.
- Adults and older clients review as a percentage of those receiving a service (on track to meet end of year target).
- Percentage of young people in Tower Hamlets aged 18-25 claiming unemployment-related benefits.
- Number of violent crimes.

- 4.2.4 The remainder of indicators are classified as amber – not currently meeting in-year targets but with actions in place to ensure that they get back on track and meet end year targets. There are still 4 months to the end year and comments reflect steps being taken to ensure targets are met.

- 4.2.5 There are **2 indicators** that will be reported on when the telephone system is phased in, current estimates suggest 2007 and **1 indicator** that is monitored termly.

5. Equalities Implications

- 5.1 The Council's ambitious targets for service delivery are focused on meeting the needs of the diverse communities living in Tower Hamlets. The Tower Hamlets Index reflects the priority the Council gives to equality and diversity issues, and includes specific equality indicators.

6. Comments from the Chief Finance Officer

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Any specific financial implications relating to the performance indicators have been incorporated in the officer comments attached to this report.

7. Concurrent Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal)

- 7.1 The Local Government Act 1999 places a duty on the Council to secure continuous improvement in the way its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Performance monitoring using the Index combined with implementation of the Strategic Plan will assist in discharging that obligation.

8. Sustainable Action for A Greener Environment

- 8.1 A number of the Indicators contribute directly towards a greener environment, including addressing abandoned cars, and improving the cleanliness of streets. The Council will ensure that in monitoring and reporting on the Tower Hamlets Index, the environmental impact locally will be kept to a minimum.

9. Anti Poverty Comments

- 9.1 A number of the indicators in the Index specifically address unemployment and homelessness families, targeting some of the most vulnerable communities in Tower Hamlets. A number of the other indicators address service improvements that have a greater impact on those communities in most need of Council services.

10. Risk Management Implications

- 10.1 In line with the Council's risk management strategy, the implementation of the Tower Hamlets Index will assist the Cabinet, Corporate Directors and relevant service managers in delivering the ambitious targets set out in the Strategic Plan. Where any difficulties or slippage arise, the process will create an opportunity for Members and Corporate Directors to discuss remedial action and keep progress under regular review.

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Appendix 1

Monthly Performance Summary for end November 2006

PI Ref No	Description	Outturn 05/06	Nov Actual	Nov Target	Annual Target	Preferred Outcome	Traffic Light	Responsible Officer	Manager's Comments
SP101	Wounding: number of violent crimes (common assault plus ABH/GHB) per 1000 population	N/A	16.12	14.08	21.2	Lower	RED	Clare Demuth	We are not currently on course to meet this target. Against a cumulative target of 14.08 incidents of GBH, ABH and common assault per 1,000 population, our current performance is 16.12. This area remains a priority for the Partnership with all key agencies engaged. Tactics / initiatives to drive down violent offending include: - Continued enforcement of Good Behaviour Zones - Operation Looba which is targeting ASB in 5 estates, 2 wards, and 5 shopping areas. - Deployment of additional central Met Territorial Support Group resources to Tower Hamlets for local tasking - High Visibility patrols in hotspots in the lead-up to Christmas. - Licensing visits and prompt interviewing of Designated Premises Supervisors following licensing disorder - Introduction of a 'rowdy bus' Friday and Saturday evenings to the end of the performance year in 2007 targeting disorder hotspots The use of these tactics is having a positive impact with a decrease in allegations from Sept-Nov. Sept= 467, Oct= 409 and Nov= 346. The winter months of December, January, February and March tend to register fewer assault allegations. However we are to register the same quantity as last years allegations for these months we would still not achieve our target. Our total end of year assault target is 4379. Our current cumulative YTD assault total = 3331. This means we would have to record 262 assault allegations each month to come in on target. It is highly unlikely we will achieve this. However the trend is downwards. Proposals are currently being progressed via the Violent Crime Action Group with a particular focus on short term operational responding across the Partnership to get us back on target.
SP104	Increased number of under 18s accessing treatment - Enhancing young people	415	342	280	448	Higher	GREEN	Clare Demuth	The target has been exceeded due to better planning and coordination of Lifeline outreach team. The stronger management structure at Lifeline has contributed to more robust performance management of staff. The number of young offenders entering treatment has been significantly higher for this period

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PI Ref No	Description	Outturn 05/06	Nov Actual	Nov Target	Annual Target	Preferred Outcome	Traffic Light	Responsible Officer	Manager's Comments
SP105	Reduction in overall crime rate (BCS Comparator Offences)	20281	12611	12392	18585	Lower	AMBER	Clare Demuth	This is a composite indicator which covers 10 key crime areas including robbery, burglary and motor vehicle crime as well as violence and criminal damage. It is the most important crime related indicator for the Borough. Our performance in this area has improved over the last 6 months. Though we are currently only slightly off course, projections to the end of the year indicate that it will be a significant challenge achieving our target. Key areas of success include (all comparisons with 2005/06): - Residential burglary down over 24% - Vehicle crime down over 11% - Criminal damage down over 6% Areas for improvement are: - Robbery up 3.7% - Violence up 0.8% These areas are receiving a sustained Partnership focus.
SP108	The proportion of relevant land and highways (expressed as a percentage) that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level. [amended]	23.0	26	16	16.0	Lower	AMBER	Alex Cosgrave	The year end outturn is a composite of 3 random sample exercises over the year undertaken by ENCAMS for the Borough. This result reflects the 1st inspection up to Sep. 2006. Performance in each can vary considerably given the random nature of the streets selected. An ongoing programme of improvements to contractor performance and improved partnership working is in place and analysis of the survey results is currently under way to assist LETS teams to better target their activities. This will be reflected in better results for the following 2 surveys and will bring performance back in line by the end of year. The results of the second survey will be released in January.
SP111	Percentage of household waste which has been sent by the authority for recycling.	8.82	11.06	16	18.00	Higher	RED	Alex Cosgrave	Recycling has risen significantly from 7.10% 2003/04, 7.35% in 2004/05, 8.84% in 2005/06 to a cumulative outturn of 11.06% in November. Monthly recycling levels are now performing in excess of 12.3% - showing improvements from the further marketing promotion of the 'Its so easy' campaign from November. The increase in recycling is significant for the Council, but will be unlikely to reach the statutory target of 18% by the end of year. Under current plans we expect to achieve Government statutory target by March 2008.
SP203	Percentage of urgent repairs completed in government time limits	94.55	96.06	95.6	96	Higher	GREEN	Maureen McElaney	On course to achieve target by year end.

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PI Ref No	Description	Outturn 05/06	Nov Actual	Nov Target	Annual Target	Preferred Outcome	Traffic Light	Responsible Officer	Manager's Comments
SP204	Average time taken to re-let local authority housing. - [New PI]	36.04	33.27	35.9	35.5	Lower	GREEN	Maureen McElaney	Results in the early part of the year did not include relets delayed through the introduction of a new IT module. The effect of these delays has now become evident in later reporting periods. However the result continues to perform within target and the regular monitoring of all voids takes place at Area level, and all relets that exceed target are scrutinised by a Panel chaired by the Director.
SP205	Percentage of residents satisfied with the Councils repairs service	82.5	89.47	83	83	Higher	GREEN	Maureen McElaney	Telephone surveys of tenants are conducted each month. Except for one month results have consistently been above target.
SP210	Average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation of households which include dependent children or a pregnant woman and which are unintentionally homeless and in priority need.	4.84	3.31	4.50	4.50	Lower	GREEN	Maureen McElaney	Results for the fourth reporting period show that the number of families placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation remain within target.
SP211	Number of supported admissions of older people to permanent residential and nursing care per 10,000 population aged 65 or over (formerly C26).	108.1	52.4	56	85	Lower	GREEN	John Goldup	The performance of this indicator continues to improve. The continued close monitoring of admissions has led it to remaining within target. The current forecast is for 138 admissions in this financial year, 27 below the number in 2005-06 and 11 below the maximum to meet the target.
SP212	Adult and older clients receiving a review as a percentage of those receiving a service.	71	44.5	60	90	Higher	RED	John Goldup	The progress toward target of this indicator has not been as rapid as had been hoped. The percentage of Mental Health clients predicted to be reviewed by year end has jumped from 52% at the end of September to 62% at the end of November. A list of all clients still to be reviewed is being provided to each social work team every month and is being used to produce work plans for each team. This, combined with the new telephone review method, leads us to expect that by the end of January we will be predicting a year end reviews percentage above that achieved in 2005-06. The target of 90% is challenging, reflecting our aspiration to move to the very top of the highest band, but we may not achieve the target during this financial year.

Appendix 1

PI Ref No	Description	Outturn 05/06	Nov Actual	Nov Target	Annual Target	Preferred Outcome	Traffic Light	Responsible Officer	Manager's Comments
SP214	Percentage of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year that were reviewed.	100	100	100	100	Higher	GREEN	Kamini Rambellas	We are performing to our 100% target on this indicator and continue to closely monitor the caseload to ensure all are reviewed within timescale. We are confident that we will continue to meet the target.
SP215	Percentage of children looked after at 31 March with three or more placements during the year	12.23	10.6	10.6	10.00	Lower	GREEN	Kamini Rambellas	Performance is improving considerably as a result of management action. Analysis of our looked after children indicates that we have a high proportion of children in the cohort for this indicator who have entered care as adolescents, and are therefore difficult to place in stable placements. Action being taken to stabilise placements wherever possible includes scrutiny of cases to ensure early intervention if a placement is showing signs of breaking down, and developing alternative placement provision. Performance is now on target and we are continuing to monitor closely.
SP218	Average time for processing new housing benefit and council tax benefit claims (days).	33.8	29.90	31.5	31	Lower	GREEN	Maureen McEleneey	Results for this indicator continue to improve.
SP301	Percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks.	35.00	40.48	60.00	60.00	Higher	RED	Emma Peters	The number of long outstanding planning applications continues to be reduced and while this is having a beneficial impact on typical caseloads, the target has not yet been met. Performance monitoring of current caseloads and a concentration of resources on those applications within the target period continues as we strive to maintain an improved rate of output of planning decisions. This is despite the disproportionately high number of major strategic proposals being submitted in the Borough.
SP302	Percentage of minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks.	78.56	78.08	81.16	80.25	Higher	AMBER	Emma Peters	Increased staff stability within the Development Control service continues to benefit performance during the review period. Performance continues to approach the target and it should be met by the end of the year.
SP303	Percentage of other planning applications determined in 8 weeks.	85.53	84.00	86.80	88.25	Higher	AMBER	Emma Peters	Increased staff stability within the Development Control service continues to benefit performance during the review period. Performance continues to approach the target and end of year target should be met.

Appendix 1

PI Ref No	Description	Outturn 05/06	Nov Actual	Nov Target	Annual Target	Preferred Outcome	Traffic Light	Responsible Officer	Manager's Comments
SP304	Number of businesses / social enterprises assisted to improve their performance	N/A	22	18	25	Higher	GREEN	Emma Peters	Above target
SP306	Percentage of young people in Tower Hamlets aged 16-18 not in education, employment or training	13.5	9.2	12.5	11.5	Lower	GREEN	Mary Durkin	The reported figure is provisional and may be subject to amendment. A number of steps have been taken to increase the number of young people in employment, education or training. These include: - door knocking/outreach work to reach out to young people those are on the NEET register. -bringing the Connexions service in house to improve the quality of careers advice to young people. The transfer of staff under TUPE to the Council will be completed in January 2007. -Setting up a borough wide NEET reduction strategy group. - Identifying additional funding to develop New Start Plus -Additional funding is secured to commission alternative provision to take people off the register. This has resulted in us exceeding our target for November 2006. We are continuing to review our approaches to addressing this issue and are expecting continued improvements in performance.
SP307	Number of people aged 24 and under in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance (and not on New Deal) helped into paid employment of over 16 hours a week for at least 13 consecutive weeks or more	100	194	130	200	Higher	GREEN	Emma Peters	We are on track to meet the LPSA2 target.
SP308	Percentage of young people in Tower Hamlets aged 18 - 25 claiming unemployment-related benefits	20.6	21.0	16.5	16.5	Lower	RED	Emma Peters	Jobcentre Plus are the prime agency for reducing unemployment. Despite improvements in the service they offer to local unemployed residents the scale of the situation, with the number of new applicants outnumbering the 'stock' of claimants, makes for a situation where although many local residents are accessing employment, the unemployment rate remains high. The Council will continue to work towards the key aims outlined in the LAA and Regeneration Strategy - to provide a long term step change by attempting to break the cycle of unemployment and worklessness by concentrating efforts on young people and the transition from

Appendix 1

PI Ref No	Description	Outturn 05/06	Nov Actual	Nov Target	Annual Target	Preferred Outcome	Traffic Light	Responsible Officer	Manager's Comments
SP309	Percentage of local residents claiming unemployment-related benefits	8.0	8.8	8.3	8.3	Lower	RED	Emma Peters	education to employment. Jobcentre Plus are the prime agency for reducing unemployment. Despite improvements in the service they offer to local unemployed residents the scale of the situation, with the number of new applicants outnumbering the 'stock' of claimants, makes for a situation where although many local residents are accessing employment, the unemployment rate remains high. The Council will continue to work towards the key aims outlined in the LAA and Regeneration Strategy - to provide a long term step change by attempting to break the cycle of unemployment and worklessness by concentrating efforts on young people and the transition from education to employment.
SP310	Increased supply of employment opportunities in key growth sectors prompted directly through the Employment Consortium	1280	960	870	1350	Higher	GREEN	Emma Peters	Skillsmatch is on target to continue to secure vacancies for local residents.
SP404a	Improved overall attendance rates at primary school (proxy for LAA 601 & 602)	93.92	95.6	94.8	94.80	Higher	GREEN	Helen Jenner	Above target - this figure relates to the first half of the autumn term.
SP404b	Improved overall attendance rates at secondary school (proxy for LAA 601, 602 & 603)	92.58	93.8	92.9	92.90	Higher	GREEN	Helen Jenner	Above target - this figure relates to the first half of the autumn term.
SP405a	Unauthorised absence rates - primary (proxy for 601, 602 & 603)	1.22	1.1	1.1	1.10	Lower	GREEN	Helen Jenner	On target - this figure relates to the first half of the autumn term.
SP405b	Unauthorised absence rates - secondary	2.42	1.8	2.2	2.20	Lower	GREEN	Helen Jenner	Above target - this figure relates to the first half of the autumn term
SP408	Number of under 16s who are active users of the Idea Stores and libraries	14008	14068	16536	17800	Higher	AMBER	Alex Cosgrave	Active users" refers to young people who borrow a library item at least once a year within the last 12 months. This means that the figures reflect a rolling-12 month view of usage, and not a cumulative increase to the total number of under-16 library users. This is an area of priority for the service in the next 6 months in the run up to the under-16s library

Appendix 1

PI Ref No	Description	Outturn 05/06	Nov Actual	Nov Target	Annual Target	Preferred Outcome	Traffic Light	Responsible Officer	Manager's Comments
									users CIPFA survey in autumn 2007, including monthly monitoring of these figures and quarterly reports by Idea Stores managers on the sets of activities and programmes undertaken. This targeted management has proven very successful. However, the remaining libraries are demonstrating reduced interest from young people in comparison to the Idea Stores as they are relatively limited in the range of services and activities available. The service is therefore looking at how best to address under-usage in areas not currently serviced by an Idea Store. The end-of-year target may not be met as these are long-term improvement measures.
SP409	Total number of library items issued to under 16s - Enhancing young people	279607	187792	198870	298304	Higher	AMBER	Alex Cosgrave	Across London, issues have been lower than in previous years. Work is currently underway to improve stock selection and display for young people in the Borough's Idea Stores and the remaining libraries.
SP410	Number of young people under 16 attending study support sessions - enhancing young people	469	N/A	328	492	Higher		Alex Cosgrave	This indicator is reported on termly basis and results will next be collected for the end of December.
SP411	Total number of under 19s completing a course in Idea Stores, libraries and learning centres - enhancing young people	1065	441	933	1400	Higher	AMBER	Alex Cosgrave	The Lifelong Learning service works on an academic year, and given the number of learners under 19 enrolled on courses, it is likely that the end of year target will be met.
SP412	Number of physical visits to public library premises per 1000 population	7709	6131.6	6516	9774.7	Higher	RED	Alex Cosgrave	The significant rise in visits in Tower Hamlets goes against the trend for the rest of London. While IS Whitechapel and Crisp Street are performing well, it appears that IS Bow has suffered as a result of the closure of the supermarket in Roman Road. Concentrated marketing at IS Canary Wharf has increased the monthly visits by 50% over the last 10 weeks. However, the remaining libraries continue to attract the same number of visits despite promotional events and reading programmes. The service continues to work towards achieving the target but is unlikely to achieve the ambitious target this year.
SP501	Budget Performance	-1225000	960000	0	0	Lower	AMBER	Alan Finch	Compared to a total net budget of £266.9m, spending is currently projected to total £267.8m. This represents a projected overspend of £0.960m after

Appendix 1

PI Ref No	Description	Outturn 05/06	Nov Actual	Nov Target	Annual Target	Preferred Outcome	Traffic Light	Responsible Officer	Manager's Comments
									allowing for the availability of a £2.090m corporate contingency set aside when the budget was approved in March 2006. The projected outturns for two Directorates; Adult Services and Environment & Culture currently forecast significant overspends in the current financial year. It is important that the Corporate Directors responsible for these budgets continue to take steps to contain expenditure within budget, and to manage cost pressures on a medium and long-term basis to minimise future budget pressures. All Directors will need to maintain robust monitoring of budgets and take early action to deal with actual and projected variances. Directors are required to report to the Cabinet if they are unable to do this without taking steps that will affect services. Overspends in two Directorates may be early evidence that this is now having a practical effect. The financial standing of the authority remains strong, but Members will need to bear these factors in mind in considering budget and medium-term planning decisions for 2007/08 – 2009/10 later in the financial year.
SP505	Number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per employee.	9.93	8.08	8.5	8.50	Lower	GREEN	Mildred Phillips	Sickness absence management continues to be a standing item on DMT. Performance continues to improve with a downward trend month on month. If this trend continues it is considered that the target will be reached by the year end.
SP506	Percentage of Undisputed Invoices Paid on Time	86.61	92.23	95	95	Higher	AMBER	Mildred Phillips	Performance in this PI continues to be steady and above 90% which compares favourably with top quartile performance of London Boroughs. Working practices are being explored to further improve outturn of this PI.
SP509	Increased attendance at Local Area Partnership events	4489	3180	3184	5000	Higher	AMBER	Alastair King	Based on the number of events held we are marginally below target. This is due to the nature of some of the November events which were smaller consultative events on planning issues, which attract fewer participants than events with broader themes. Events planned for Spring are likely to redress the balance and bring the numbers back on track.
SP510	% of telephones answered within the customer promise standard	N/A	67.47	75	75	Higher	AMBER	Claire Symonds	All Contact Centre Hotline services are in excess of the Customer Promise target except for Council Tax and Housing Repairs. These are high volume services

Appendix 1

PI Ref No	Description	Outturn 05/06	Nov Actual	Nov Target	Annual Target	Preferred Outcome	Traffic Light	Responsible Officer	Manager's Comments
									subject to fluctuations in demand, seasonal variations can be met by managing resources but there has been very high unexpected demand since the New Year, especially on repairs and recycling. However we are undertaking training of existing staff in additional services to improve resilience at peak times, and would expect lower demand in the spring, so would be hopeful of meeting the target by March.
SP511	% of letters responded to within customer promise standard	N/A	N/A	90	90	Higher		Claire Symonds	Robust monitoring system not yet in place, to be implemented by April 2007 so no data will be available for year end.
SP512	% of calls handled by the customer contact centre	N/A	N/A	40	40	Higher		Claire Symonds	The Council's Borough-wide telephony systems do not currently facilitate accurate measurement of call volumes. Only calls accessing the Contact Centre are currently being reliably measured. It is therefore not possible at this time to provide an accurate measure of the percentage of all calls to the Council this will be addressed as the roll out of the new telephony systems is completed as part of the Accommodation Strategy.
SP513	Percentage of complaints completed in time - Council as a whole - Stage 1	63	68	71	75	Higher	AMBER	Ruth Dowden	The position is improving (from 62% in Sept) However further improvement is required, particularly in some directorates. Directors and directorate complaints officers have been asked to identify why the trends are dipping and what action can be taken to return to target by year end.
SP515a	Percentage of attendees at LAP events who are from targeted communities: BME residents	54	58	48	48	Higher	GREEN	Margaret Libreri	Performance is above target.
SP515b	Percentage of attendees at LAP events who are from targeted communities: Bangladeshi residents	N/A	44	33	33	Higher	GREEN	Margaret Libreri	Performance is above target.
SP515c	Percentage of attendees at LAP events who are from targeted communities: Somali	N/A	3	5	5	Higher	AMBER	Margaret Libreri	Identified as target group for which to establish a baseline. Action planned includes targeting the Somali community for attendance at LAPs through the Tower Hamlets Somali Network, and through CEN

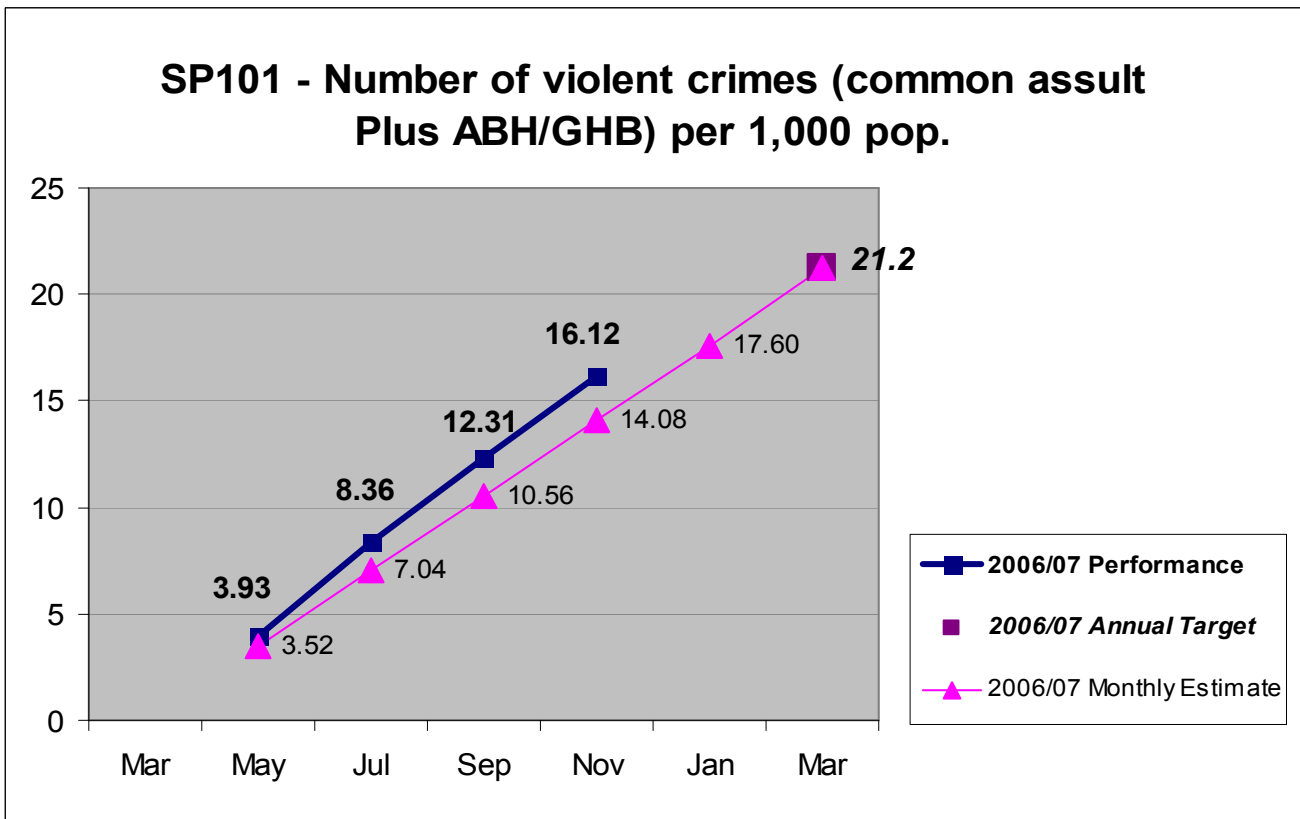
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PI Ref No	Description	Outturn 05/06	Nov Actual	Nov Target	Annual Target	Preferred Outcome	Traffic Light	Responsible Officer	Manager's Comments
	residents								activities.
SP515d	Percentage of attendees at LAP events who are from targeted communities: Young residents (16 - 25)	N/A	31	15	15	Higher	GREEN	Margaret Libreri	Attendance by young people is in excess of the target because a large number of events to date have been targeted at young people or areas of interest to young people, including education and employment.
SP516	The percentage of the top 5% of Local Authority staff who are from an ethnic minority.	14.29	15.59	17	18.00	Higher	RED	Lorraine Pitt	Again, there has been a slight improvement in performance of this PI from the last period, though still below target. Ongoing recruitment and management development activities should help to improve performance further. However, it should be noted that it is volatile due to small numbers of employees involved.
SP517	Percentage of top 5% of earners of Local Authority staff that are women.	48.66	51.52	49	49	Higher	GREEN	Mildred Phillips	The council continues to exceed target in this PI. It is likely that target will be exceeded at year end.

Tower Hamlets Index Performance Charts

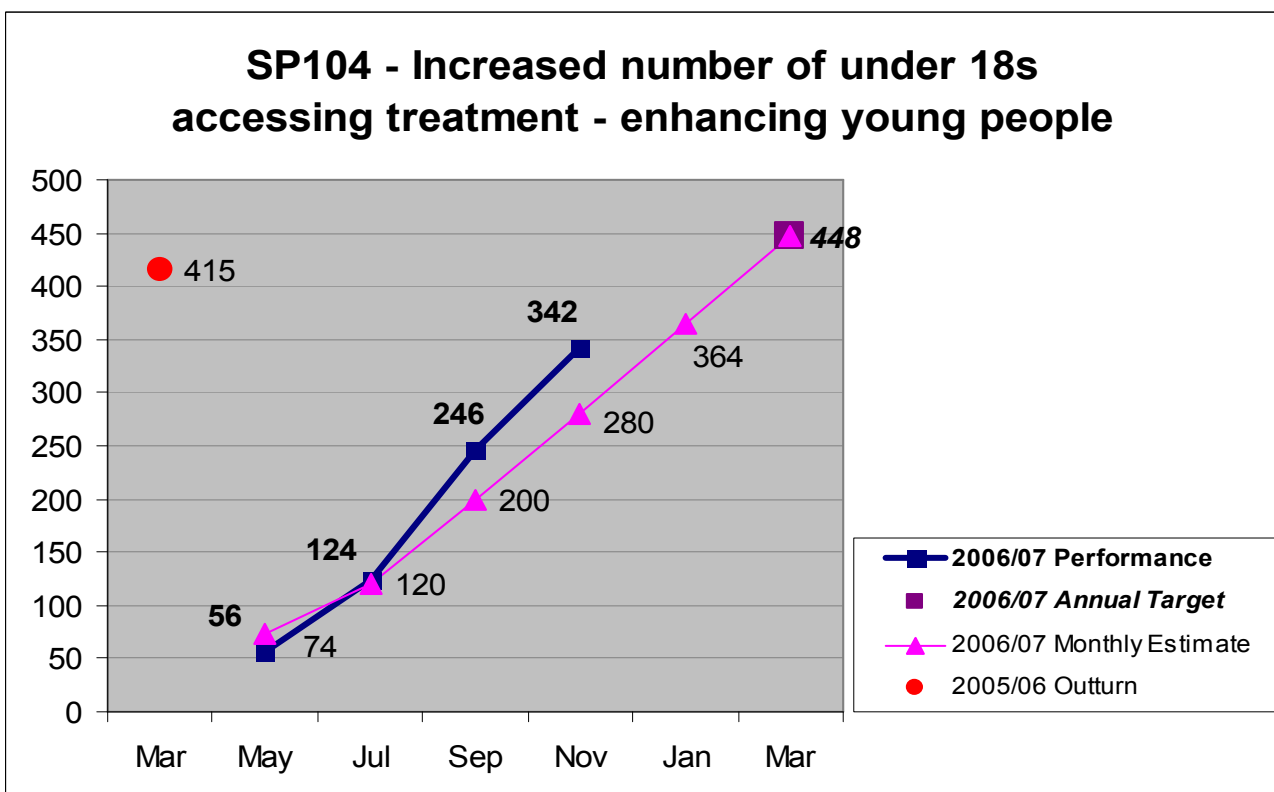
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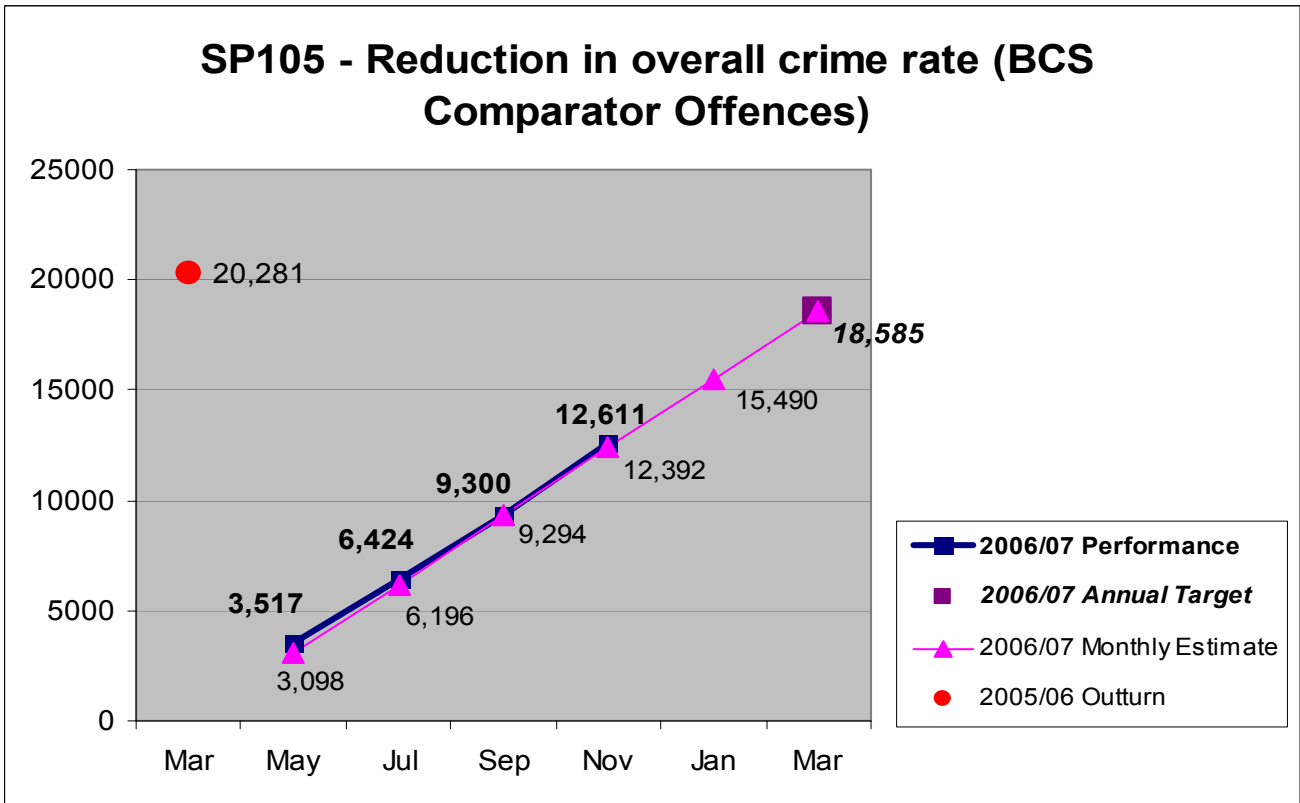


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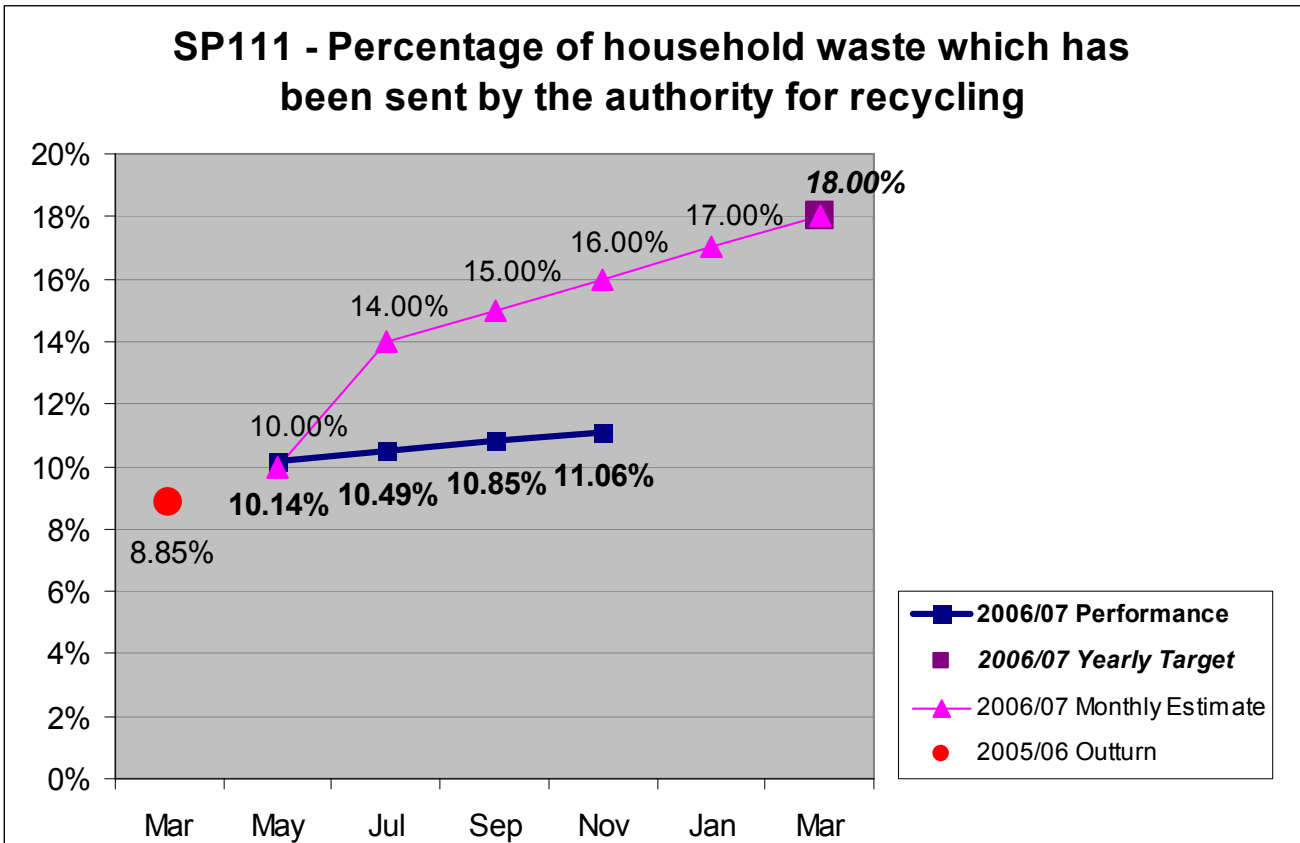
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Lower Performance is better

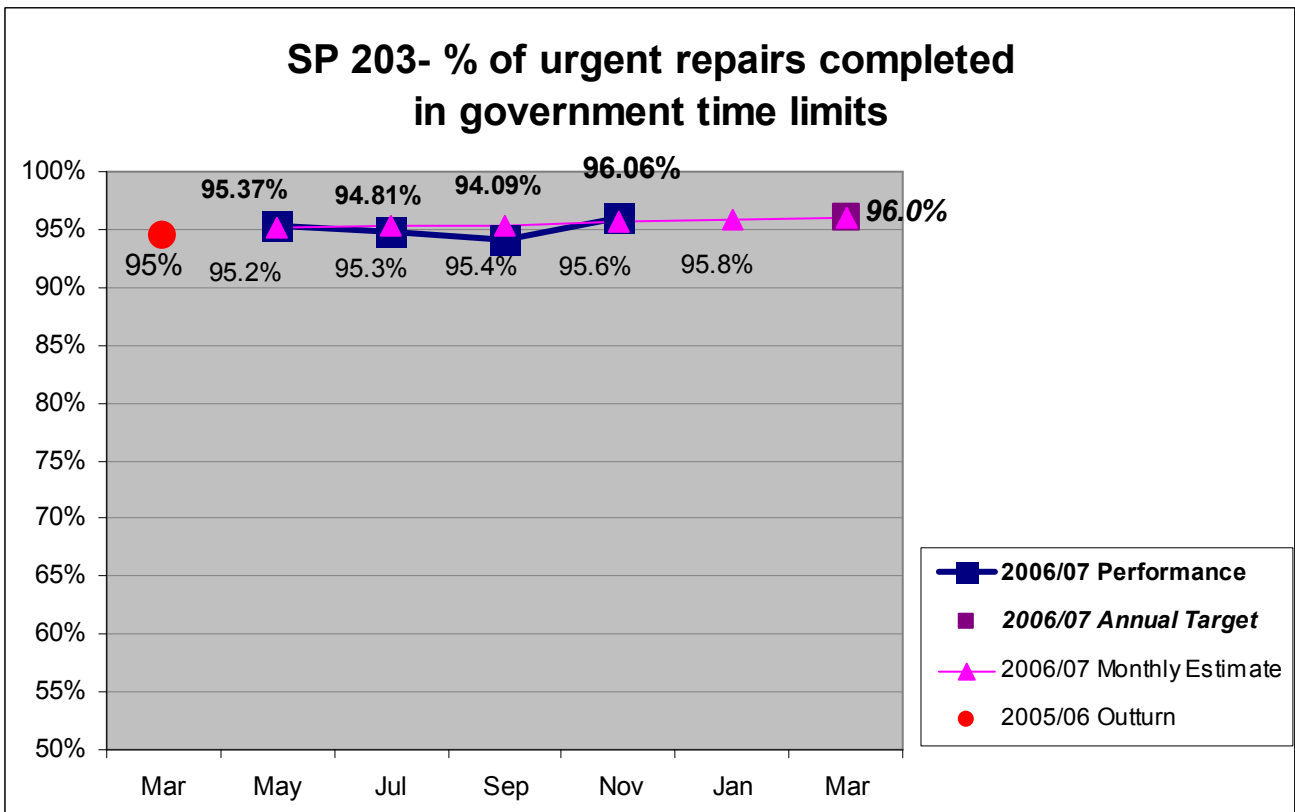


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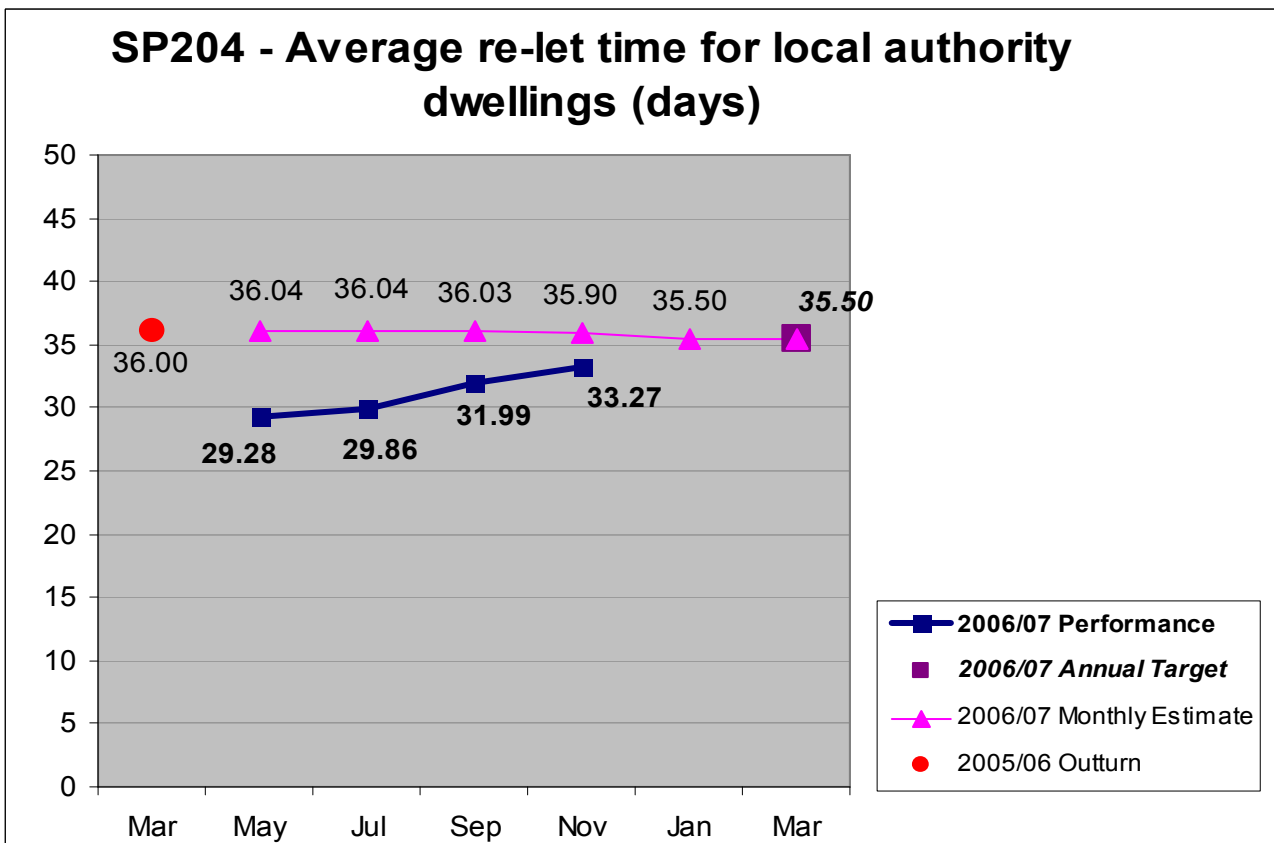
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Higher Performance is better



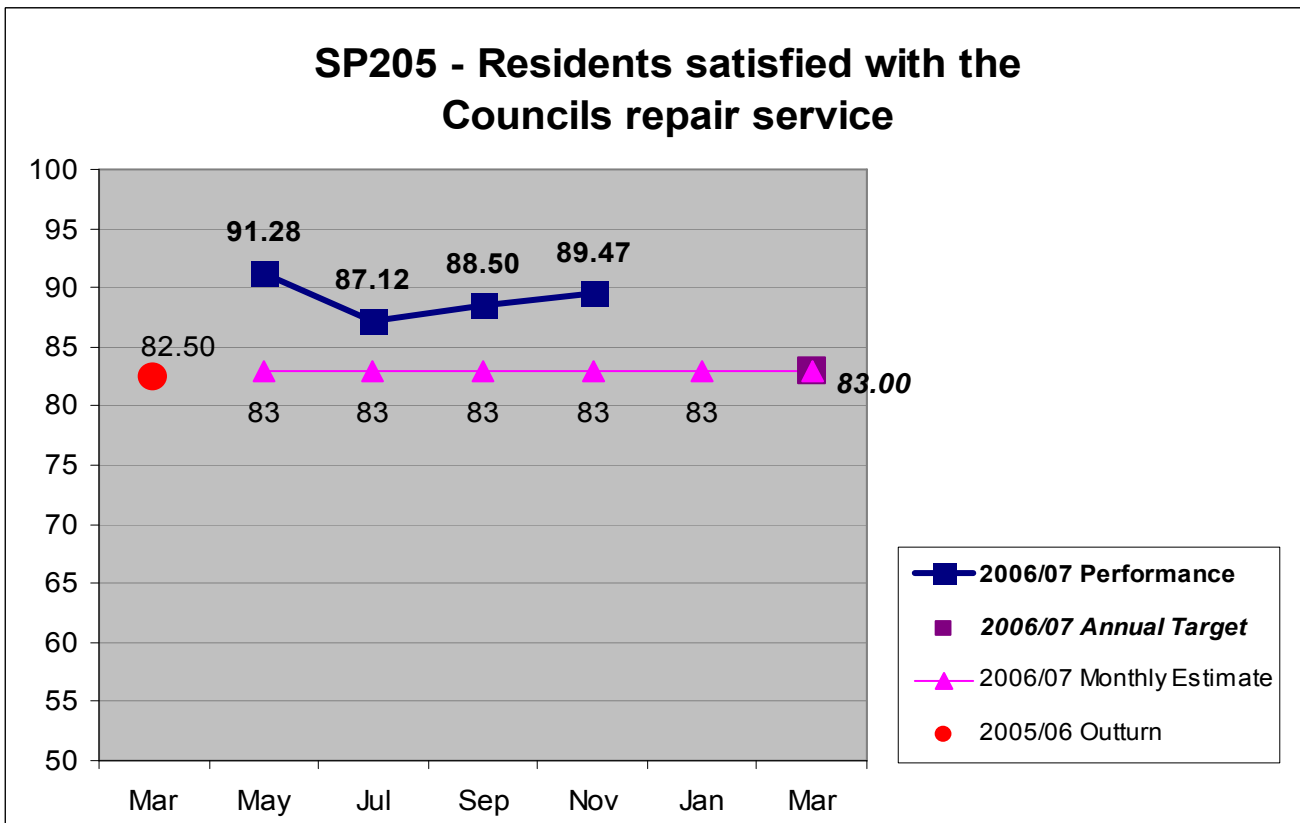
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Lower Performance is better



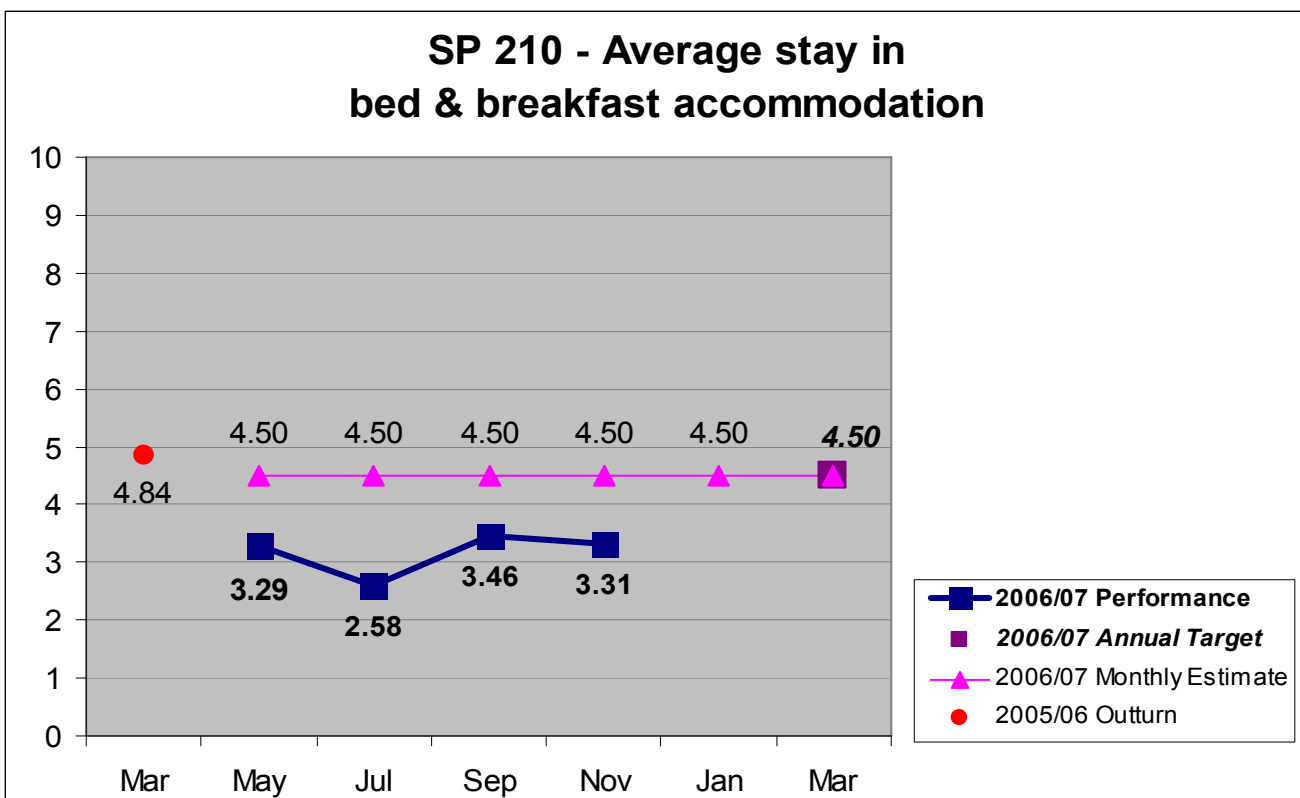
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Higher Performance is better

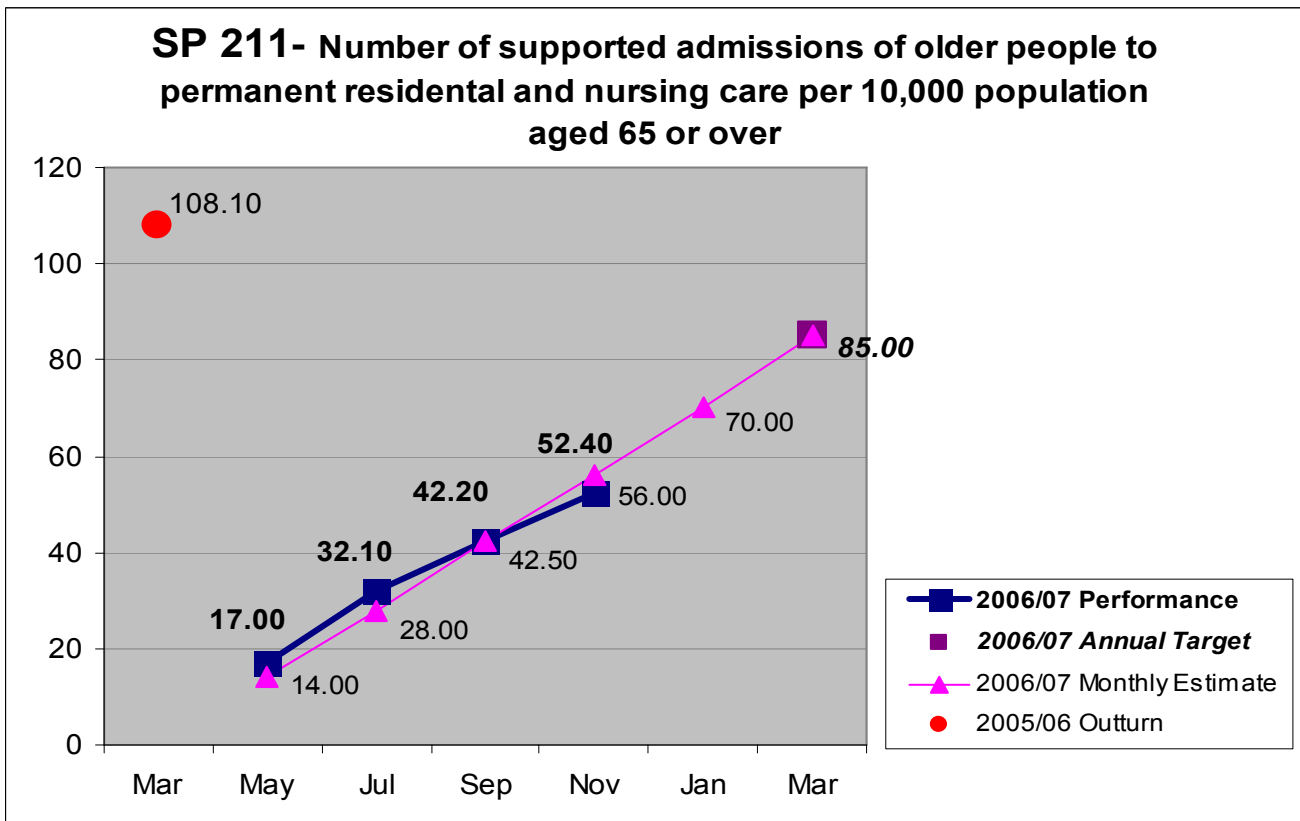


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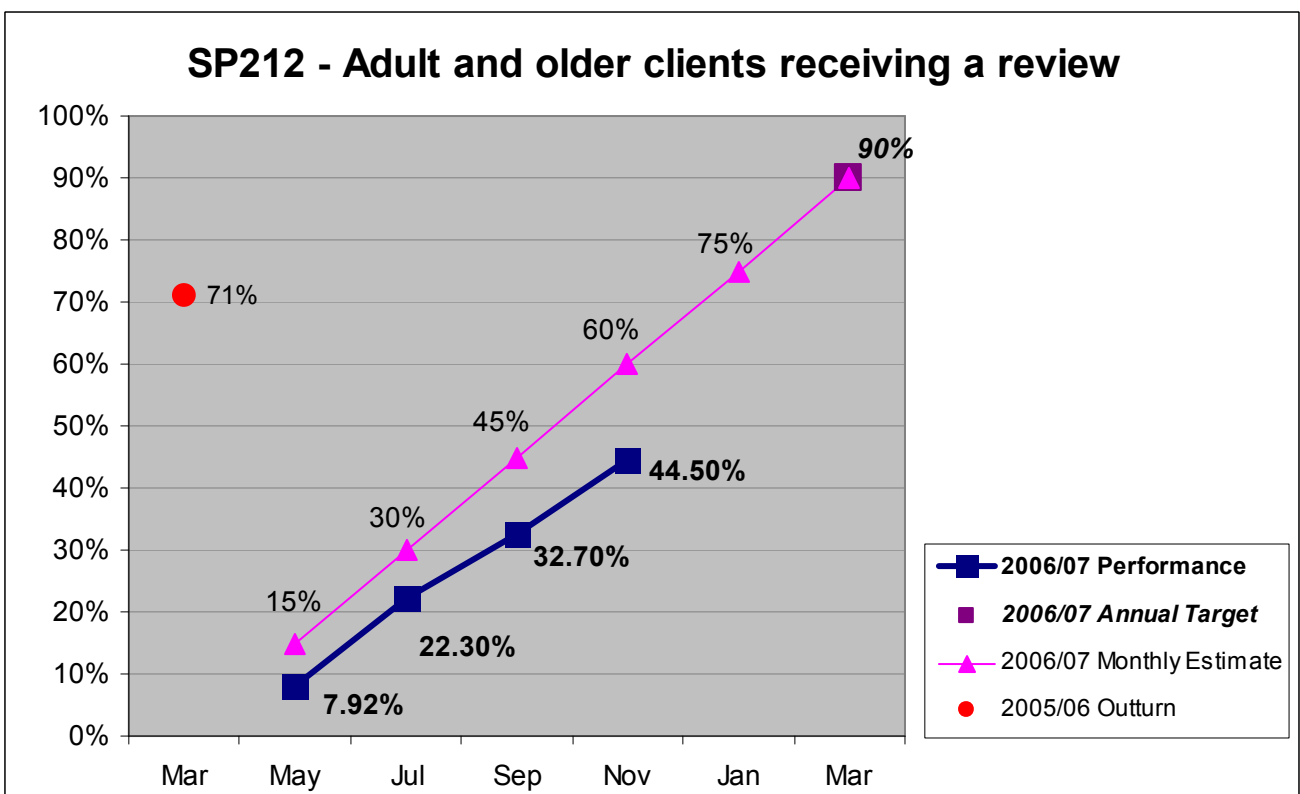
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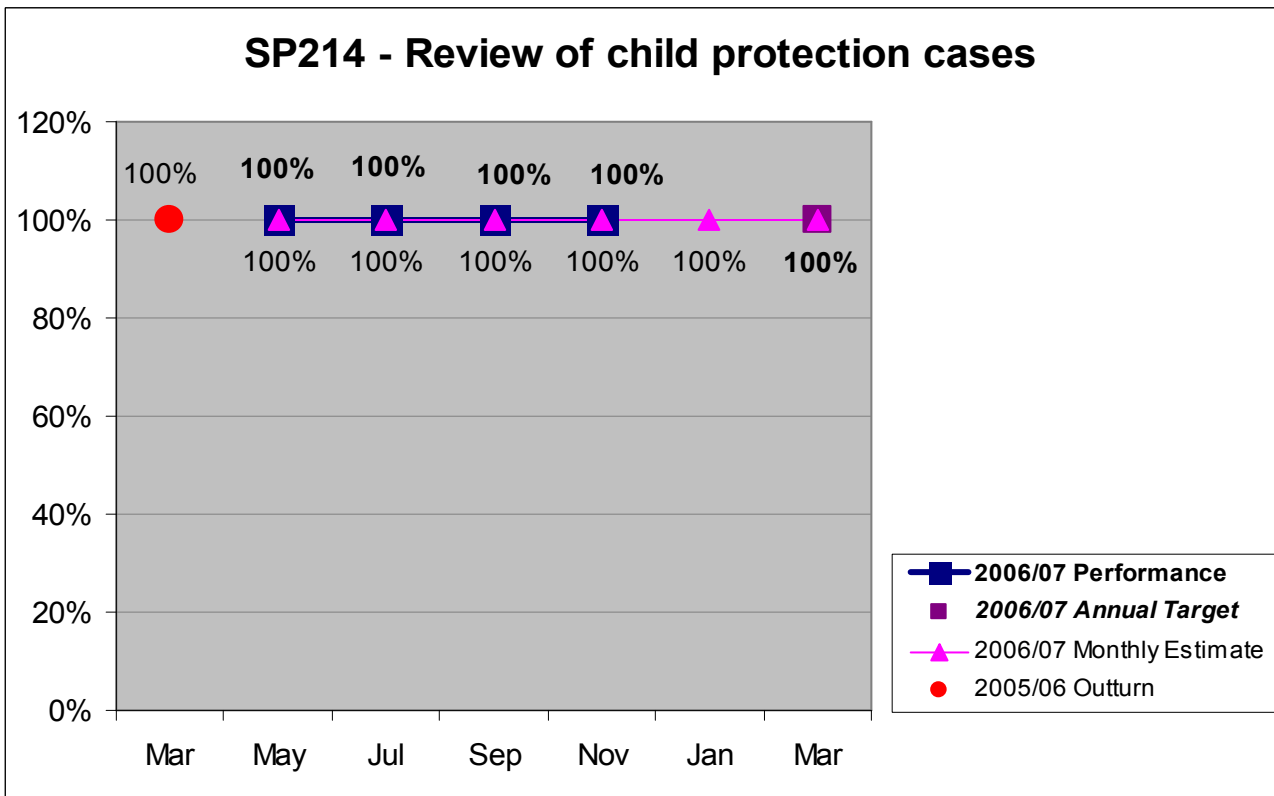
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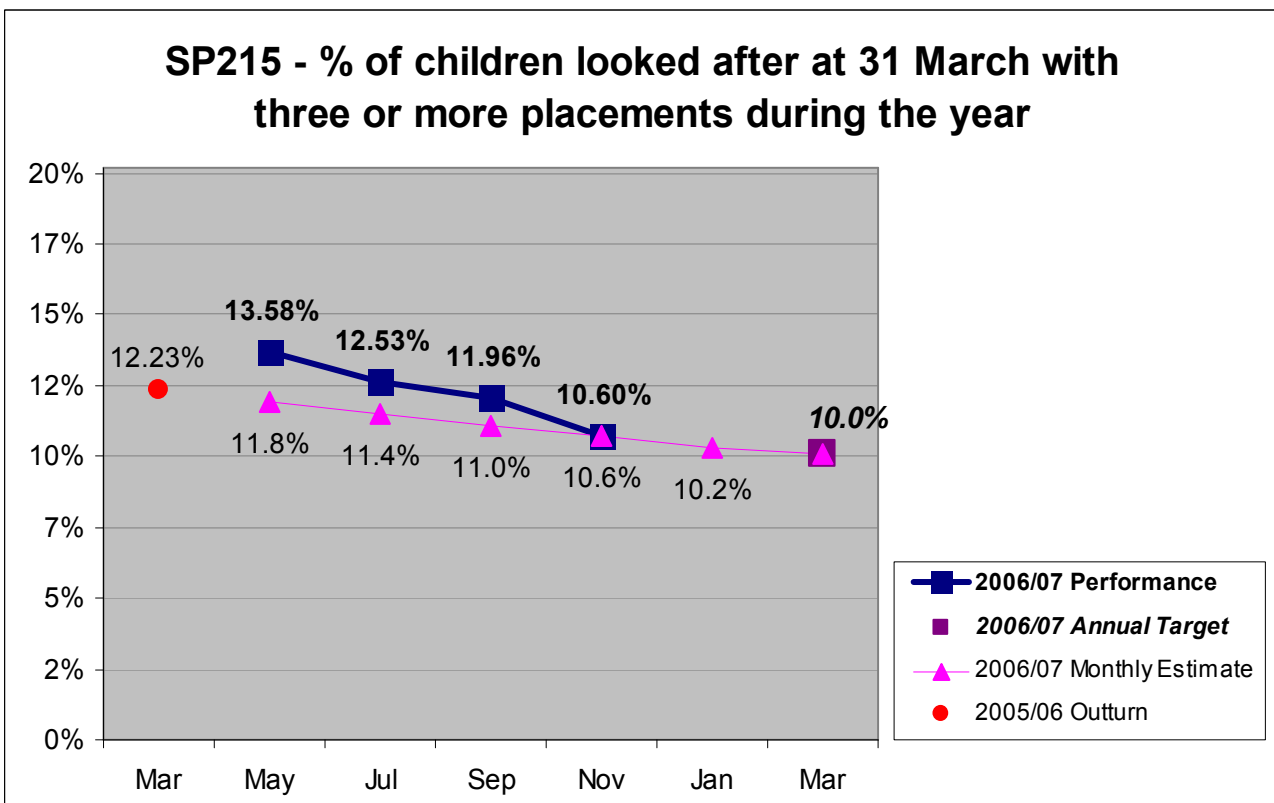
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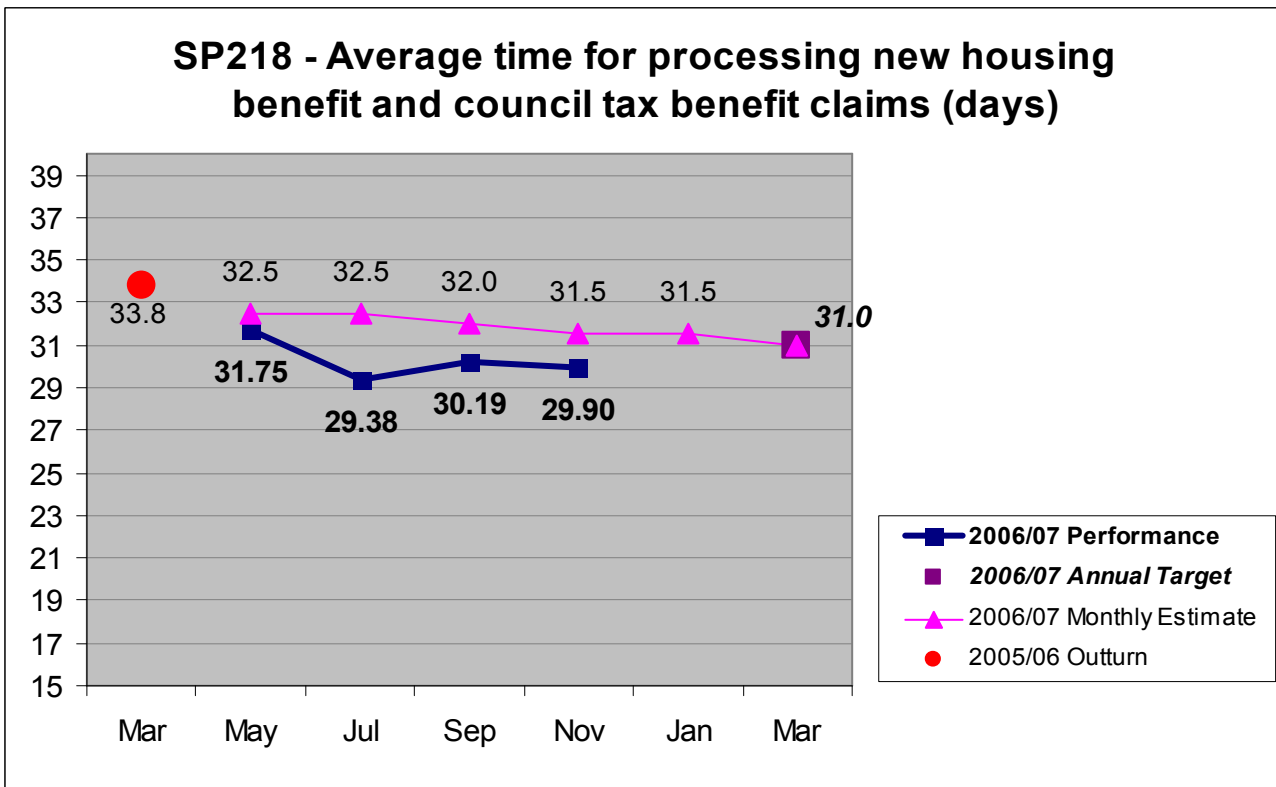
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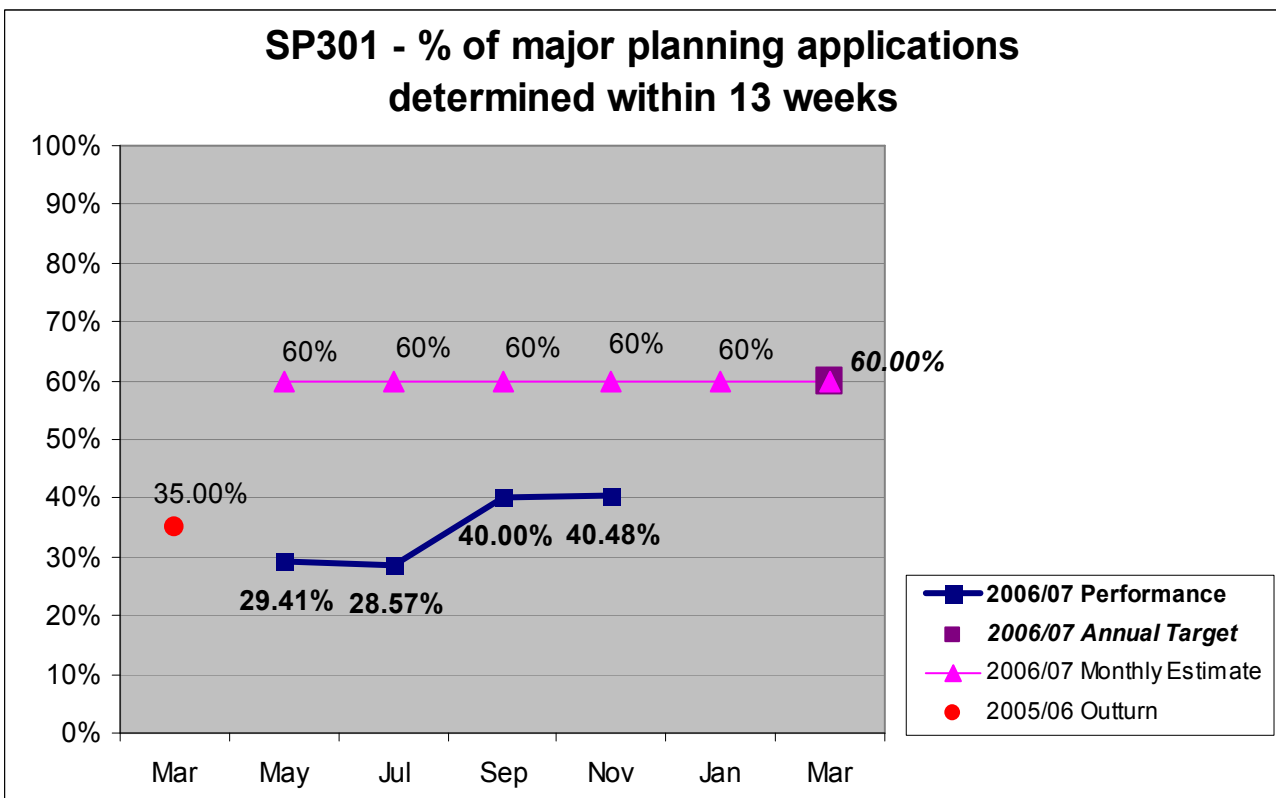
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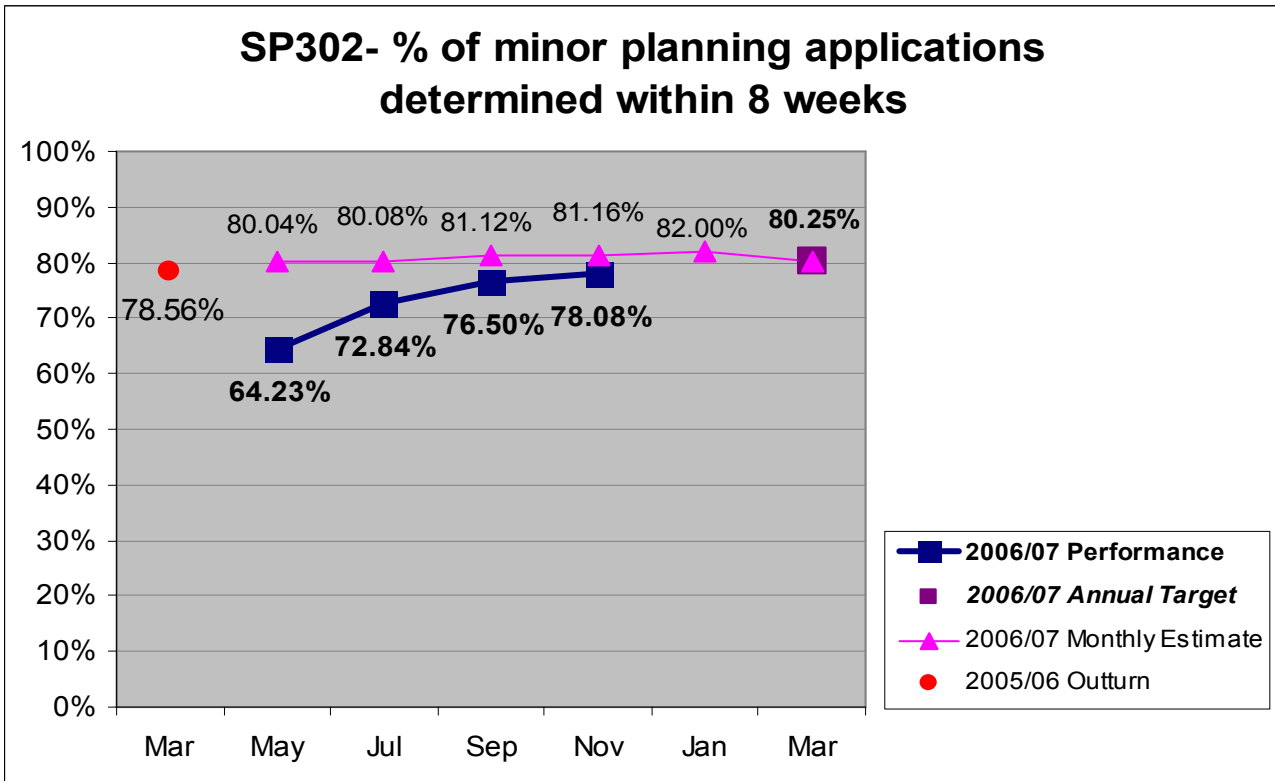
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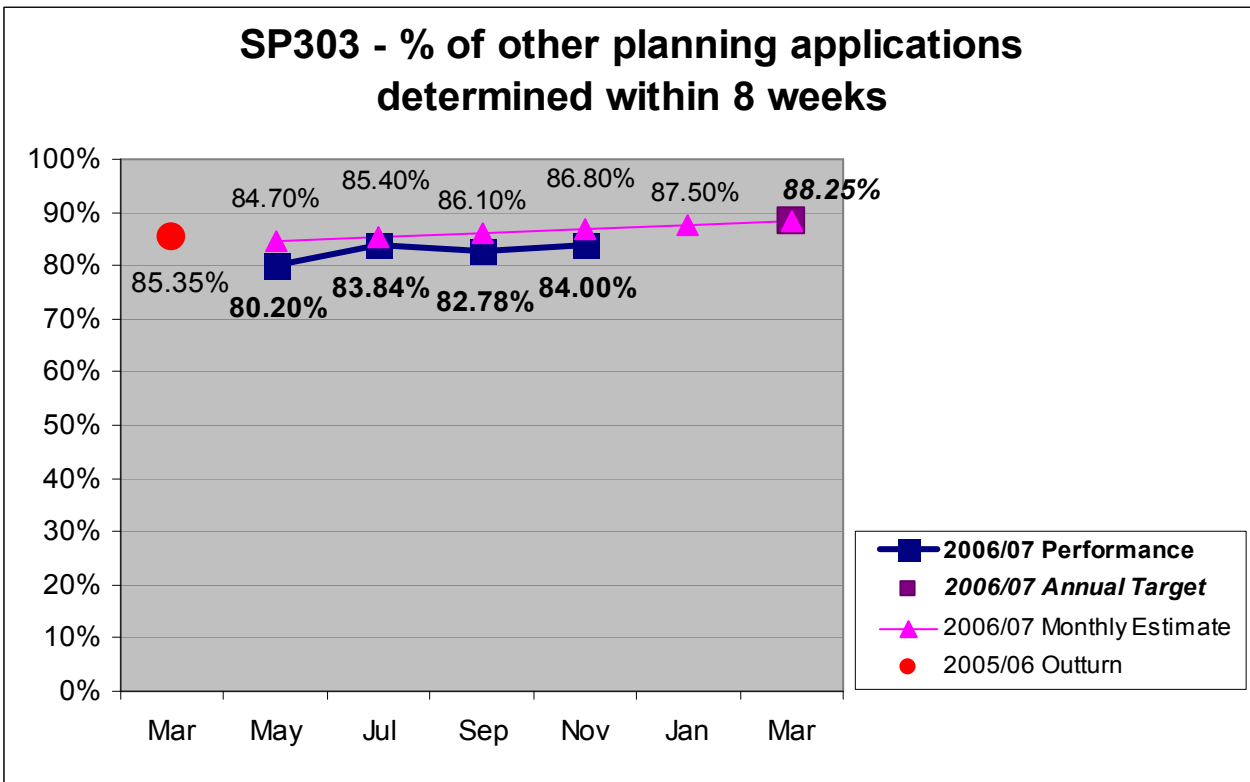
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Higher Performance is better

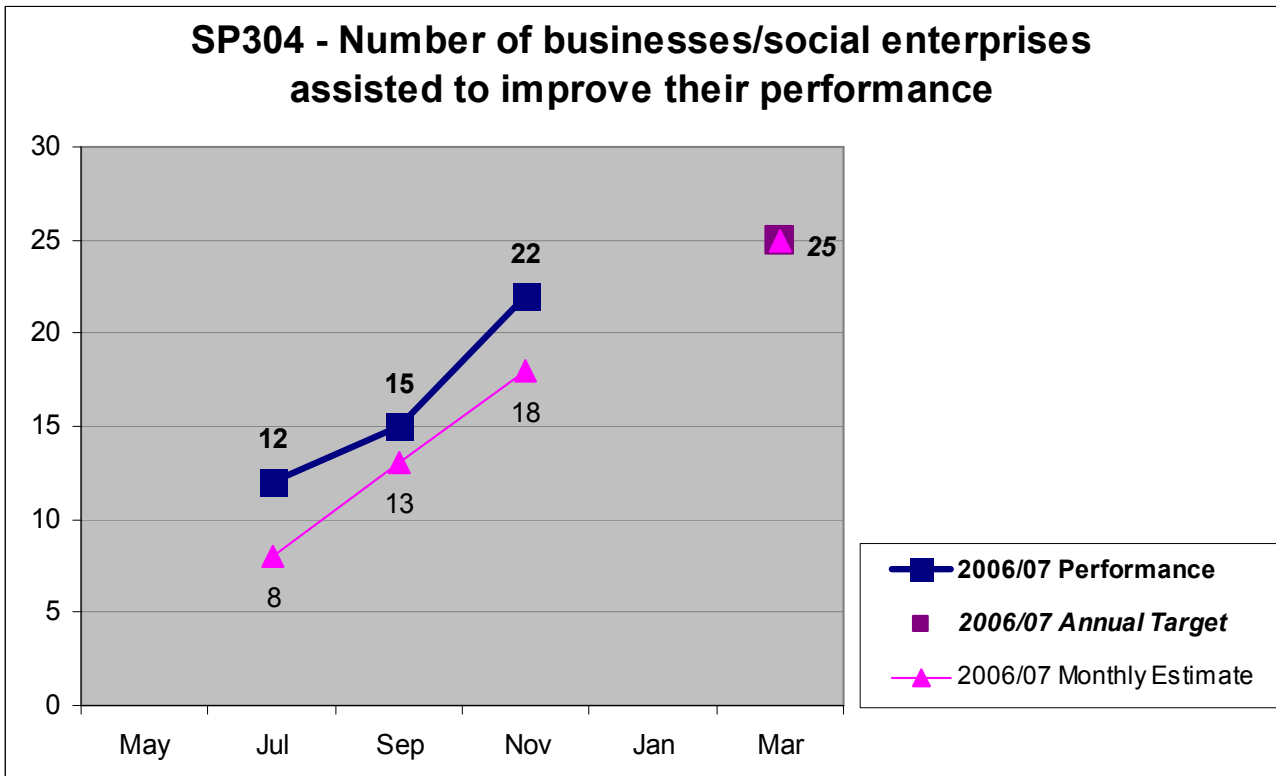


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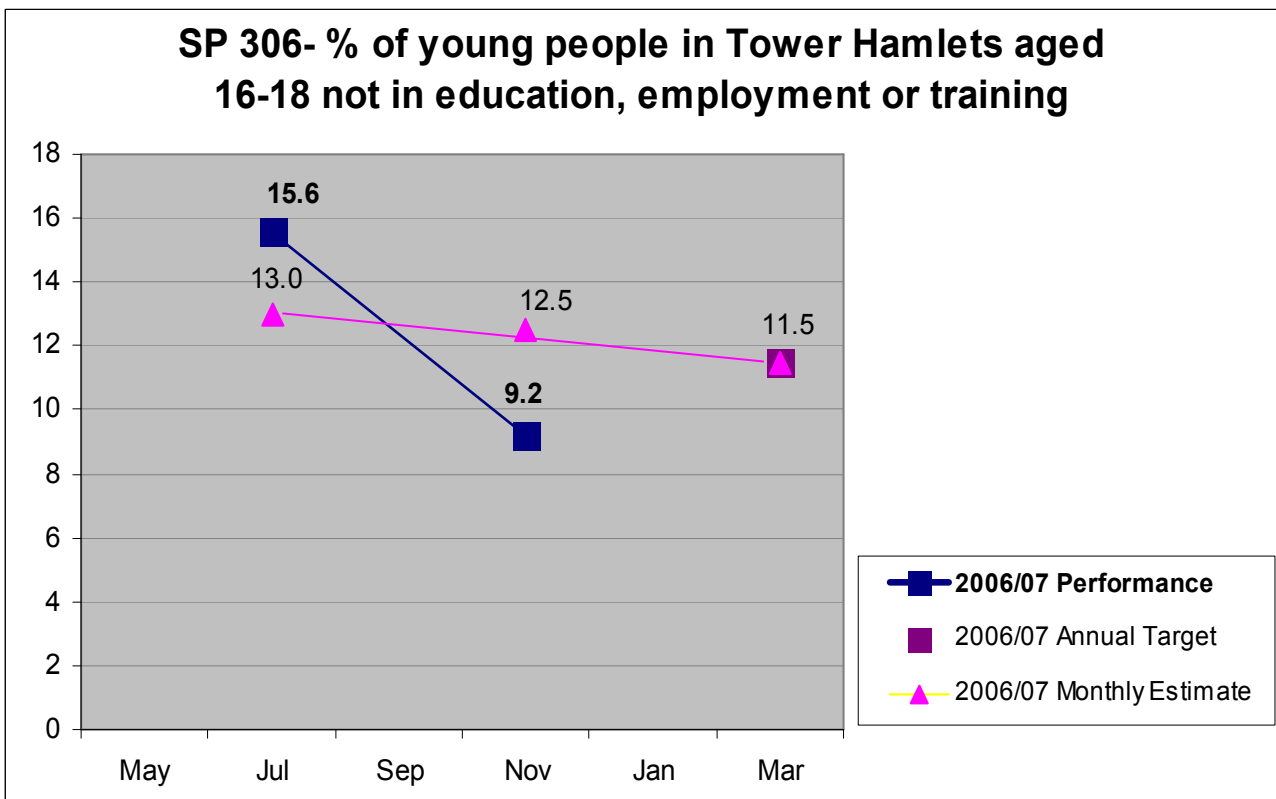
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Higher Performance is better

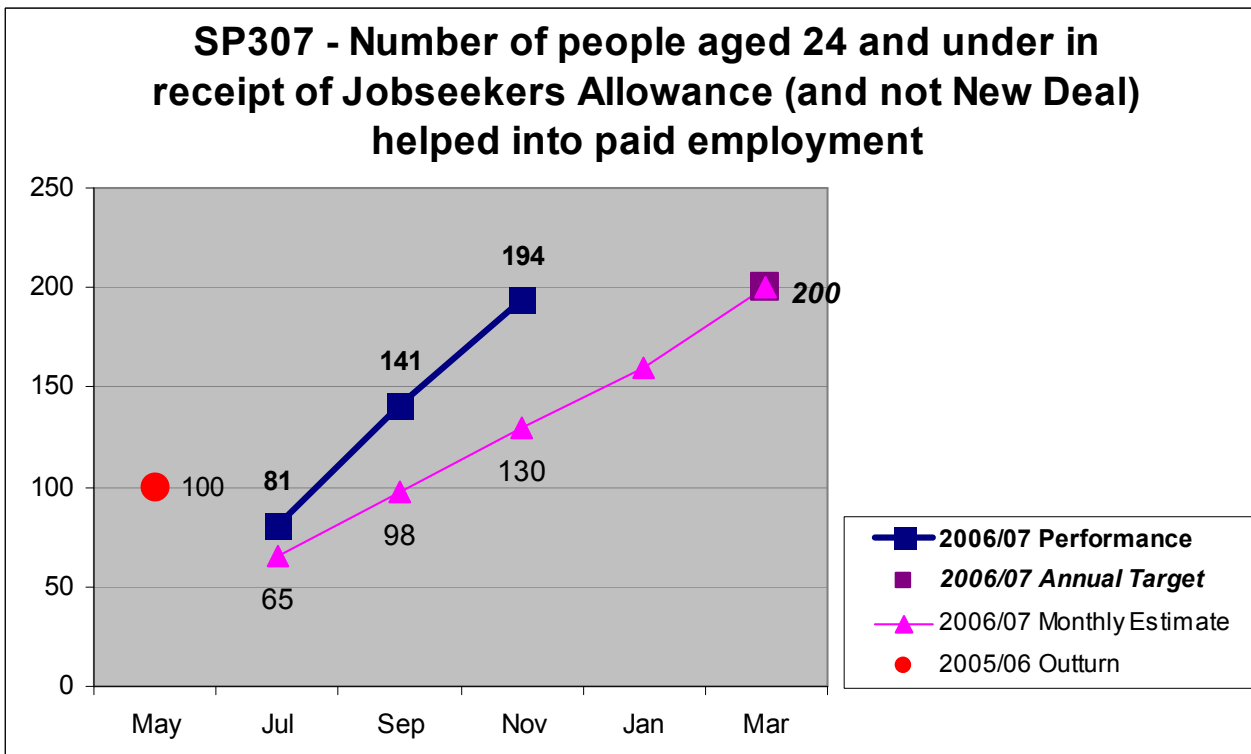


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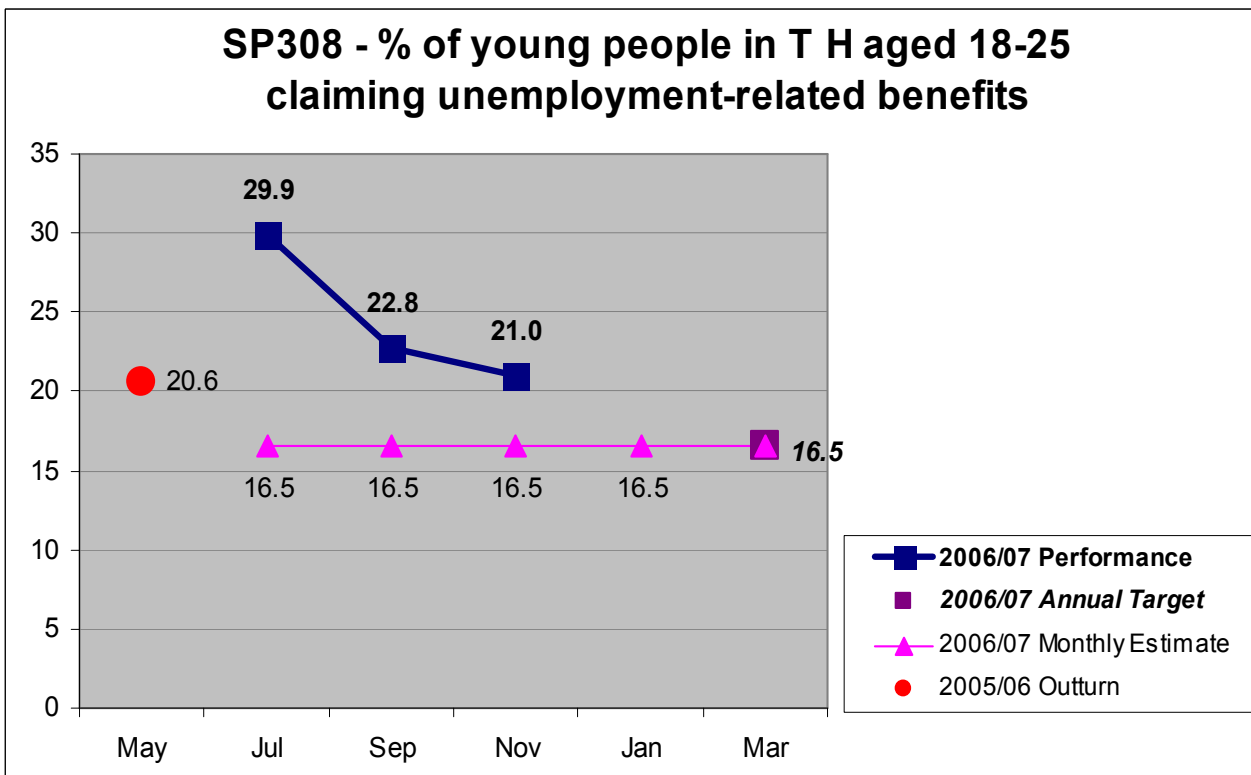
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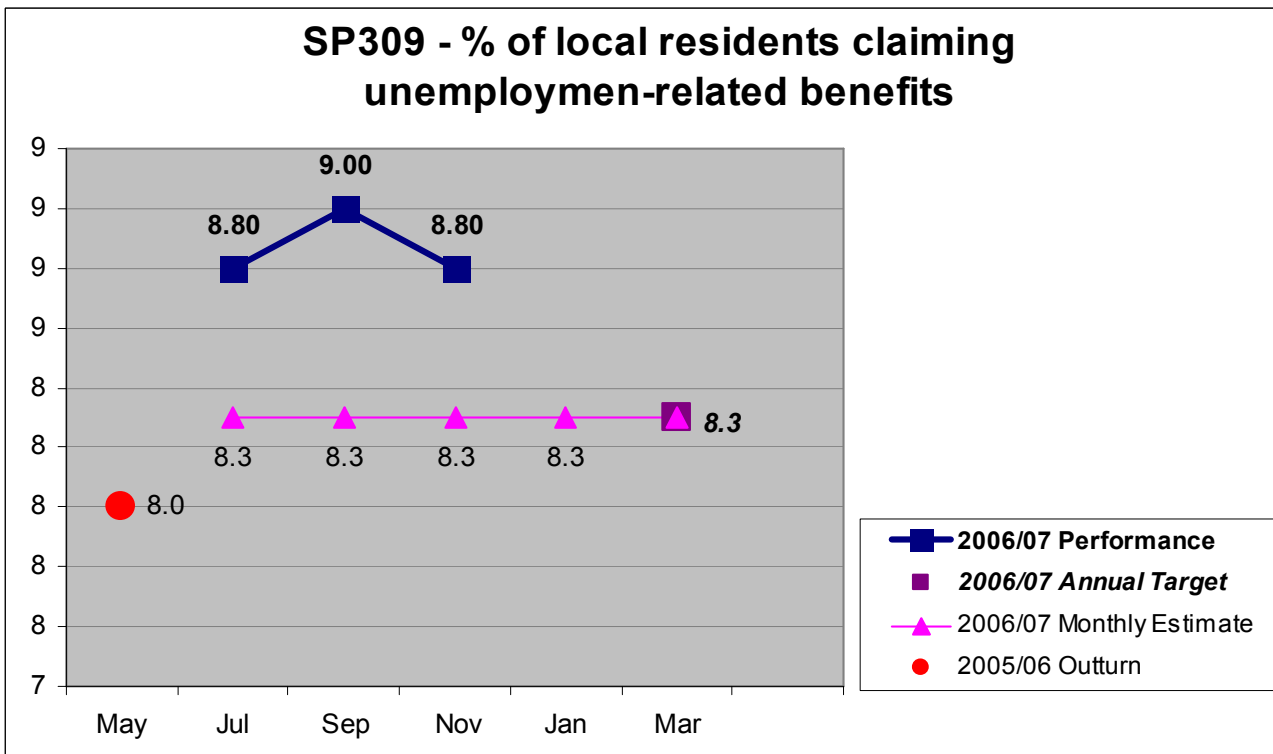


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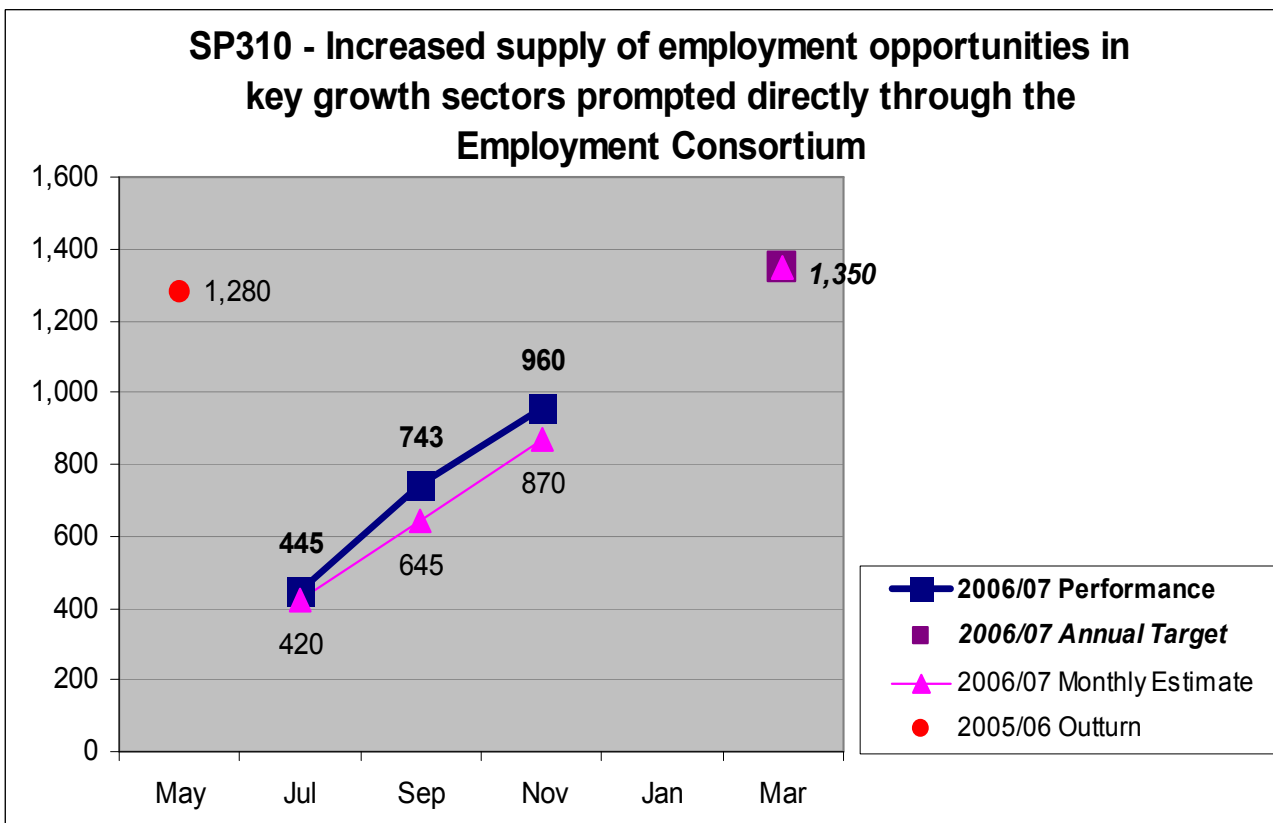
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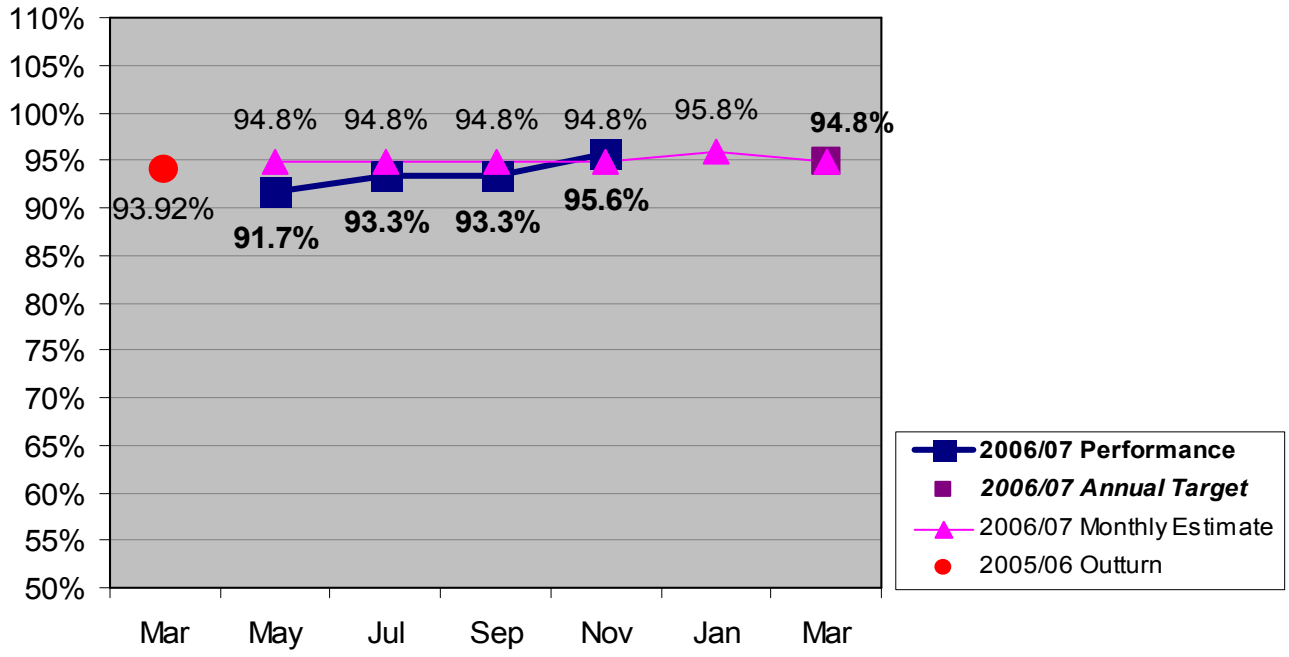
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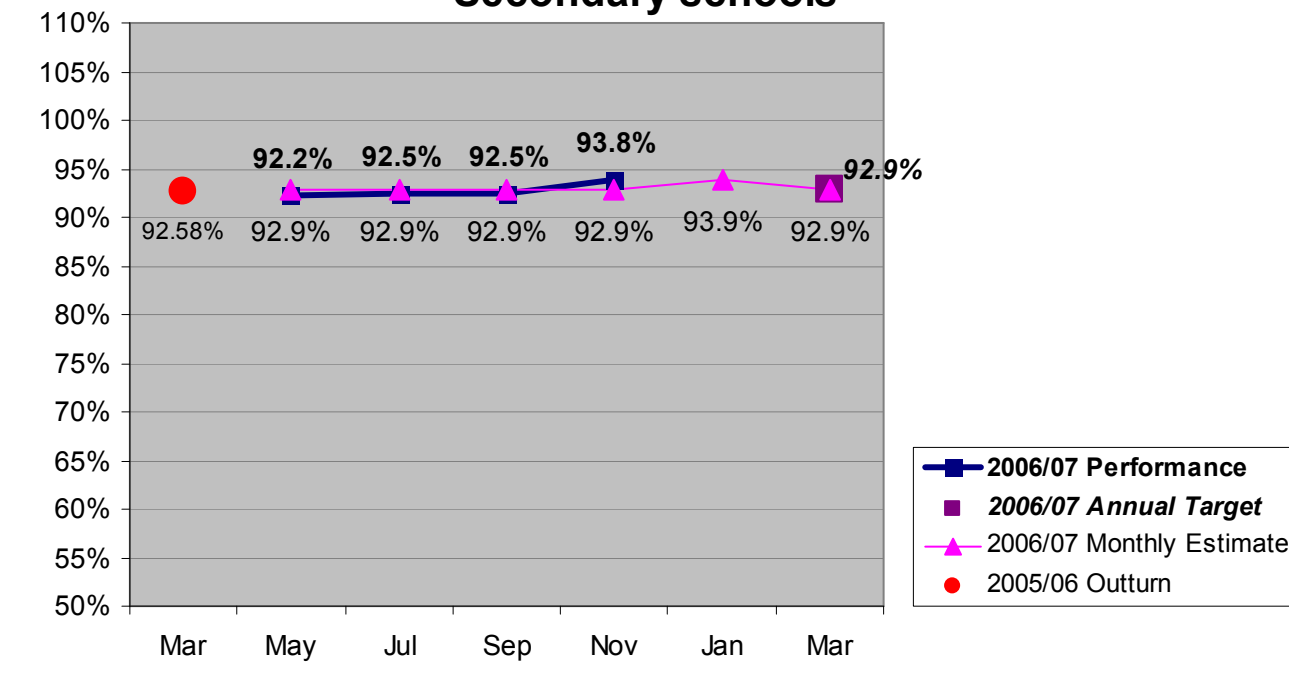
SP404a - Improved overall attendance rates at primary schools



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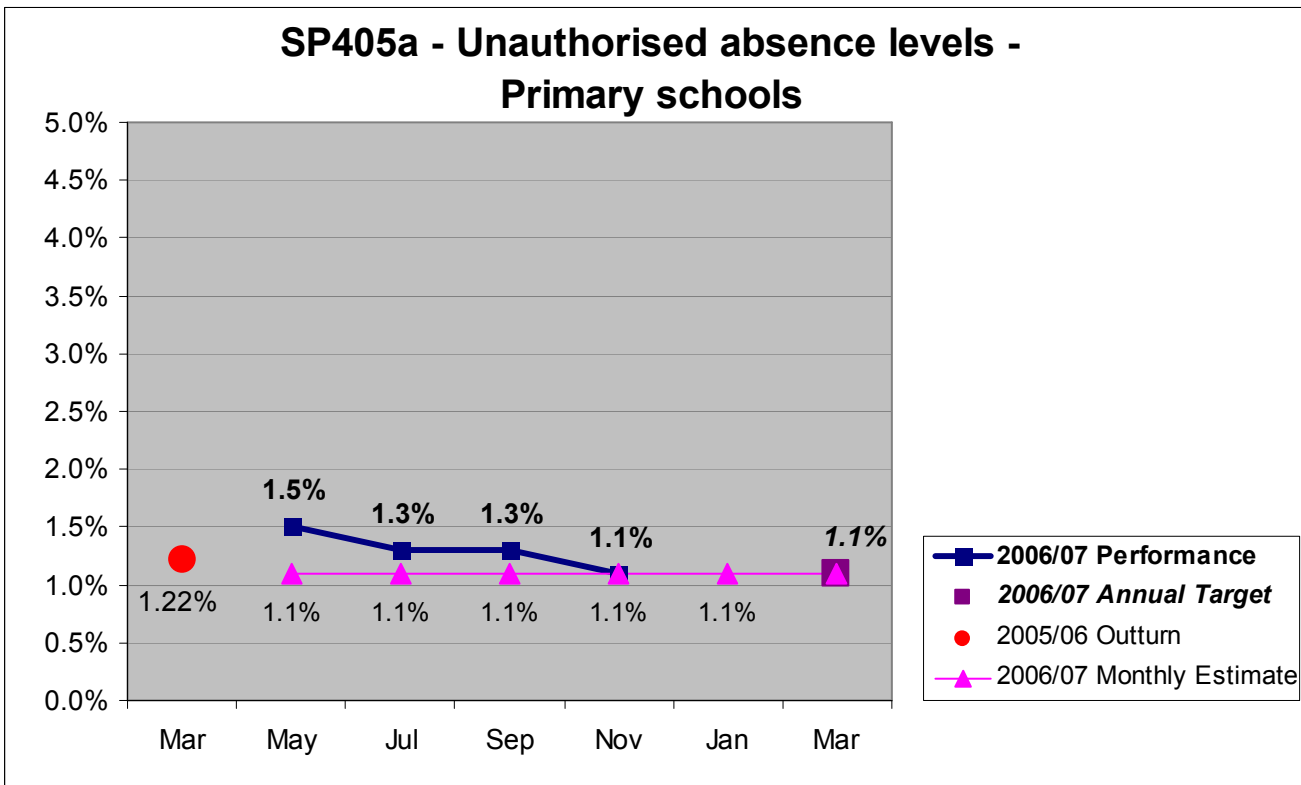
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SP404b - Improved overall attendance rates - Secondary schools



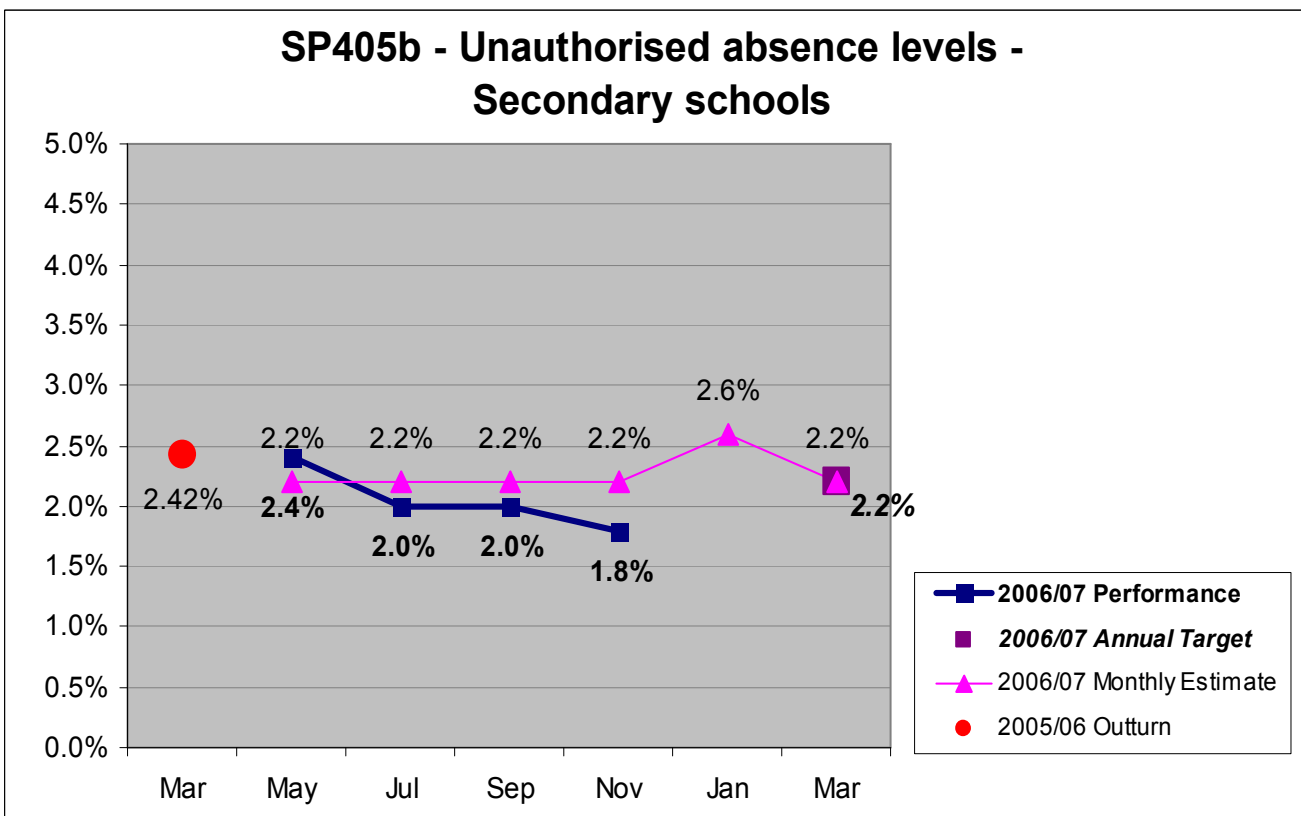
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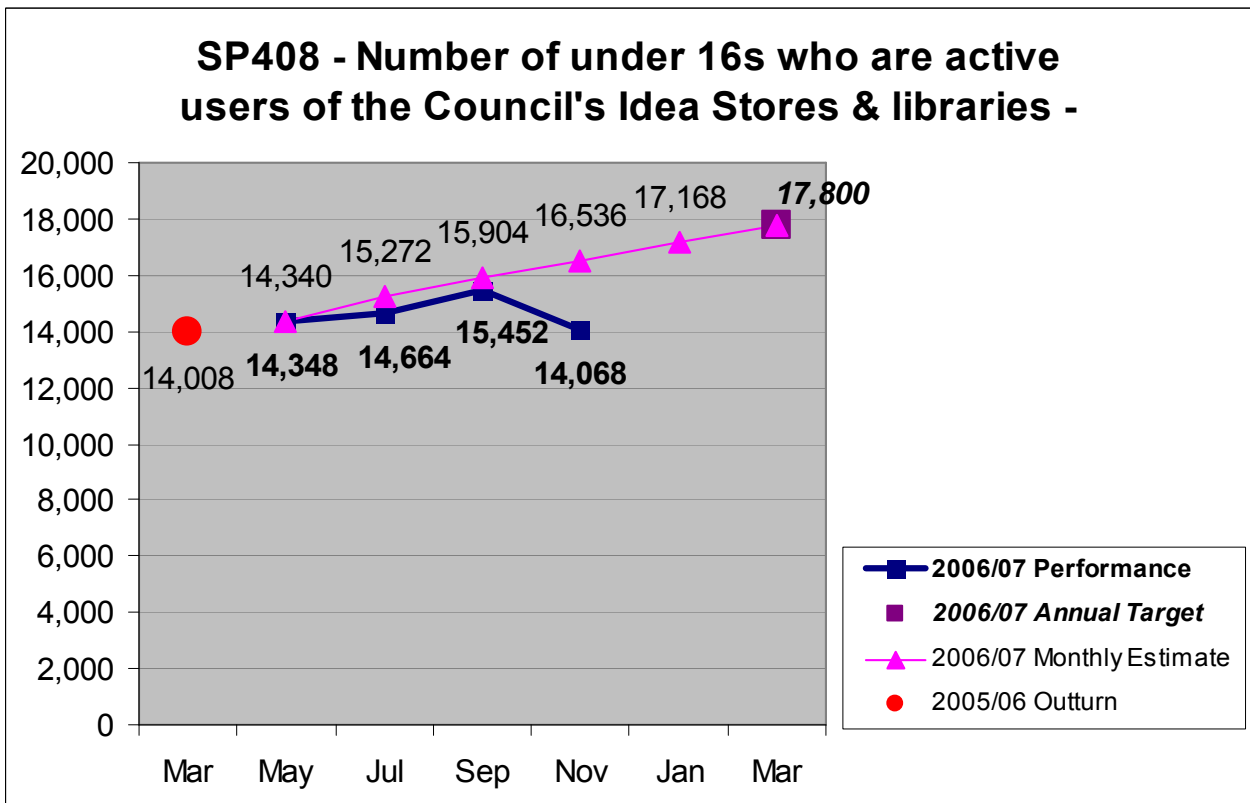


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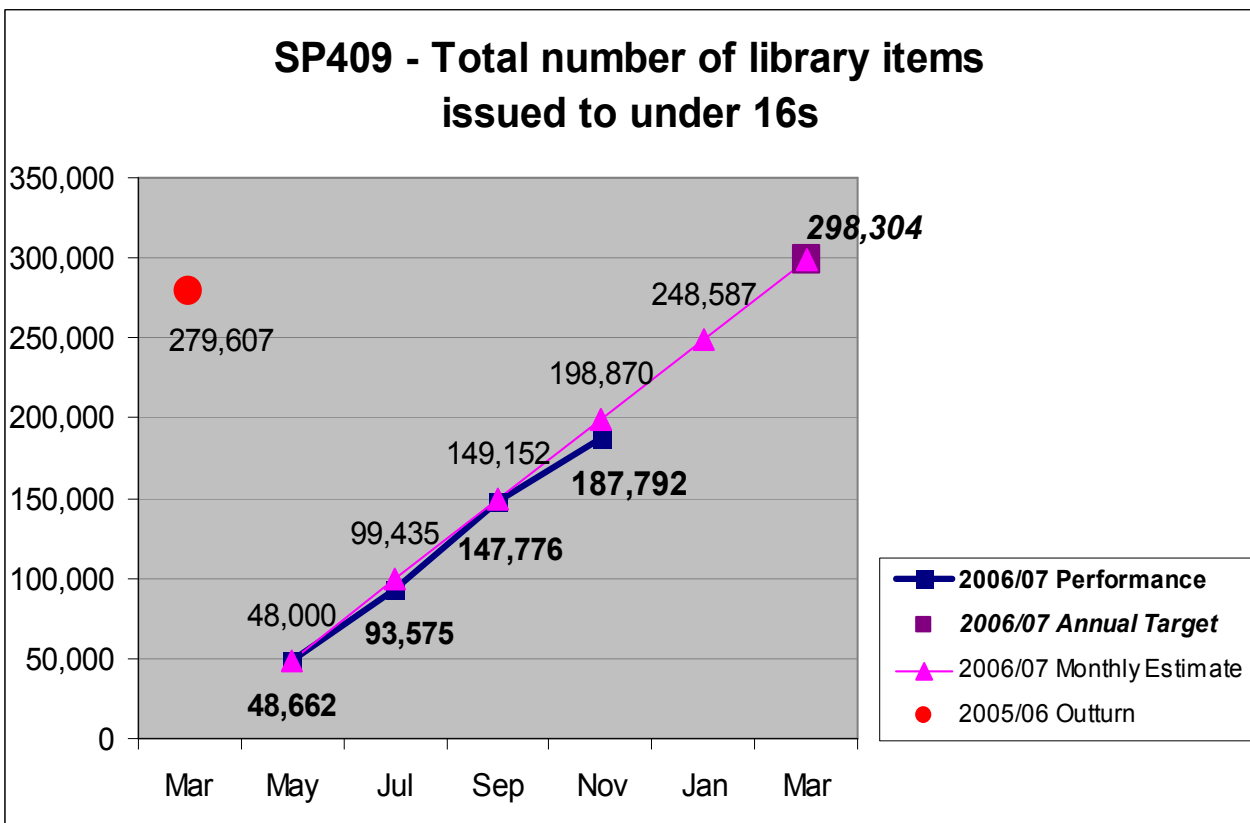
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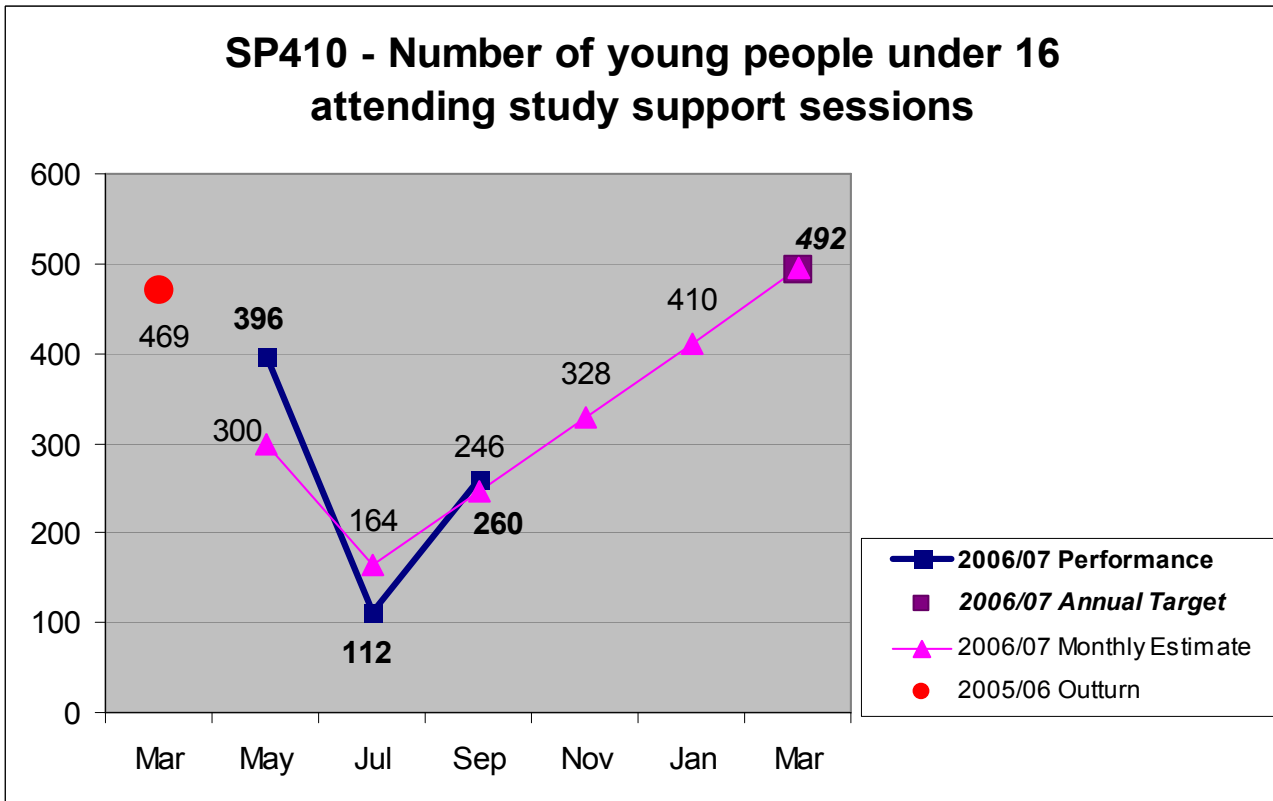
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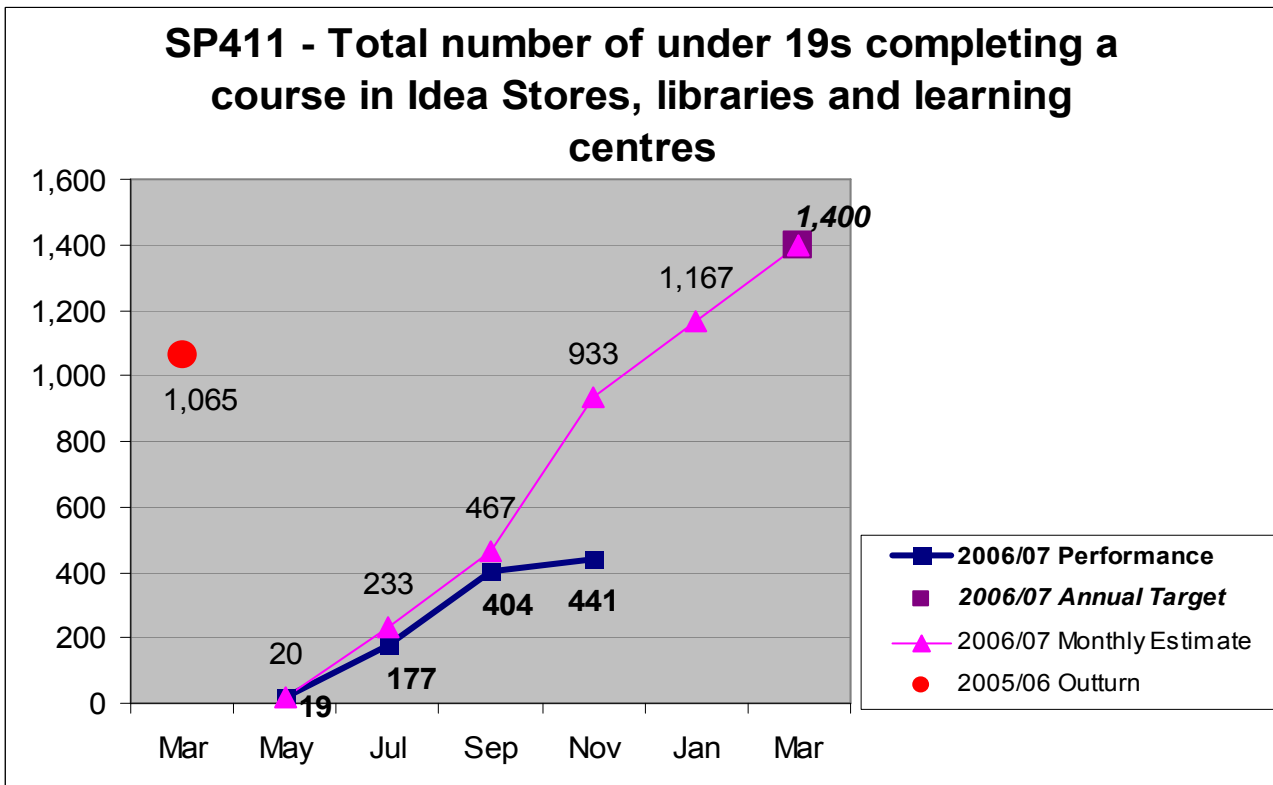
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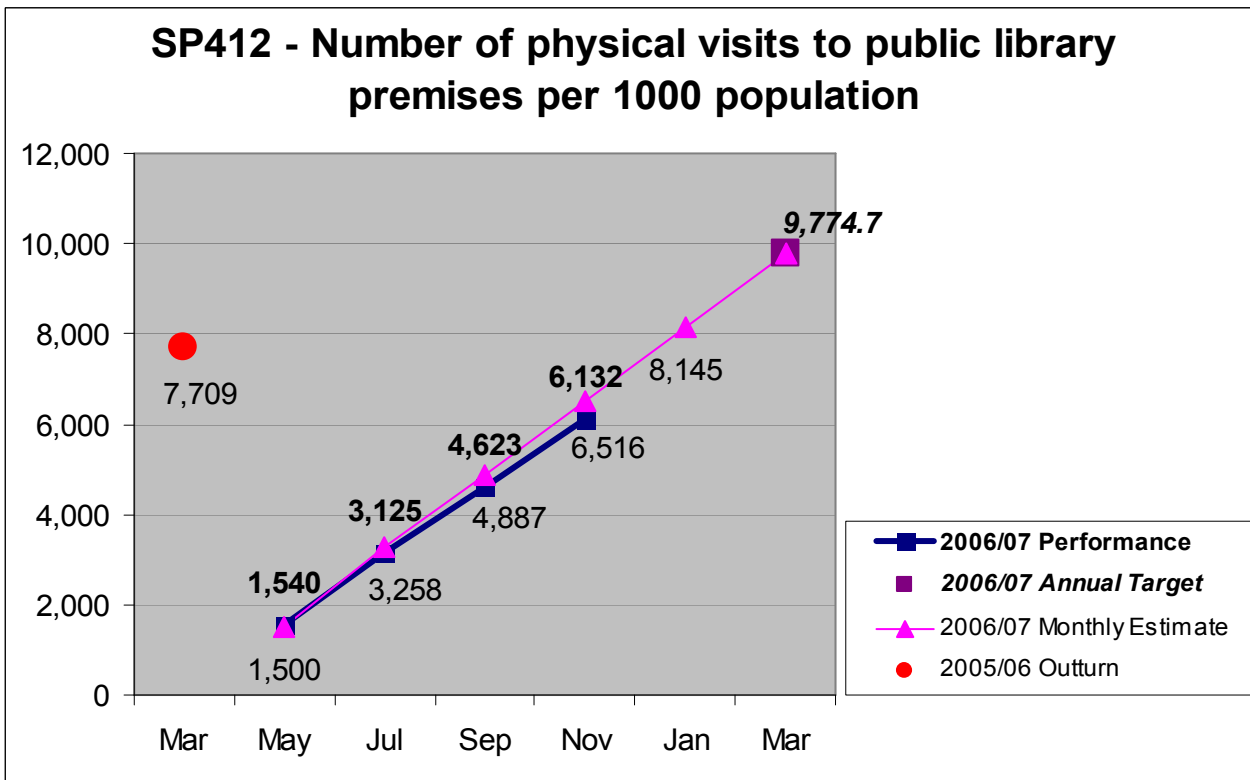


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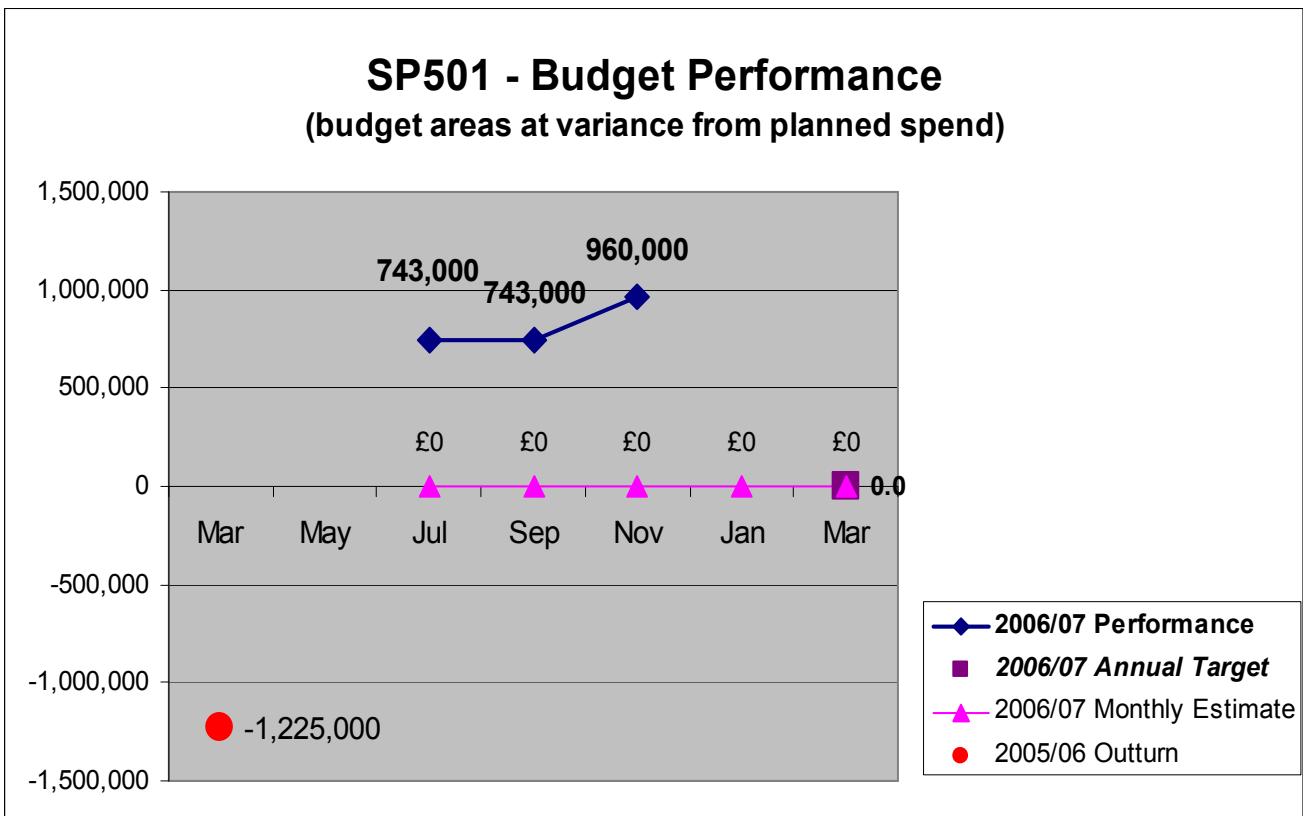
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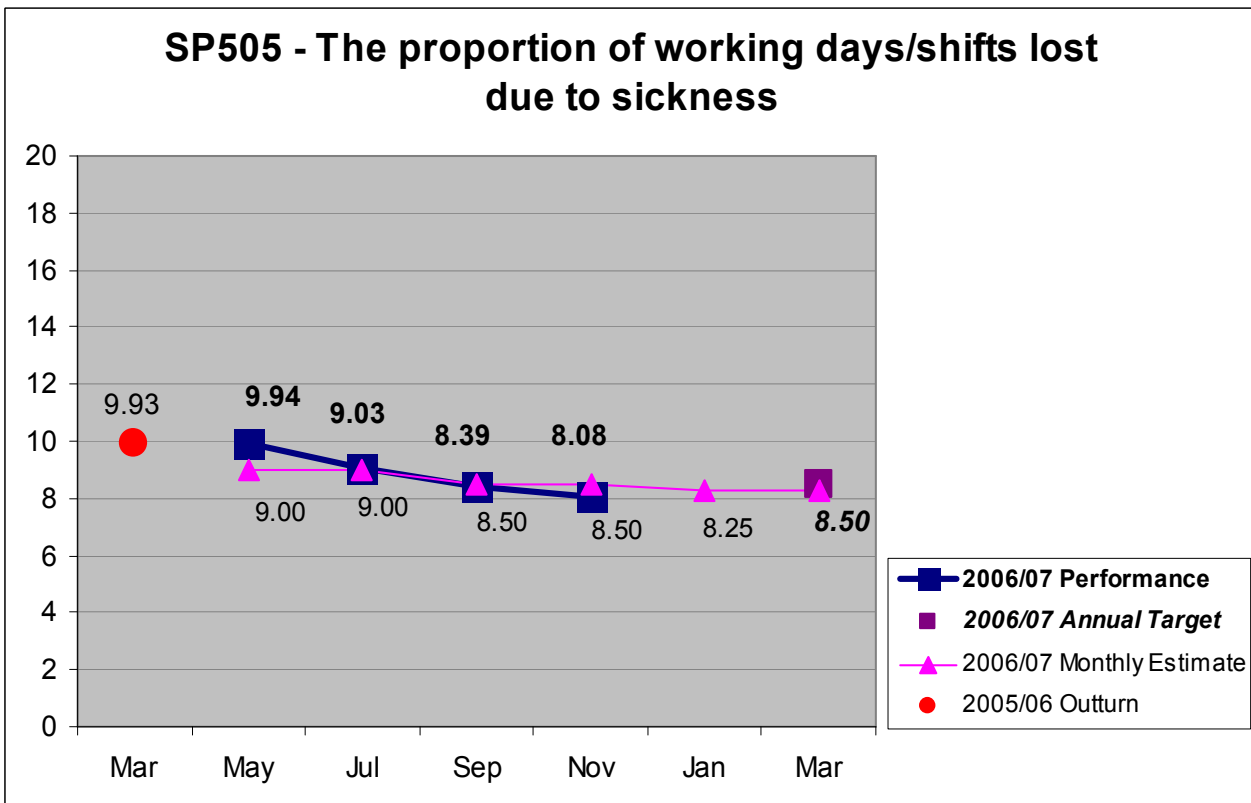


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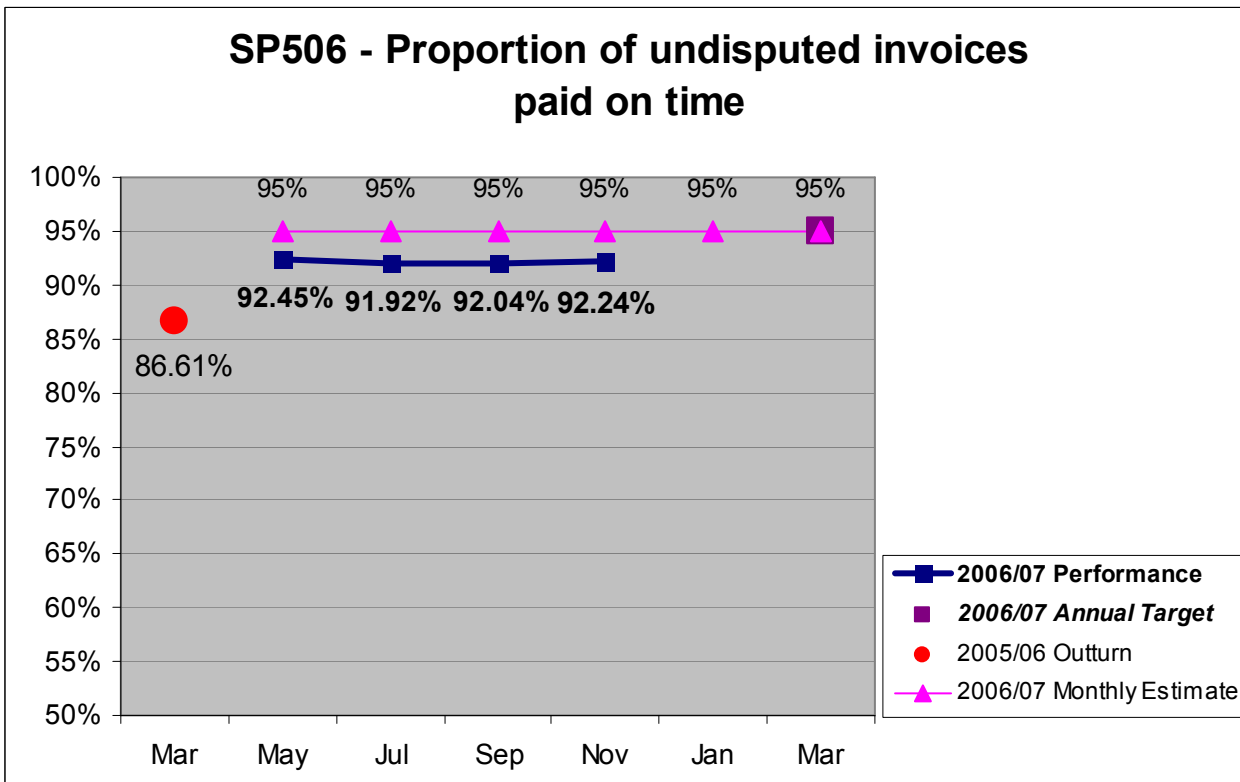
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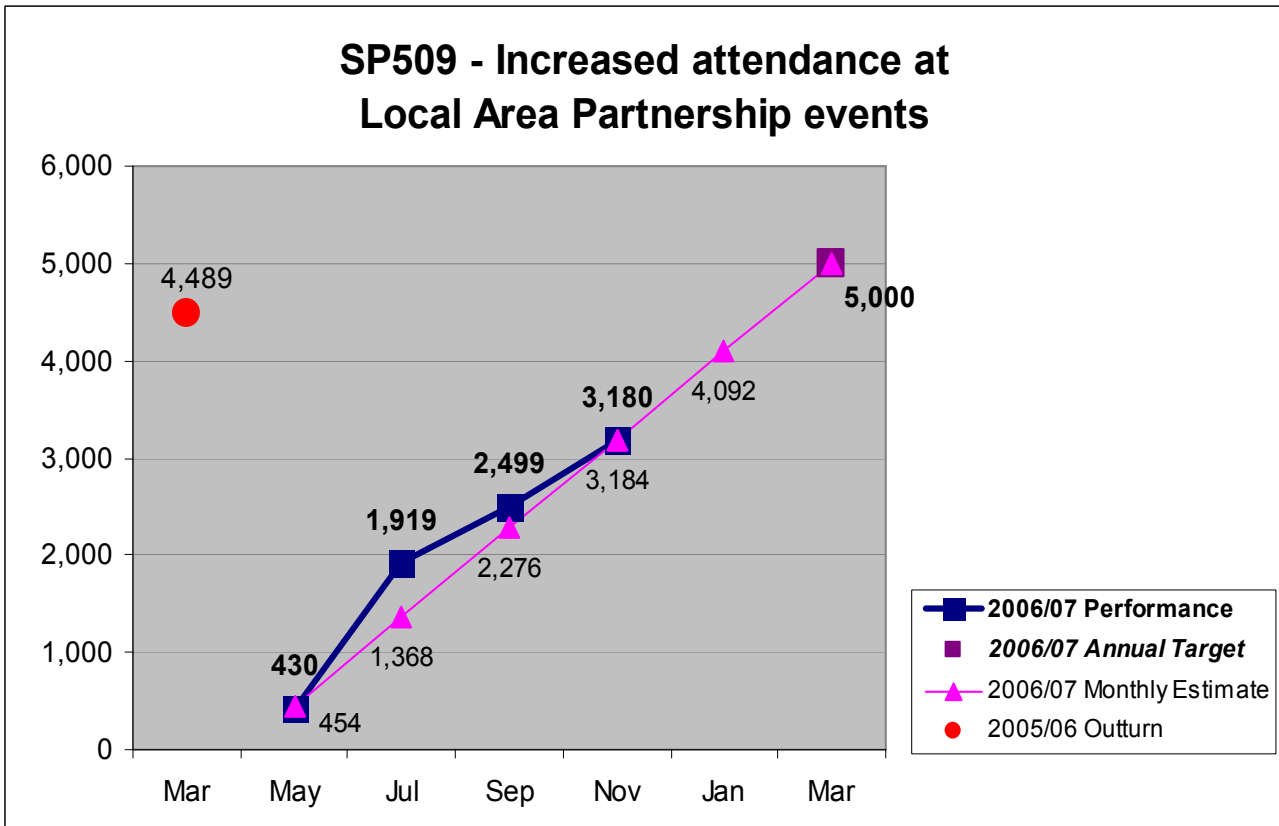
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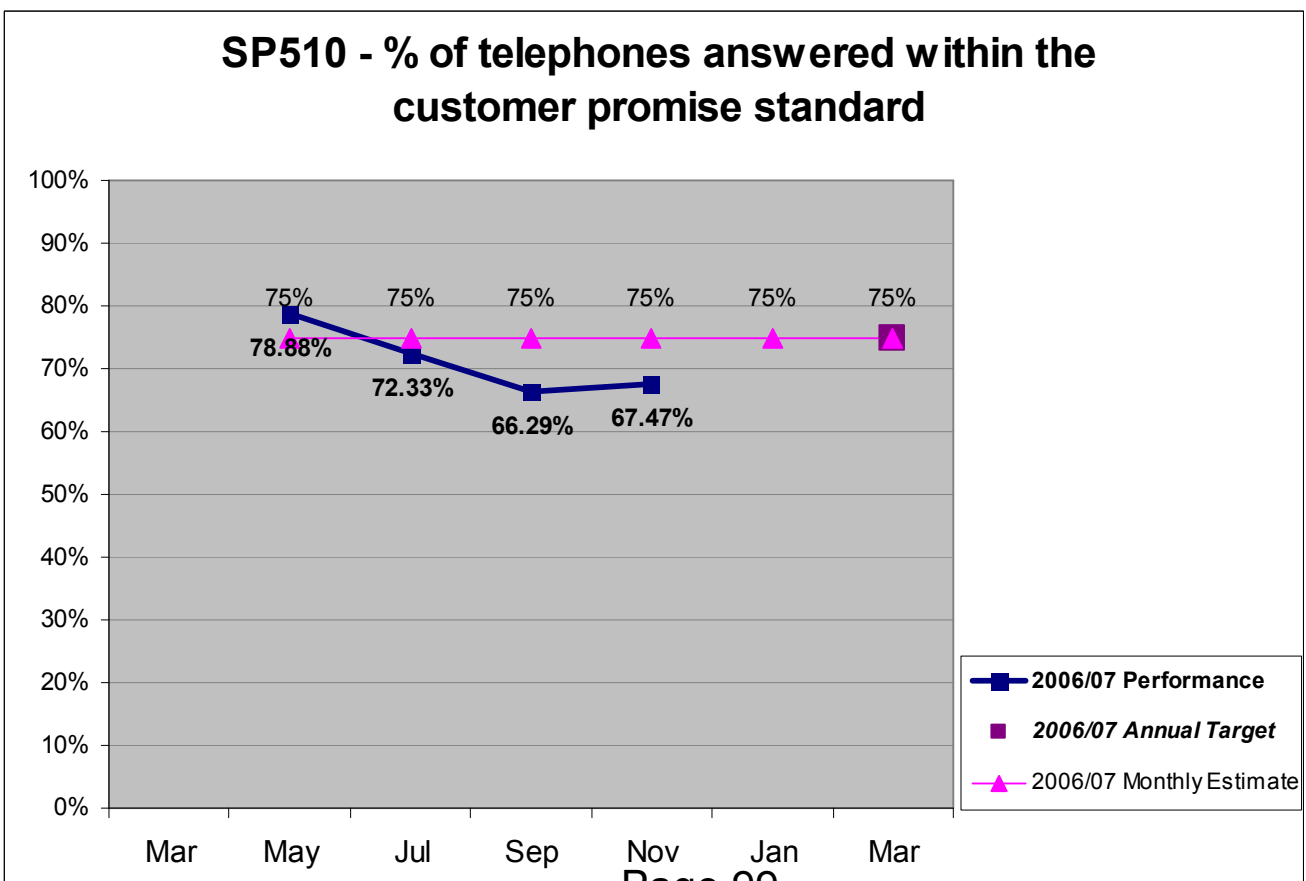
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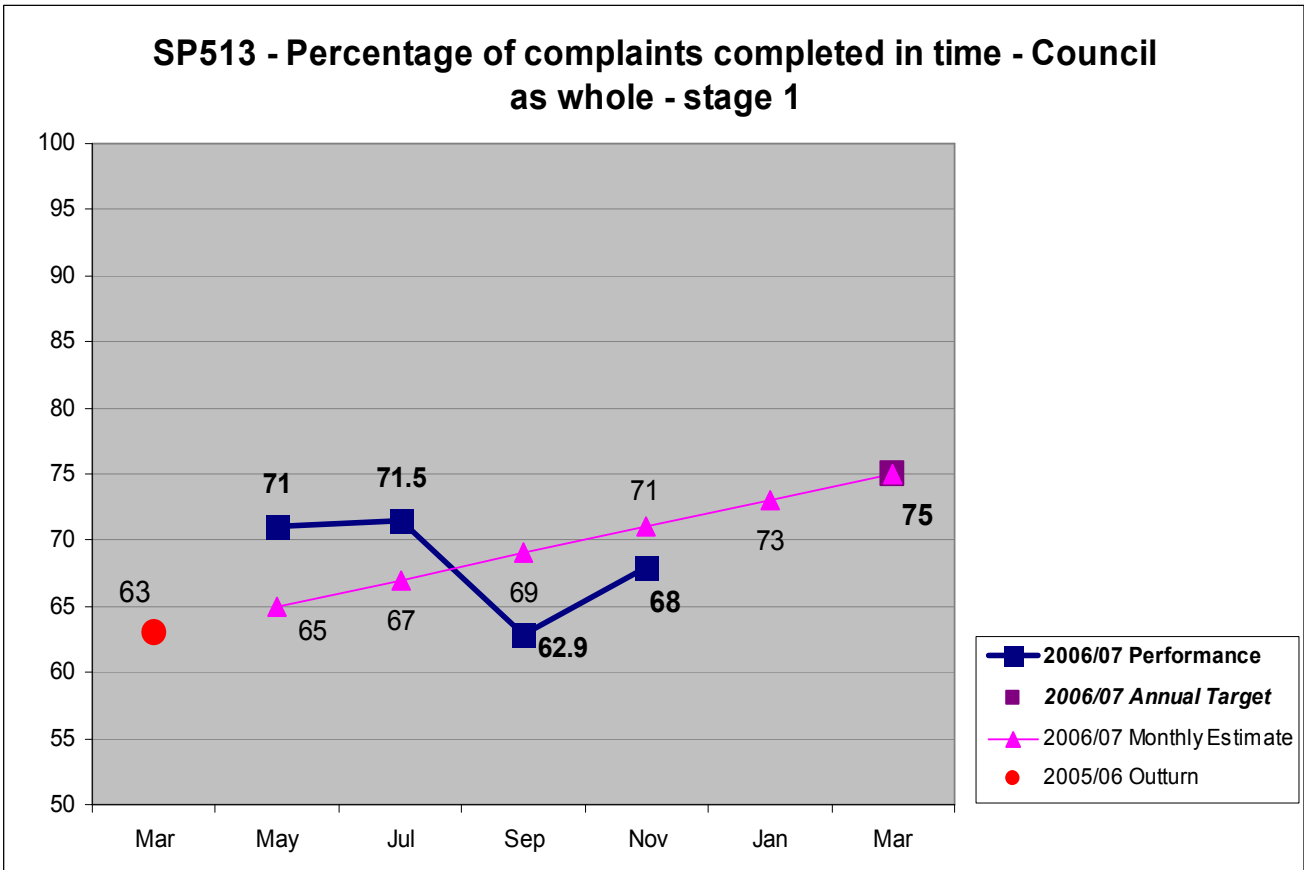
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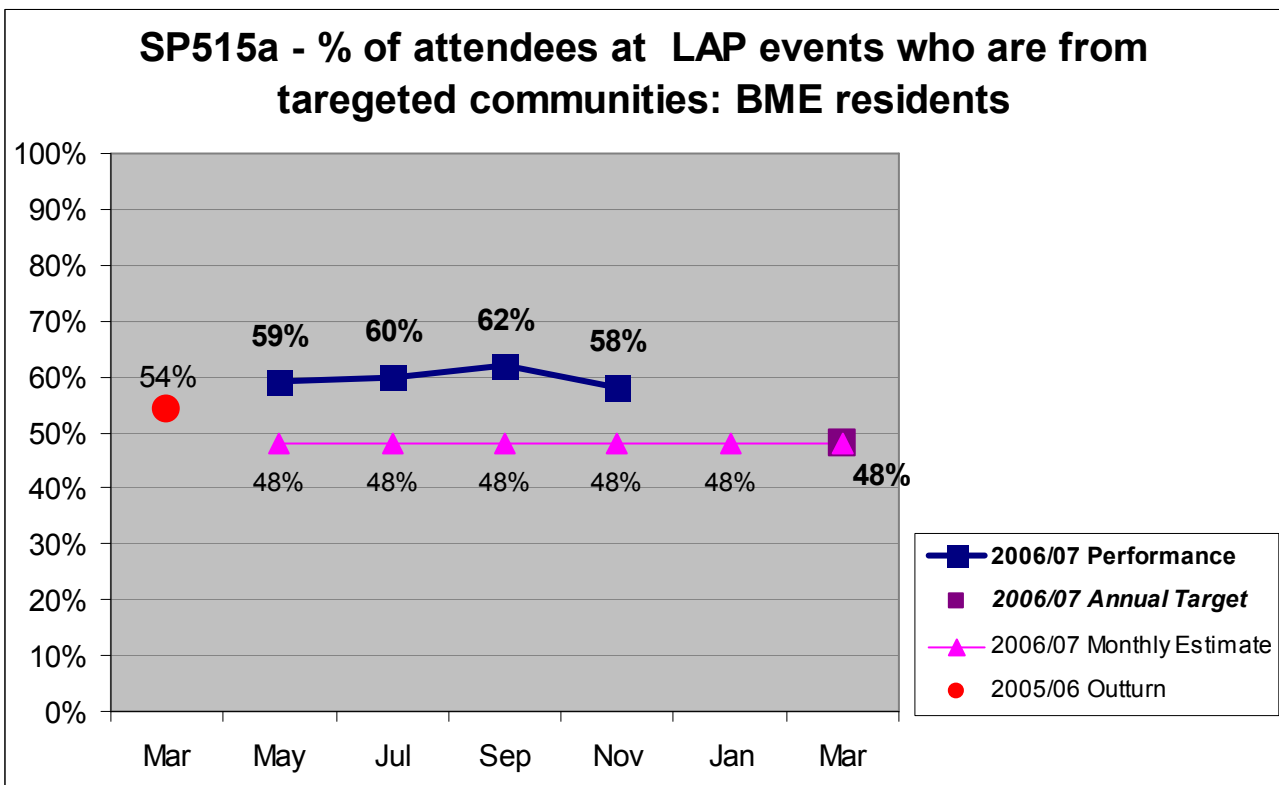
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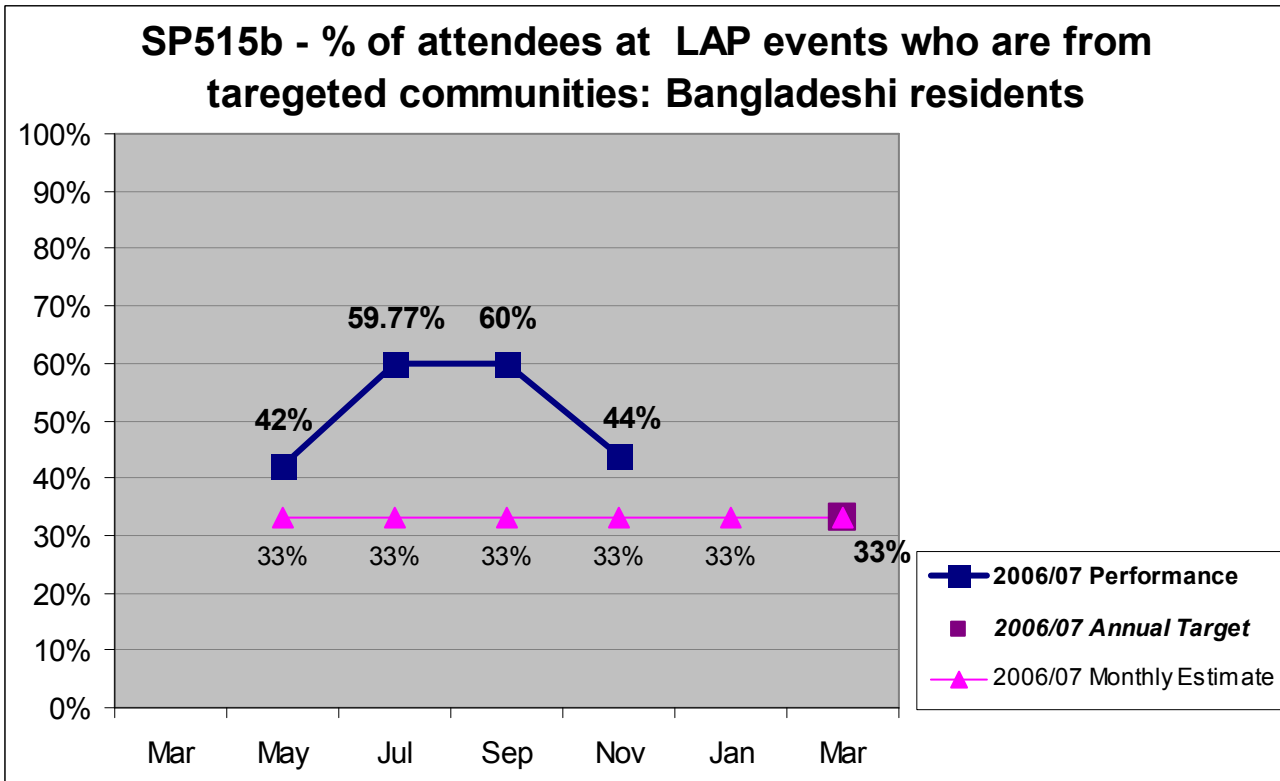


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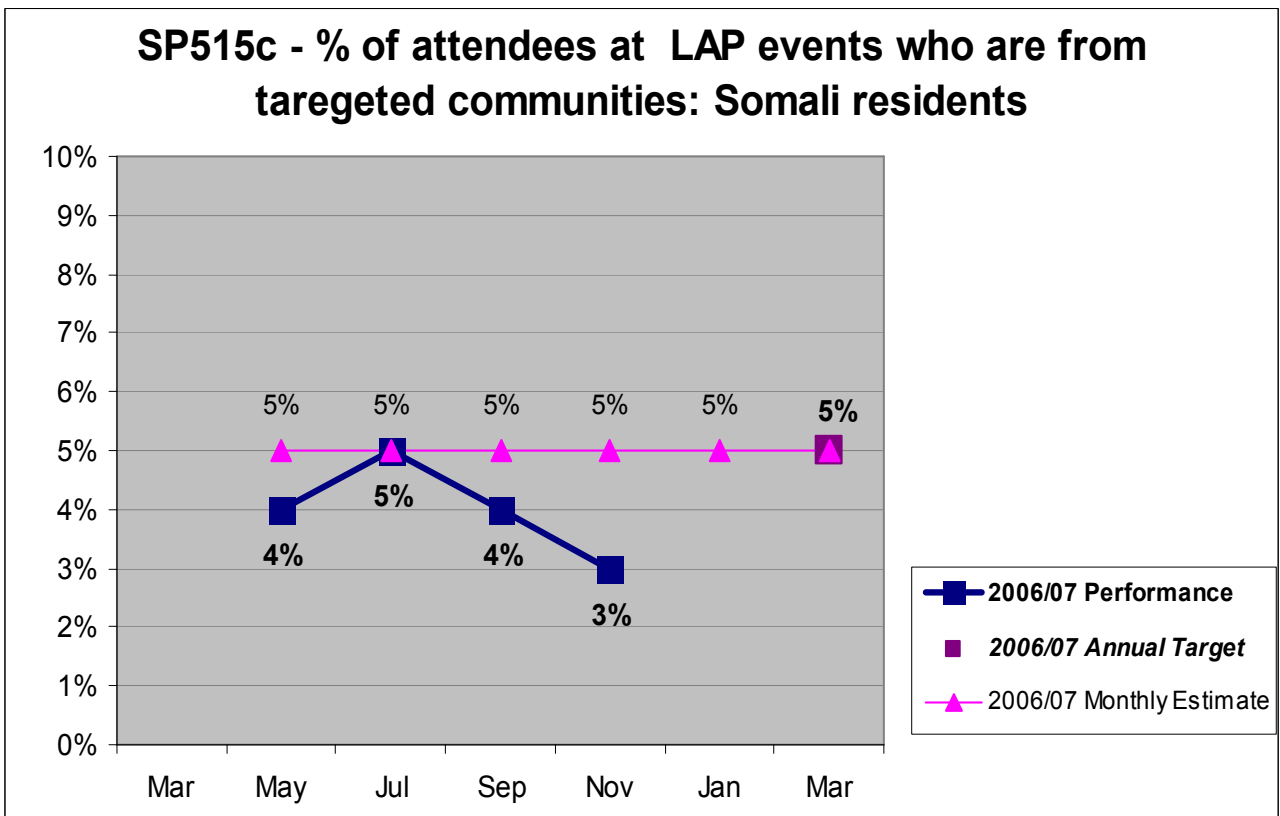
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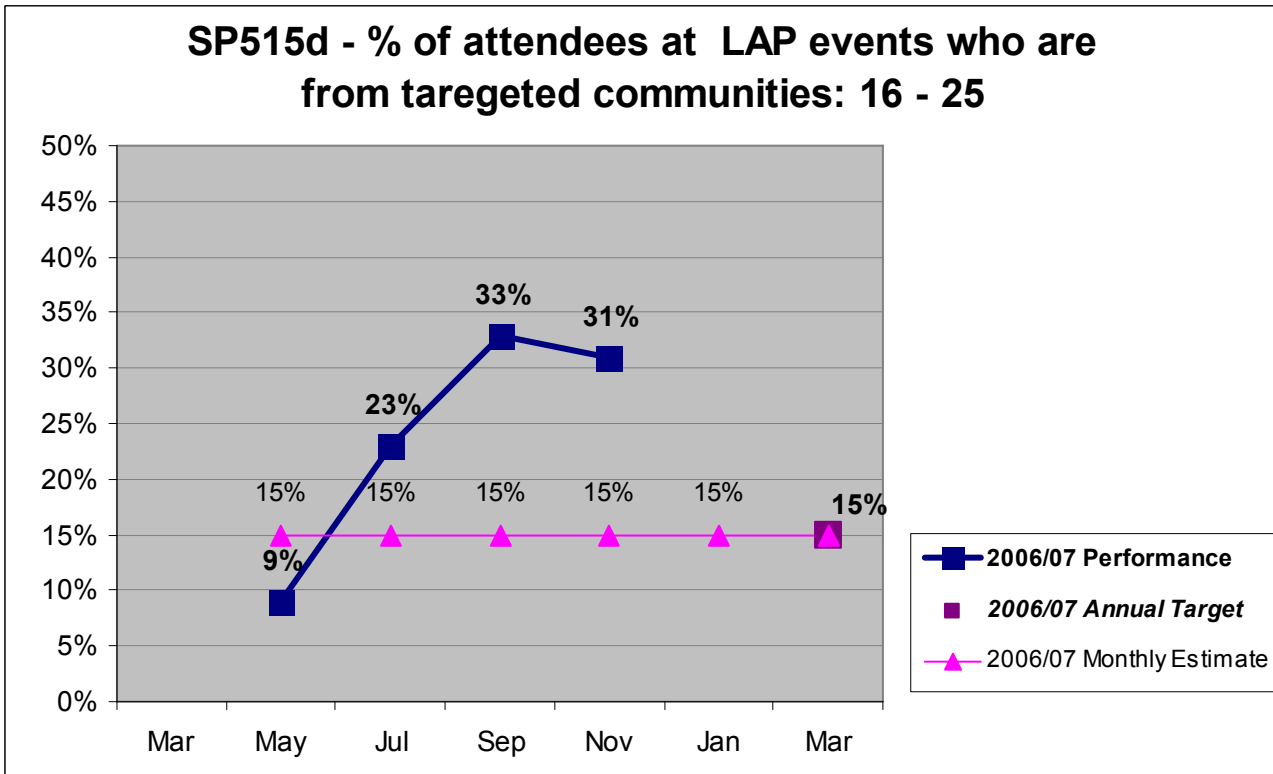
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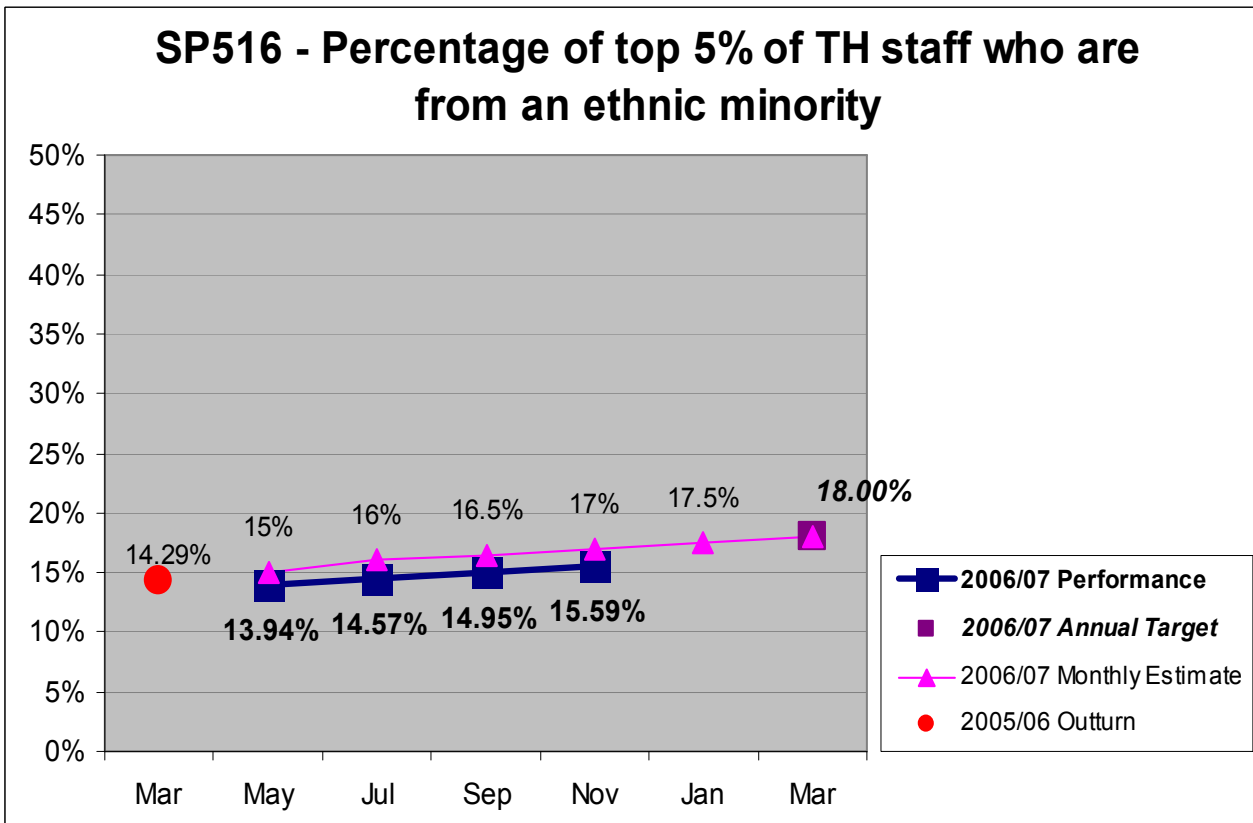
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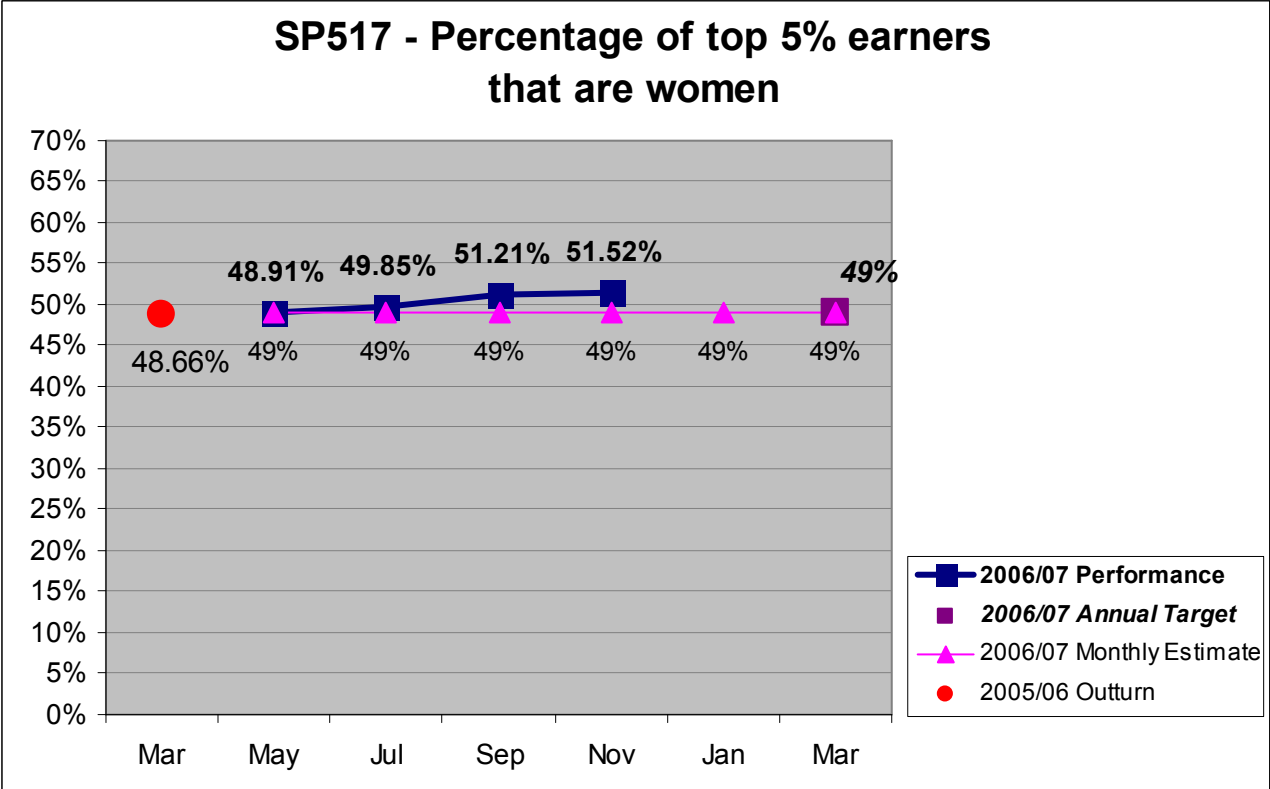


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Higher Performance is better



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Appendix 3

Lead members for T H Index 2006

PI Ref No	Description	Lead Member	Responsibility
SP101	Wounding: number of violent crimes (common assault plus ABH/GHB) per 1000 population	Councillor Abdal Ullah	Cleaner, Safer, Greener
SP104	Increased number of under 18s accessing treatment - Enhancing young people	Councillor Abdal Ullah	Cleaner, Safer, Greener
SP105	Reduction in overall crime rate (BCS Comparator Offences)	Councillor Abdal Ullah	Cleaner, Safer, Greener
SP108	The proportion of relevant land and highways (expressed as a percentage) that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level. [amended]	Councillor Abdal Ullah	Cleaner, Safer, Greener
SP111	Percentage of household waste which has been sent by the authority for recycling.	Councillor Abdal Ullah	Cleaner, Safer, Greener
SP203	Percentage of urgent repairs completed in government time limits	Councillor Rupert Bawden	Housing and Development
SP204	Average time taken to re-let local authority housing. - [New PI]	Councillor Rupert Bawden	Housing and Development
SP205	Percentage of residents satisfied with the Councils repairs service	Councillor Rupert Bawden	Housing and Development
SP210	Average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation of households which include dependent children or a pregnant woman and which are unintentionally homeless and in priority need.	Councillor Rupert Bawden	Housing and Development
SP211	Number of supported admissions of older people to permanent residential and nursing care per 10,000 population aged 65 or over (formerly C26).	Councillor Abdul Asad	Older People and Health
SP212	Adult and older clients receiving a review as a percentage of those receiving a service.	Councillor Abdul Asad	Older People and Health
SP214	Percentage of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year that were reviewed.	Councillor Helal U. Abbas	Children's Services
SP215	Percentage of children looked after at 31 March with three or more placements during the year	Councillor Helal U. Abbas	Children's Services
SP218	Average time for processing new housing benefit and council tax benefit claims (days).	Councillor Rupert Bawden	Housing and Development
SP301	Percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks.	Councillor Rupert Bawden	Housing and Development
SP302	Percentage of minor planning applications determined in 8 weeks.	Councillor Rupert Bawden	Housing and Development
SP303	Percentage of other planning applications determined in 8 weeks.	Councillor Rupert Bawden	Housing and Development

Appendix 3

PI Ref No	Description	Lead Member	Responsibility
SP304	Number of businesses / social enterprises assisted to improve their performance	Councillor Anwara Ali	Equalities, Employment and Skills
SP306	Percentage of young people in Tower Hamlets aged 16-18 not in education, employment or training	Councillor Helal U. Abbas	Children's Services
SP307	Number of people aged 24 and under in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance (and not on New Deal) helped into paid employment of over 16 hours a week for at least 13 consecutive weeks or more	Councillor Anwara Ali	Equalities, Employment and Skills
SP308	Percentage of young people in Tower Hamlets aged 18 - 25 claiming unemployment-related benefits	Councillor Anwara Ali	Equalities, Employment and Skills
SP309	Percentage of local residents claiming unemployment-related benefits	Councillor Anwara Ali	Equalities, Employment and Skills
SP310	Increased supply of employment opportunities in key growth sectors prompted directly through the Employment Consortium	Councillor Anwara Ali	Equalities, Employment and Skills
SP404a	Improved overall attendance rates at primary school (proxy for LAA 601 & 602)	Councillor Helal U. Abbas	Children's Services
SP404b	Improved overall attendance rates at secondary school (proxy for LAA 601, 602 & 603)	Councillor Helal U. Abbas	Children's Services
SP405a	Unauthorised absence rates - primary (proxy for 601, 602 & 603)	Councillor Helal U. Abbas	Children's Services
SP405b	Unauthorised absence rates - secondary	Councillor Helal U. Abbas	Children's Services
SP408	Number of under 16s who are active users of the Idea Stores and libraries	Councillor Lutfur Rahman	Culture
SP409	Total number of library items issued to under 16s - Enhancing young people	Councillor Lutfur Rahman	Culture
SP410	Number of young people under 16 attending study support sessions - enhancing young people	Councillor Lutfur Rahman	Culture
SP411	Total number of under 19s completing a course in Idea Stores, libraries and learning centres - enhancing young people	Councillor Lutfur Rahman	Culture
SP412	Number of physical visits to public library premises per 1000 population	Councillor Lutfur Rahman	Culture
SP501	Budget Performance	Councillor Josh Peck	Resources and Performance
SP505	Number of working days/shifts lost to sickness absence per employee.	Councillor Josh Peck	Resources and Performance
SP506	Percentage of Undisputed Invoices Paid on Time	Councillor Josh Peck	Resources and Performance
SP509	Increased attendance at Local Area Partnership events	Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Regeneration, Localisation & Community Partnerships
SP510	% of telephones answered within the customer promise standard	Councillor Sirajul Islam	Deputy Leader

Appendix 3

PI Ref No	Description	Lead Member	Responsibility
SP511	% of letters responded to within customer promise standard	Councillor Sirajul Islam	Deputy Leader
SP512	% of calls handled by the customer contact centre	Councillor Sirajul Islam	Deputy Leader
SP513	Percentage of complaints completed in time - Council as a whole - Stage 1	Councillor Sirajul Islam	Deputy Leader
SP515a	Percentage of attendees at LAP events who are from targeted communities: BME residents	Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Regeneration, Localisation & Community Partnerships
SP515b	Percentage of attendees at LAP events who are from targeted communities: Bangladeshi residents	Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Regeneration, Localisation & Community Partnerships
SP515c	Percentage of attendees at LAP events who are from targeted communities: Somali residents	Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Regeneration, Localisation & Community Partnerships
SP515d	Percentage of attendees at LAP events who are from targeted communities: Young residents (16 - 25)	Councillor Ohid Ahmed	Regeneration, Localisation & Community Partnerships
SP516	The percentage of the top 5% of Local Authority staff who are from an ethnic minority.	Councillor Anwara Ali	Equalities, Employment and Skills
SP517	Percentage of top 5% of earners of Local Authority staff that are women.	Councillor Anwara Ali	Equalities, Employment and Skills

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Agenda Item 8.2

COMMITTEE	DATE	CLASSIFICATION	REPORT NO.	AGENDA ITEM
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6 March 2007	Unrestricted		8.2
REPORT OF: Assistant Chief Executive	TITLE: Equalities Action Plan – 2006/07 Six Monthly Monitoring Report: Update			
ORIGINATING OFFICER(S): Alan Steward Interim Corporate Equalities Manager	WARD(S) AFFECTED: All			

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a further update on the Equalities Action Plan six monthly monitoring report considered at its January meeting.

2. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the further information and action on the Equalities Action Plan.

Local Government Act, 2000 (Section 97)

List of "Background Papers" used in the Drafting of this Report

Brief description of background papers:

Equalities Action Plan 2006/07 agreed by Cabinet on 7 June 06

Equalities Action Plan – 2006/07 Six Monthly Monitoring Report – Overview and Scrutiny Committee, January 2007

Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection

Alan Steward
Interim Corporate Equalities Manager
020 7364 4873

3. Background

- 3.1 The Equalities Action Plan (EAP) six monthly monitoring report was submitted to the January 2007 meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members noted the significant progress in implementing the Equalities Action Plan but raised concerns about a number of aspects of the form and content that made it difficult to scrutinise progress and identify potential improvements. This report responds to the comments and concerns raised.
- 3.2 Members were concerned that there was not enough information contained within the monitoring report to judge progress on the amber and red indicators. In particular that progress was reported for the end of September and information lacking about the reasons for any slippage, remedial action being taken and any new milestones that were established. This has been addressed and the further information is provided in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 Analysis shows that in all cases although there have been delays in meeting the targets, these should be rectified so that most of the actions will be implemented by the year end.
- 3.4 Inevitably the reasons for slippage vary significantly. They include:
- delays as a result of waiting for confirmation of funding or policy from central government
 - changing circumstances where implementation of the action uncovers further issues that need consideration. For example, consultation with users or staff raising issues that will improve the final action but may take longer.
 - revised timetables for other initiatives affecting the timescales for the equality action. For example, changes to letting a contract or a delivery strategy.
 - the need to increase capacity or resources to make sure that the actions are delivered.
- 3.5 This would indicate that there are lessons to incorporate into developing the Plan in future. These would include:
- making sure that all targets are realistic and deliverable within timescales
 - checking the potential impact of other services or strategies more thoroughly
 - allowing greater time to deliver actions that require consultation.
- 3.6 Members also raised concerns about the level of detail provided in the monitoring report so that they could draw conclusions as to whether progress was satisfactory.
- 3.7 Further analysis of the EAP indicates that the rigour and robustness of the activity, milestones and success criteria needs improvement. We also need to provide greater detail on progress for members to be confident that the actions and progress are reflected in service improvements and having the required impact. While this has traditionally focused on those actions considered at amber or red, it is recognised that future reports should provide an update on all actions.
- 3.8 The issues raised above are important in improving the robustness of the Equalities Action Plan but are difficult to address part way through the year. It is therefore proposed to build these into the preparations for next year's EAP.

- 3.9 It is very timely to review the structure and content of the EAP. There has been significant new equalities legislation over the last two years that we need to incorporate into the Council's Equalities Action Plan for 2007/08. This includes:
- Race and Diversity Scheme agreed at Cabinet in June 2006
 - Disability Equalities Scheme agreed at Cabinet in December 2007
 - The forthcoming Gender Equality Scheme that has to be agreed by end of April 2007
 - The integration of the various Equalities Commissions into the new Commission for Equalities and Human Rights.
- 3.10 With the burgeoning individual schemes, we will take the opportunity to review the way that the EAP is brought together and then both implemented and monitored.
- 3.11 In addition, the Council has invested in a corporate performance monitoring system – Excelsis – that is being used to monitor the Strategic Plan, directorate and service plans. It is proposed to enter the Equalities Action Plan into this system next year. This brings significant advantages including setting out clear milestones for judging progress and performance. It will also link equality actions into service and team plans that will further embed the EAP within the Council.
- 3.12 The Council's Corporate Equalities Steering Group – with representatives from all directorates – will discuss the preparations for next year's EAP at its February meeting. This will include discussion and agreement on improving the robustness of both the EAP and its monitoring, particularly around actions, targets and milestones. The outcome can be reported to a future meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4. Concurrent Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal)

- 4.1 The European Union Race Directive 2000/43 (published in June 2000) prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race and ethnic origin by laying down "the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of racial or ethnic origin".
- 4.2 In November 2000, the European Union published the Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000/78. This Directive sets out the anti-discrimination "principle of equal treatment" in the context of sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability and age. This Directive was implemented on 2 December 2006 in relation to disability and age.
- 4.3 The Government consultation paper "Towards Equality and Diversity-Implementing the Employment Race Directive" (2001) indicated its intention to implement the Directives by amendment to the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The consultation paper also referred to the Government's intention to introduce legislation to prohibit discrimination in work and training on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion and age. The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003 and the Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003 were enacted with effect from 1 and 2 December 2003 and transpose the phase 1 provisions of the Directive into UK law. The Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 are intended to give effect to the provisions on age discrimination with effect from 1 October 2006 though currently they are still in draft form.

- 4.4 The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 strengthens the Race Relations Act 1976 by extending protection against racial discrimination by public authorities and by placing a duty on public authorities to have regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote racial equality and good race relations.
- 4.5 The Equalities Action Plan monitoring report detailed in Appendix 1 sets out the Council's intentions and progress with regard to equality which has been formulated having regard to and in compliance with legislation. The Council's policies and plans will need to be kept to under review in order to embrace future legislative changes.

5. Comments of the Chief Financial Officer

- 5.1 As service design and provision give consideration to Equalities issues Directorate budgets reflect these and consequently no additional budgetary provision is expected as a result of the Equalities Action Plan 2006/07. Any additional costs arising from implementing the Equalities Action Plans will be contained within Directorate 2006/07 budgets.

6. Equal Opportunity Implications

- 6.1 By incorporating national standards, the integrated Equalities Action Plan represents an important step in progressing the Council's equality and diversity agenda. The attached monitoring report on the Plan clearly shows how equalities is at the heart of the Council agenda and the extent of the progress towards integrating equality and diversity fully into all aspects of service delivery and employment practice.
- 6.2 This report demonstrates the progress being made with creating an environment in which everyone who lives and works in our borough is treated with dignity and respect and where everyone can improve their life chances and access the increasing opportunities on offer.

7. Anti-Poverty Implications

- 7.1 The integrated Equalities Action Plan aims to tackle the barriers currently preventing some of the most disadvantaged people and marginalised communities in our borough from accessing the life opportunities on offer and aims to enable them to actively participate in creating and sharing prosperity in the borough.

8. Sustainable Action for a Greener Environment

- 8.1 There are no specific issues relating to the environment raised in this report.

9. Risk Management

- 9.1 There have been major changes in equalities legislation over the last few years and new sweeping changes are expected as well as the establishment of a single Equalities Commission to replace the existing equalities bodies. The Council's agenda on equalities is an ambitious one, which has marked it out as a leader on

equality and diversity to date. The Council has been one of the first councils in London and nationally to extend the remit of the National Equality Standard for Local Government beyond the three statutory requirements (race, disability and gender) to encompass also sexuality, age and religion or belief. Progress to date has been very positive, but much work remains to be done to ensure that the Council maintains the highest level of the Standard in 2006/7.

- 9.2 The Equalities Action Plan provides a focus for all the Council's equalities work, and a means by which Members can ensure that each of the progress milestones are achieved. The arrangements in place to review progress during the year through the Corporate Equalities Steering Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, are considered to be effective ways of keeping this work on track.

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Equalities Action Plan 2006/07 Monitoring Report

Key Activity	Dir	Key Milestone and Completion Date	Success Criteria	Lead Officer	Update	Traffic Light	Progress To 31 Dec 06	Explanation Of Slippage/Failure To Meet Target	Remedial Action Including New Deadlines
Integrate management of mental health services for older people with other adult mental health services.	AS	Revised Section 31 agreement in place to include mental health services for older people (June 06)	Older people with mental health problems and their carers assured of same standards of service as all adult mental health service users.	John Goldup	Following Cabinet consideration, timescale revised to January 2007	AMBER	Section 31 agreement terminated at end December 2006 and alternative plan to make joint appointment of a service manager responsible to both LBTH and ELCMHT to be put in place from January 2007.	Interim service manager will be in post from January 2007, while recruitment for a permanent post holder is carried out.	
Progress development of integrated learning disabilities resource centre, due to open 2009	AS	Outline Business Case to DoH submitted in March 06 Decision on PFI credits - September 06 Detailed specification prepared by end of November 06	Beacon development of inclusive, integrated, empowering services for people with physical disabilities and sensory impairment Effective use of capital and other resources	Clive Turner / John Beverton	Business case submitted in June 2006 by agreement with DoH. Decision on PFI credits by DoH delayed until late Autumn 2006. This will delay development of detailed specification since no work can commence on it until funding has been agreed. Still anticipated to be completed by April 2007.	AMBER	The DoH has approved the Outline Business Case. Officers continue to work with key stakeholders to progress this work	Continued close working with key stakeholders is envisaged to enable overall target to be met.	
Progress development of Centre for Independent Living for people with physical disabilities, due to open 2008	AS	Outline Business Case to DoH submitted in March 06 Decision on PFI credits - September 06 Detailed specification prepared by end of November 06	Beacon development of inclusive, integrated, empowering services for people with physical disabilities and sensory impairment Effective use of capital and other resources	Barbara Disney	There was an unforeseeable delay in submitting the business case, which was submitted in June 2006 with consent from DoH. The decision on PFI credits is not expected until late Autumn. This will necessarily delay detailed specification being developed until funding agreed. However, some work has already been done which is anticipated to be completed by April 2007.	AMBER	Officers continue to work with key stakeholders to progress this work.	Continued close working with key stakeholders is envisaged to enable overall target to be met.	
Monitor exclusions of mixed heritage pupils very closely and refocus the work of Caribbean and African Students Project to prioritise work with mixed (Caribbean/African and White) students	CHS	Report on 05/06 exclusions, October 06	Proportionally high statistics for excluded mixed heritage pupils are reduced to expected levels	Liz Vickerie	Full report not due to Oct 06 and fixed term statistics not yet available but 05/06 permanent exclusion statistics show there is still an over-representation of mixed heritage White/Caribbean pupils who account for 1.5% of school population but 7.5% of permanent exclusions - however this figure relates to 5 individual pupils. There were no permanent exclusions of mixed heritage White/African pupils or any other mixed heritage pupils. The re-alignment of the Caribbean African Students Project (CASP) to focus on mixed heritage pupils has only been running one term so too early to identify any impact.	AMBER	Pupils of mixed heritage backgrounds are now either under-represented in exclusions or are excluded at a rate that is similar to their representation in the school population	Target has been met	
Develop Diversity and Equality Policy with guidelines which include all 6 equality strands to promote equality and diversity across youth work providers	CHS	All policies developed and implemented by youth work providers (June 06)	Providers are aware of their duty to eliminate all forms of discrimination and to promote good relations	Steve Sipple	Work in progress. Will be finalised for new contracts in Jan. 07	AMBER	Initial draft produced in consultation with original contracted youth work providers.	End of consultation with new contractors - end February 2007. Diversity and Equality Policy finalised by 31 March 2007.	

Key Activity	Dir	Key Milestone and Completion Date	Success Criteria	Lead Officer	Update	Traffic Light	Progress To 31 Dec 06	Explanation Of Slippage/Failure To Meet Target	Remedial Action Including New Deadlines
Letting of contracts - review and update standard terms to incorporate a requirement to ensure contractors are aware of their obligations to provide services in compliance with the council's equality policy and plan, and the importance of their contribution towards achieving the council's equality performance targets.	CE	Standard ITT clauses reviewed and updated as necessary by September 2006	Up to date ITT clauses on equalities included in standard terms for all appropriate contracts	Nick Walker,	A more fundamental review of procurement clauses is in progress and is not yet complete	AMBER	The PQQ and ITT includes Equalities requirements. These refer to what is required under the law and do not include information that we require as reporting data from our contractors	It is believed that this has been an issue of ensuring statute compliance rather than informing on Council policy and using suppliers for reporting.	Procurement is to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment that will identify what should be done and at what level reporting is required. The EIA will be completed by March 07.
Improve procurement equalities practice building on the procurement strategy and manual	CE	Procurement Guide for staff in place by June 06 Procurement Advocacy Team in place working jointly with the corporate Project Management and Risk Management Teams by December 06	The Central Procurement Unit provides a more pro-active and strategic service	Nick Walker	Procurement guide has been produced and is currently being reviewed prior to launch. Some procurement advocacy work has been undertaken, but the structure has not yet been revised	AMBER	Equalities clauses are included within all contracts	It is believed that that this has been an issue of ensuring statute compliance rather than informing on Council policy and using suppliers for reporting.	Procurement is to undertake an Equalities Impact Assessment that will identify what should be done and at what level reporting is required, this will be completed by March 07.
Develop an Action Plan for more coordinated services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) young people	CHS	Strategy produced, distributed to and explained to key stakeholders (August 06)	Number of young disabled people, young women and LGBT young people reached increased from 2004-5 baseline	Steve Sipple	1st draft developed and currently being consulted on.	AMBER	1st draft developed and currently being consulted on.	Not enough time scheduled for adequate consultation with all partners. Based on feedback from stakeholders we planned a more inclusive but slower development process.	Further consultation with young people and providers planned for an event during LGBT History Month in February 2007. Strategy to be distributed by 31 March 2007.
Increase Direct payments to Disabled Children	CHS	Staff trained by January 07 User information on direct payments distributed by September 2006	More children and families have access to Direct payments to enable them to have more direct control of the services they receive	Ann Goldsmith	Referral for Direct payments under consideration	AMBER	Training of staff completed. Leaflet produced and ready for distribution	Eligibility criteria have excluded some families. Have also identified that eligible families require considerable support through application process	Plan in place to fast-track existing referrals
Establish website language button link to translated service information	AS	Existing service information translated December 06 Upload and link the language button February 07 New service information translated and uploaded March 07	Monitoring of the number of hits on the website evidence an increase in usage	Margot Fonseca	Provision will be made available to translate existing/new relevant service information by March 07	AMBER	Some existing service information has been translated, but could not sensibly be finalised until it is known exactly when the Directorate will change its name and what it will change to.	Much existing information needs updating, and an action plan to remedy this is being considered by the Adult Services DMT in January. Once this is actioned, the material will be translated.	As in previous column. Date for upload to website remains as March 2007.
Ensure that information regarding accessing social care is readily available to users, carers, children and families	CHS /AS	Information materials printed and distributed by October 2006	Information readily available to users, carers, children and families from disadvantaged communities	Ann Goldsmith John Goldup	Publication now scheduled for end of March 07	AMBER	Training of staff completed. Leaflet produced and ready for distribution	Eligibility criteria have excluded some families. Have also identified that eligible families require considerable support through application process	Plan in place to fast-track existing referrals
Pilot presentation of website information.	AS	Launch pilot site June 06	Information readily available to users and	John Beverton	Some delay in obtaining a domain name for the website.	AMBER	Now Achieved. Website was up and running in	Delay in obtaining domain name for website.	N/A - now achieved.

Key Activity	Dir	Key Milestone and Completion Date	Success Criteria	Lead Officer	Update	Traffic Light	Progress To 31 Dec 06	Explanation Of Slippage/Failure To Meet Target	Remedial Action Including New Deadlines
in formats accessible to people with learning disabilities			carers		This appears to have been resolved and the website should be up and running by December 06.		December 06. The website is picture supported, colour coded, has options on text size etc. so the website is fully accessible.		
Review all leaflets and publicity to ensure information available is complete and accessible	AS	Clear standards, catalogue system, and publication process – August 06 Collect, audit and catalogue all existing information – September 06 Identify gaps and updates / need for translations & schedule work – October 06 Publications complete – March 07	Comprehensive, up to date, accessible service information leaflets available to staff and service users	Margot Fonseca	Standards, publication process and catalogue system completed. Existing information collected. Gaps to be identified and translations /publications completed by March 07.	AMBER	Gaps in information and updates were identified in December 2006.	Much existing information needs updating, and an action plan to remedy this is being considered by Adult Services DMT in January. Once this is actioned, the material will be translated. Slippage is due to the split between Children's and Adult Services, moves, and uncertainty about when the name of the new Adults Directorate will change.	Deadline for completion of publications remains as March 2007.
Review Adults Services information on website to ensure information is complete and accessible	AS	Review accuracy and completeness of existing information – August 06 Draft/collect updates – October 06 Upload to website – December 06	Comprehensive, up to date service information available electronically.	Margot Fonseca	Reviewed plus updated website (A-Z). Review of accuracy of the website information to be completed by end of November for update in December '06	AMBER	Review of accuracy of information on the website completed in December. Request made to corporate web team to update information on website where this was not done as part of the A-Z update exercise in summer 2006.	Much of the information on the website was updated following the A-Z exercise in summer 2006, but some was not updated accurately. The corporate improving communications group planned to update the website as a whole in January 2007, and it was decided to amend our timescales to fit with this plan.	All website entries will be updated in January 2007. All leaflets as in line 77 above will be uploaded to the website as pdf files as soon as completed and in any case by March 2007.
Work with community and local media to increase access to older people's services from minority ethnic communities	AS	Campaign launched June 06 Percentage of BME older people assessed for services to reflect population profile by December 06	The percentage of BME older people (65+) who receive an assessment is the same as that of the white community. The percentage of older people who receive services as a result of an assessment is the same as the white community.	Ian Queenan	Contact has been made with BME organisations to identify individual workers to those organisations. A broader advertising campaign has not been launched. PAF is currently on target.	AMBER	Ensure Link Age Plus, a new initiative targeting mainly the 50+ age group from all sectors of the community is reaching out to all BME groups. A lot of joint collaborative work has been undertaken with private and voluntary sectors including various day centres such as Sonali Garden, Sundial, Poplar Day Centre and St Hilda's. In conjunction with the council they have taken the lead role to publicise this project and address low level needs (as determined by Local Authority eligibility criteria/FACS). Also within Older Persons Teams all members are now all trained to ensure a holistic approach is undertaken in their assessment process. In terms direct payments there has been wide publicity in various languages in order to target the BME groups. Carers assessments, to address carers specific needs & supporting carers/crisis intervention have led to services	No slippage. The percentage of BME older people receiving assessments and services as a result are both slightly higher than the percentage of the white community receiving these.	N/A

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Facilitate access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) by providing services in schools, extended schools and children's centres.	CHS	Through joint planning and reviewing between CAMHS and education and other appropriate services. Ensure adequate access for Looked After Children to CAMHS services. Ensure access to CAMHS advice for children with a learning disability by March 07. 225 days CAMHS input into children's centres and the same into other education settings by June 06. 450 days CAMHS input into children's centres by March 07	Improved access is demonstrated	Kamini Rambellias	Access to CAMHS for LAC fully achieved. Inter-agency care pathways for children & young people with a learning disability are currently being developed which will highlight level of CAMHS input required. CAMHS targets for input to Childrens Centres and school based settings are being worked towards but require further strategic discussion to agree priorities	AMBER	Now on target to achieve March 07 deadline(450 days)	Slippage in achieving March 06 deadline due to need to reallocate resources	Resources now reallocated to achieve target for March 07
Improve accessible formats for the Council's weekly newspapers East End Life and encourage uptake of EEL on tape and complete proposal for costings on uptake of Bengali tapes for the visually impaired residents	ALL	Redesign of East End Life to incorporate accessible fonts to improve readability March 07	Demonstrate increased awareness of council services through the annual residents survey and bi annual readership (ICMI survey)	Laraine Clay	The redesign of East End Life has been put on hold awaiting an EEL report which is up before LAB on 22/11/06	AMBER	The report went to Cabinet in January as it involved the possible partnership with a private publishing company	The report was considered by Cabinet on January 10 but called-in to February OSC.	In the meantime we are discussing ideas for the re-design and looking at a deadline of June.
Ensure council publications promoting customer access reflect accessibility guidelines	CE	Updated section in the Council's communications manual by September 06	Communications audit reflects increased adherence to DDA guidelines in Council publications	Chris Payne	The Council's Communications Manual is being updated. Corporate ID guidelines are being distributed to staff involved in production and key suppliers on CD Roms. Equalities section is being updated to reflect new DDA	AMBER	Now Complete	Delays happened in production and at sign up stage	Will be rolled out in February and March 07 to staff and suppliers including training sessions
Promote the usage of the Borough's Sports and Art facilities and Libraries and Idea Stores to the refugee community	EC	Develop and provide promotional literature of these facilities to key agencies	Literature distributed to key agencies by Sept 06	Paul Martindill	Information to be delivered to key agencies by November 06	AMBER	Cultural services promotional literature will be delivered to Praxis in March 07. This will contain details of new cultural services programmes for sports, arts and lifelong learning courses.		
Make sure that all school staff and pupils are aware of procedures for reporting racist incidents	CHS	Distribute summary guidelines on procedures to all schools and settings (September 06)	Increase in the number of racist incidents reported by schools previously making nil or low returns	Sarah Gale	The report on racist incidents in schools for the academic year 05/06 showed an increase in the number of schools making a nil return	AMBER	N/A	A possible explanation is that school strategies to tackle racism, fewer incidents are now occurring and that in a growing number of schools there have been no incidents at all.	Schools with nil returns have been contacted and offered training to ensure that all staff know the procedures for recording and reporting racist incidents. A report will be prepared at the end of March 07.

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Improve support available to older people within the Somali community through reconfiguration of Mayfield House Day Centre	AS	Following consultation with Somali service users and community organisation proposals to Cabinet September 06	More effective and cost effective support to older people within the Somali community	David Cowell	Consultation completed. Cabinet presentation delayed due to Housing Choice	AMBER	Meeting continuing with local Somali organisations with whom a provisional service model has been agreed.	Date for conclusion of Housing Choice process not yet known. However, advice received from the relevant RSL indicates that the re-provision need not await outcome of Housing Choice.	Report to LAB May 2007 outlining Commissioning and re-provision options.
Increase staff understanding of refugees physical and mental health care needs through training and information	AS	Training Plan in place September 06 Training provided for representatives from Adult services teams	Training impact evaluation shows 90% approval rating for impact of training on services provided. Refugees accessing services survey shows significantly greater satisfaction with service use	Jan Hill	Training pack is now ready and will be delivered to staff over next 2 months	AMBER	Information been compiled which staff will have later in the year regarding the physical & emotional needs of refugees and asylum seekers. Training pack is now ready and will be delivered to staff January 07	The target was set up to be achieved in 2006-07 as part of the ongoing training and development initiatives intended to support achievement of equality standard level 5. The delay in delivering the action is due to the additional time taken by consultation with staff.	No remedial action necessary at this stage. However, the training will be an integral part of the ongoing equalities training for staff in the directorate.
Increase number of people able to live independently in the community with appropriate support	AS	Contract for training and service provision let June 2006 20 telecare assessors trained by October 2006 150 users by March 07	Most vulnerable service users, and their carers, more effectively supported	John Goldup	Delivery strategy has been revised with alternative milestones. On course with all milestones in Project Plan.	AMBER	Telecare project board has been established. A project plan has been set out and proposals to enhance the existing care alarm service have been agreed.	Revision of delivery strategy.	Telecare Project will deliver assistive technology to support older people to live at home on a pilot basis from May 2007 and with a full service operating by March 2008.
Improve the training and job opportunities to care leavers	CHS	Develop scheme to support care leavers accessing work experience and job opportunities Scheme drafted by June 2006 and in operation by September 2006	Increase the percentage of care leavers in employment, education and training at 19 to 70% by March 2007 (BVP1161)	Jenny Boyd	Joint NRF bid achieved. Delay in funding. Youth Engagement appointment likely on Oct 06	AMBER	The decision was taken to incorporate the proposed care leaver scheme within a wider NRF bid targeting youth employment. NRF funding has now been agreed. Youth engagement worker appointed.	Slippage due in part to recognition of need to widen remit of scheme. NRF funding not confirmed until July 06. First recruitment attempt unsuccessful.	The programme will be in place by March 07. Targets to be set for 07/08
Extend employment opportunities for people with mental health problems and learning disabilities by: -expanding range of employers committing to provide employment to people with learning disabilities. -developing vocational support services within the borough for people with mental health needs. - increasing the number of people with physical disabilities accessing employment or training opportunities via the Day Opportunities Resource Centre	AS	4 significant employers signed up by September 06. 5% increase (March 06 baseline) on numbers of people employed with mental health problems and / or disabilities known to the Council by September 06, and 15% increase by March 07	More people with learning disabilities, mental health needs and physical disabilities in employment	John Goldup	Sept 06 data not yet available	AMBER	It has not been possible to establish a baseline from which to determine the percentage rise in numbers of disabled people and people with mental health problems helped in to employment. However, in the disabilities area a number of disabled people have been helped by the various projects as follows: DITO has helped 32 people including 11 volunteers. NRF-Next Steps-Way Ahead: 1 person already in work placement. NRF-Next Steps-Life Begins At' 1 person in employment and 1 expected to start in mid Feb 07. Positive East. Employment: 25 Tower Hamlets residents have been given an Action Plan. Education / Training: 7 Tower Hamlets residents have been enrolled on external Education or Training programmes. Volunteering: 14 Tower Hamlets residents have	Extended time period to secure NRF funding caused slippage in recruitment of key staff.	Key staff now in place. Revised target to sign up 4 significant employers is December 2007.

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Commission new women's drug treatment service	CE	Service established and receiving clients by July 06	Increase the number of female problematic drug users engaged and retained in treatment to 27% of all users (20% currently)	Gilly Cottew	Although there has been a delay with the opening of the service the recruitment of the staff has taken place with CRB checks currently underway.	RED	The women's drug service opened to service users in November 2006	Service opening was originally planned for July 2006. The service is housed in Hopetown Hostel (a new build site) and due to delays in construction the service was unable to open	A separate entrance to the Hopetown hostel is planned for the women's service which is currently subject to planning permission. The DAT has negotiated use of the main hostel entrance with the Salvation Army (the hostel provider) for clients of the women's drug service
Improve access to play for disabled children	EC	4 new inclusive play sessions by March 07	Improve Play facilities for disabled children in Mile End Park	Paul Martindill	Slippage has occurred to the provision of play equipment, however, alternative funding is available to still achieve this target by March 07. 3 play sessions completed by September 06 awaiting outcome	AMBER	A series of new play sessions for deaf children are being delivered at Mile End Park between January and March 07.		
Further extension of the old age pensioners & disabled tenants decorating scheme to tenants of registered social landlords	H	Start Pilot in April 06 Equality impact assessment of the pilot completed by August 06 Evaluation of the pilot and decision to extend the programme taken by December 06	Joint partnership working ensures comparable service standards and care for vulnerable tenants across social housing providers	Sue Lawrence	Green for pilot but amber on EIA - diversity data has been assessed but not yet formally written up. New target date for completion is November	AMBER	The EIA has now been completed	Workload	The EIA was completed by the end of November 06
Market houseproud grants and the Houseproud Scheme to leaseholders and freeholders who are over 60 and/or disabled	H	25 Houseproud grants and referrals to Houseproud private loan scheme by March 06	25 eligible homeowners have received grant assistance to help them access a Houseproud loan to make repairs and adaptations to their property	Alison Thomas	Nine completed so far but have until March 07 to hit target for year end	AMBER	16 grants and 30 referrals were completed by Dec 31st	Target set for March 2007	Target was set for March 2007
Young People's Advisory Group Drugs and Alcohol to be formed to identify issues and needs of young people as well as review existing service provision and make recommendations to the Young Persons Substance Misuse Joint Commissioning Group	CE	Young People's Advisory Group convened June 06	Increased number of young people engaged in young people's advisory group	John Currie	Establishment of this group continues to be a problem. Training and other incentives have been offered with no uptake. Lifeline and Youth Service facing difficulty in engaging young people to participate on substance misuse advisory group. Existing young people's groups to be explored to make substance misuse a standing agenda item to establish young people's interest in the area.	AMBER	Substance Misuse is an agenda item on the Tower Hamlets Youth Partnership Group to generate interest in the area. Promotion also being undertaken through the Local Youth Partnership. Lifeline Substance Misuse Project for young people is continuing to explore models of engagement for young people that have went through a treatment journey.	Lifeline and Youth Service facing difficulty in engaging young people to participate on substance misuse advisory group. Young people have expressed the view that they do not want to be part of drug specific regularly meeting group and would be interested in giving their views in other ways such as one to one contacts.	DAT officers will be engaging with young people to explore these views further and construct a model of User Involvement for young people that is inclusive and functional. Existing young people's groups to be explored to make substance misuse a standing agenda item to establish young people's interest in the area
Introduce equalities monitoring for elected members	CE	Completion of monitoring & analysis of results by March 07	Monitoring shows evidence that make up of Council reflects local	Tim Revell	Information available on age & gender; consideration currently being given to means of obtaining	AMBER	It is scheduled to collect the information by the end of March deadline.	n/a	The best means of collecting the information will be discussed and agreed at the

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consistent with the approach used for staff			community		information on other 4 strands				Member Learning and Development Group in February 07.
Review sample of PDRs to ensure that managers are being appraised against equality targets	CE/ HR	Review PDRs of 30 Senior Managers and report findings to CCT October 06	100% of managers are appraised against equality targets relevant to their service	Devora Wolfson	To progress through PDG group	AMBER	The PDG review has been completed and the progress has been reported to PDG.		
Provide community groups and those working with Asylum Seekers and Refugees with contact details of the Council's schemes and those of other public sector employers.	CE/ HR	Provide community groups with contact details for each scheme by September 06	Increased awareness of career paths and opportunities with the Council	Busola Osibogun	Sifting through list of community groups with a view to sending out the information in November 06	AMBER	Sifting through the list of community groups has been completed	There was a delay in sifting through the list of community groups	Recruitment team will start sending the vacancy list last week in January 07
Provide community groups with details of vacancies and opportunities available and offer advice on the Council's application procedure	CE/ HR	Contact community groups and offer advice by September 06	Asylum seekers and Refugees are aware of the opportunities available with the Council	Busola Osibogun	Sifting through list of community groups with a view to sending out the information in November 06	AMBER	Sifting through the list of community groups has been completed	There was a delay in sifting through the list of community groups	We will send out advice sheets on recruitment with all applications for posts within the Council. All members of the HR team provide advice to prospective applicants should they call to request it.
Encourage teaching as a career option for Somali school-leavers and undergraduates	CHS	5 Somali young people are funded to train as teachers (September 06)	Teaching becomes a more attractive career option for Somali school-leavers and undergraduates, resulting in a 100% increase in the number of applications for initial teacher training from Somali students	Sarah Gale	So far 2 Somali young people are being funded to train as teachers. 7 who trained to work in schools (April - July 06) are being followed up with support on routes into teaching	AMBER	N/A	Shortage of suitably qualified Somali young people interested in teaching as a career. It is reported that teaching is not seen as an attractive profession.	Campaign to publicise financial support available to train to teach.
Support the progression of BME teachers into management roles.	CHS	Complete consultation with schools July 06 Publicise opportunities September 06 March 07 20 BME teachers access programmes	10 more BME teachers move into management roles	Sarah Gale	Consultation delayed until outcomes of BME management training programme run by Institute of Education are known	AMBER	N/A	Consultation delayed until outcomes of BME management training programme run by Institute of Education are known.	External consultant commissioned to consult with staff in schools and produce a report with recommendations.
Investigate and share good practice in recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce with public sector partners in the borough, including RSLs	CE/ HR	Arrange information sharing event and identify good practices that can be adopted by partners (December 06)	All public sector employers in LBTH are aware of good practices that can increase the diversity of their workforce profiles	Busola Osibogun	arrangements in hand for meeting with local public sector partners in January 07	AMBER	A half day seminar has been arranged for the end of January (JIP Welfare to work for disabled people) to explore the employment services currently offered to local disabled people and to share good practice in recruiting and retaining disabled people in the workforce. With regard to ethnicity, we are reviewing our Workforce to reflect the Community offerings and report, once this has been done, we will then be able to arrange the information sharing event as agreed. In the meantime, we are continuing to gather information from other London Authorities regarding	Slippage on this target has been down to getting a date in diaries in respect of the disability diversity meeting. As regards ethnicity, the delay in meeting this target has mainly been due to the review of the WTRC and time constraints, we are now however moving forward swiftly with this.	

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Provide advice, training and support to prepare managers for age discrimination legislation	CE/ HR	Deliver training through Corporate Learning and Development Programme (on-going). Provide briefings to managers and publicise guidance on age discrimination from July 06	Minimum attendance level of 75% achieved. Managers are fully aware of the implications of age legislation when managing staff	Devora Wolfson Busola Osibogun	Attendance at 69% to be raised at CHRNG to improve attendance	AMBER	the recruitment and retention on BME staff into the top 5% of earners group, it is expected that this will also contribute to the good practice to be disseminated. Two of three sessions delivered. This was raised at CHRNG and the HR leads agreed to raise the profile with managers. Guidance to be considered by CESH in February 2007	Guidance to be considered by CESH at February meeting. It will then be distributed through the Intranet and promoted through the Manager Briefing.	
Prepare for and implement employment aspects of Disability Equality Legislation	CE/ HR	Implement human resources requirements of positive duty to promote disability equality by October 06	LBTH complies with employment requirements of the duty to promote disability equality	Busola Osibogun	Draft action plan going to Cabinet for approval in November 06. Positive duty guidance, January 2007	AMBER	Disability Equality Scheme has been approved by Cabinet and the Positive Duty Guidance was published in December 06.	Disability Equality Scheme has been approved by Cabinet and the Positive Duty Guidance was published in December 06.	
Prepare for and implement employment aspects of Gender Equality Legislation	CE/ HR	Implement human resources requirements of duty to promote gender equality by March 07	LBTH complies with employment requirements of the duty to promote gender equality	Busola Osibogun	Equalities policies and schemes to be reviewed with the view to bring these under one umbrella. Issue guidance on gender equality end Jan 07	AMBER	HR requirements of the duty on course to be published with the general duty in March 07. Review of Equality policies still on going.	HR requirements of the duty on course to be published with the general duty in March 07. Review of Equality policies still on going.	
Conduct a bi-annual staff survey to measure communication of key priorities to staff	CE/ HR	Second staff survey to be undertaken by December 06 and results published by March 07 Implementation of existing staff survey action plan, providing progress reports to CCT in June 06 and October 06	Survey undertaken and rate of participation increased from 04 The Council can demonstrate that it has acted on the findings of the 04 staff survey	Devora Wolfson	Survey planned for April 2007	AMBER	The staff survey has been commissioned for April 2007.	The staff survey report went to CCT, and all the actions have been completed. However, it was agreed by the leads on the staff survey that spring would be a more appropriate time to hold the staff survey sessions, because of the festive period at the end of the year and a lot of people are usually on holiday.	
Deliver a programme agreed between the Partnership support team and the CEN (Community Empowerment Network) to increase engagement of targeted groups	CE	Programme agreed by June 06, reviews October 06 and April 07	Increased attendance for targeted groups	Margaret Libleri	PST and CEN programme planned. BME overall and Bangladeshi attendance above target, Somali attendance one percentage point below (Sep 06) Action being planned to increase engagement with Somali community	AMBER	Somali attendance at LAP events is currently at 3% of those attending, indicating that we are attracting the Somali community to events, although attendance is below the target of 5%.	The baseline we establish for Somali attendance in 2006-07 will be used to set the 2007-08 target. Publicity for LAP events is targeted at the Somali community through Somali radio and publications. We also commission work through the Community Empowerment Network to engage hard to reach groups, including Somali groups. For 2007-08 we will work directly with the Somali network to target information about events and increase engagement.	
Develop the Children and Young People's Participation Strategy	CHS	8 "Hear By Right" assessments undertaken in youth projects in each LAP area with staff and young people by October 06. Children and Young People's Participation Strategy developed by March 07.	Benchmarks established for more advanced levels of participation to be achieved.	Blossom Young	Hear By Right assessments have not yet taken place and are being booked currently. They will be carried out with other services as well as youth projects. The 1st draft of the participation strategy was produced in Sept 06 and is currently out for consultation	AMBER	Hear By Right assessments booked with 5 service areas as a sample of different services across the Partnership rather than just focusing on youth services. First draft of participation strategy currently being consulted on.	Original schedule did not allow for adequate time for development of borough-specific Hear By Right assessment tools which have now been completed. Assessments are being undertaken for the first time in the borough and are taking longer to complete in full than	

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Increase the capacity of the third sector to participate in the planning and delivery of excellent public services	CE	Review the roll out of the Third Sector Strategy by commissioning code of practice across the Partnership by September 06	Evidence of commissioning of Third Sector by Directorates	Sharon McGilchrist	Outcome of review with treasury delayed until end of 2006	AMBER	Review with treasury was completed by 31st Dec 06	Outcome of review with treasury delayed until end of 2006 originally anticipated.	Revised strategy presented to LAB, CMT and joint PCT Council Management Team
Develop a Parks and Open Spaces Disability Consultation Group	EC	Group formed by October 06	Improved access arrangements and facilities in line with requirements of the DDA	Paul Martindill	Staff resources have not been available to complete the required work due to vacancy of key positions. This will now be completed in January 07	AMBER	A parks survey completed in February 07 identified 9% of users possessing a disability. These users are being invited to formulate the Disability Consultation Group with first meeting scheduled for June 07.	Staff resources have not been available to complete the required work due to vacancy of key positions.	The users identified in the survey are being invited to formulate the Disability Consultation Group with a first meeting scheduled for June 07.
Review and relaunch consultation framework to ensure compliance and that all consultation activity is shared via the corporate consultation calendar	AS	Review framework by September 06 Amend toolkit into fact sheets for intranet by August 06 Advertise framework. Processes and toolkit November 06	Increased impact of involvement information and communication strategies	Margot Fonseca	Consultation framework reviewed and toolkit amended. To be tailored to Adult service prior to re-launch	AMBER	Consultation framework, processes and toolkit were amended, placed on intranet, and cascade briefing produced in December 2006.	Slippage due to split of Social Services into Adult and Children's Services.	Actions now complete.
Implement and monitor the agreed procedure for capturing and analysing the ICT environment and support needs of disabled staff	CE	Procedure agreed with all internal parties including HR & Disabled staff forum by July 06 Report to ICT DMT November 06 provides monitoring information on numbers of users enrolled/supported and turnaround times Survey of disabled ICT users conducted January 06	ICT service evaluation shows needs of disabled staff are being significantly met	Jim Roberts	Progress made on devising & agreeing procedure for capturing needs. Implementation delayed due to slippage of dependent activities (implementation of new enrolment system and implementation of new service desk tool).	AMBER	Looking at the procedures that need to be put in place to support this project	Due to slippage of dependent activities such as the new enrolment system and implementation of new service desk tool	New target date is December 07
Participate & develop work of Peer Support Project focusing on disseminating effective impact assessment practice with Gravesham & Bristol	CE	Project mapping meeting June 06, launch event September 06	Support provided to 30 local authorities who evaluate support as good or better.	Michael Keating	This project has been delayed due to Gravesham who is the leading authority- Training should start in Jan 07.	AMBER	New meeting dates have been set up and officers identified	This project has been delayed by the lead authority- Training should start in Jan 2007.	New meeting dates have been set up and officers identified
Improve recording and monitoring of equalities data about service users and ensure equalities profiling of all people calling the customer contact centre	AS	All services to achieve 90% ethnicity coding of their service users and monitor service usage or uptake to the Tower Hamlets estimated ethnic populations Profiling fully completed by September 06	Services planned and designed to fully reflect the needs and aspirations of a diverse community	John Goldup	a) Ian Queenan to discuss recording ethnicity with the call centre b) Service managers to ensure that team managers robustly pursue correct recording on SWIFT by workers.	AMBER	Recording of ethnicity coding on SWIFT now stands at 98.5% of all service users. Profile reports are available for monitoring purposes but need to be broken down into age groups as the ethnic profile of the borough is radically different across different age groups and the majority of services are needed by older people. This means that current reports show over representation of White British, all Black categories	Staff shortage in information team and conflicting priorities delayed profiling.	Facility to record 'refused to say' to be added to SWIFT code list by April 2007. Profiling to be available on a team by team basis and age group by April 2007.

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Develop joint systems for Health and Social care EIAs and diversity monitoring	AS	Agree approach to EIAs of integrated services with the PCT January 07 Map existing systems of diversity monitoring February 07 Progress report to CESC - March 07	Joint approach to EIAs Diversity monitoring processes mapped as basis for developing joint protocols	Margot Fonseca	Approach to EIA of integrated services will be agreed by March 07.	AMBER	and Chinese, and under-representation of all other groups (in most cases marginal), but this would not be the case if broken down by age group. Recording ethnicity has been discussed with the call centre and they routinely record ethnicity of all callers that result in a referral to Adult Services. However, the Siebal system does not allow them to record ethnicity of other callers. This has not been included in the Integration Project for this year. As identified in the Business Plan monitoring report, unless a 'support services' workstream is included, this will not be a priority for this year.	This action depended on the Integration Project in line with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy including a workstream to look at integration of support services other than HR, e.g. including EIAs and interpreting / Translation. It has not been possible to prioritise this area of work, as the post of Integration and Partnerships Programme Manager (NRF funded) has not yet been recruited to. It is not now likely to be addressed until 2007-8.	To be addressed by the Integration Programme Board and Integration and Partnerships Programme Manager when in post - postponed until 2007-8.
Integrate home care contracts and older people's private and voluntary sector administration functions within commissioning activity	AS	Proposals produced for consultation June 06 Implementation achieved by September 06	More efficient commissioning and monitoring of services	Ian Queenan / David Cowell	Proposals produced. Consultation slipped by 1 month	AMBER	Restructuring proposals completed	Delay in consultation due to loss of key staff	Launch formal consultation on 1/2/07. Complete restructuring by 1/4/07

Agenda Item 8.3

COMMITTEE	DATE	CLASSIFICATION	REPORT NO.	AGENDA ITEM
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6 March 2007	Unrestricted		
REPORT OF: Assistant Chief Executive	TITLE: Request for Report on Strategic Communications Contract			
ORIGINATING OFFICER(S): Michael Keating Service Head, Research and Scrutiny	WARD(S) AFFECTED: All			

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report responds to a request from a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for a report to the Committee on a specific contract entered into by the Council.

2. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- 2.1 agree how to deal with this request, considering officers' proposals set out in Section 4.

Local Government Act, 2000 (Section 97)

List of "Background Papers" used in the Drafting of this Report

Brief description of background papers:

n/a

Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection

Angus Dixon
020 7364 4850

3. Background

3.1 In January, the Scrutiny Lead for Excellent Public Services, Councillor Simon Rouse wrote to the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee requesting under Article 6, section 6.03 of the Constitution that the Committee review by way of a report and questioning of officers a particular decision of the Chief Executive and its subsequent implementation. The decision in question was that made in August 2005 to award a contract for strategic communications support and interim management to Verve Communications.

3.2 Councillor Rouse asked that a report to Overview and Scrutiny should cover the following points:

- The background to the awarding of the contract including details of all parties involved in any review and decision to outsource the work;
- Detailed outlining of the tender process undertaken;
- The nature of the contract awarded to Verve Communications, including terms and conditions, nature of the work to be undertaken, timespan of contract and performance indicators;
- Details of all work undertaken by Verve Communications since the awarding of the contract including costs and benefits obtained by the Council;
- How the ongoing performance of Verve Communications has been monitored by officers and Members since its awarding of the contract;
- The role and remit of the communications review;
- How the Council's spend on communications activity compares to other London boroughs;
- Any other expenditure by the Council on communications spend to consultants or other third parties or associated companies to Verve Communications; and
- The current expectation of the life of the contract and when re-tendering may occur.

3.3 Councillor Rouse pointed out that this is not an exhaustive list of areas to cover.

3.4 The Chair of the Committee informed Councillor Rouse that due the weight of the agenda for February Committee, he had asked officers to prepare a report for March Committee.

4. Process for Overview and Scrutiny to review a decision

4.1 All work by Overview and Scrutiny sits within its work programme which is agreed by the Committee. As the Constitution makes clear, all requests for reviews sit within the context of the overall work programme. This is so that the Committee can prioritise and organise its work and that of officers.

- 4.2 Members are reminded that criteria were agreed to draw up the Work Programme for the Committee. These are to consider:
- Issues that assist in tackling an area of poor or challenging performance (bottom quartile or equivalent) that has priority within the Strategic Plan
 - where member input and understanding would assist with sustaining high performance that has priority within the Strategic Plan
 - issues that assist the Council in addressing an area of national policy development that has significant implications for the Council and where member input would be valuable
 - issues that relate to a planned service inspection and member input would be valuable in providing a robustness test before inspection (or submission of self-assessment)
 - where there is gap between community perception or concern and objective performance and members' leadership on this issue would help address this gap
 - where members' work on an issue will contribute particularly toward improving Value For Money (VFM)
- 4.3 A report of the kind requested by Councillor Rouse is not within the current Overview and Scrutiny work programme. There is however a scrutiny review planned under the Excellent Public Services workstream of the Council's use of consultants and temporary staff. The review which Councillor Rouse has requested could be brought into that workstream as a 'case study' for that review. While the review of the Council's use of consultants is not due to take place until 2007/08 and has not yet been scoped, the piece of work on the specific contract could be carried out immediately since all the information is available.
- 4.4 The normal format for pieces of work of this kind is for the Scrutiny Lead to hold an informal scrutiny session at which reports and documentation are considered and there is questioning of and discussion with officers. A report of this session is then prepared for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Lead has the opportunity to present this report. In this case, an informal scrutiny session could report back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee directly or it could feed into the overall reporting on the review of the Council's use of consultants and temporary staff. Given that the contract with Verve Communications expires on 31 July 2007, scrutiny input on future arrangements would optimally be made before this time.
- 4.5 Officers are therefore proposing that the informal scrutiny session on the communications contract be held by the Scrutiny Lead for Excellent Public Services in the coming weeks with a report back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in April 2007.

5. Concurrent Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal)

- 5.1 Under Rule 1.3(i) of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules the Committee is charged with considering any matters relevant to the remit of the Committee required by a Committee member pursuant to Section 21(8) Local Government Act 2000.

- 5.2 Rule 1.3(c) requires the Committee to approve an annual overview and scrutiny work programme including the work programme of any scrutiny panels it appoints to ensure that there is efficient and effective use of the Committee's/ Panels' time.
- 5.3 Rule 9.1 enables any Committee Member to give notice to the Assistant Chief Executive that s/he wishes an item relevant to the function of the Committee to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting and provided the matter is relevant to the Committee's work programme, the Assistant Chief Executive shall ensure it is included.
- 5.4 Apart from compliance with the foregoing constitutional requirements there are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

6. Comments of the Chief Financial Officer

- 6.1 There would be no additional costs in undertaking this piece of scrutiny work, apart from the input of officer time.

7. Equal Opportunity Implications

- 7.1 There are no direct equal opportunity implications.

8. Anti-Poverty Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct anti-poverty implications.

9. Sustainable Action for a Greener Environment

- 9.1 There are no specific issues relating to the environment raised in this report.

10. Risk Management

- 10.1 There are no risk management issues raised by this report.

COMMITTEE	DATE	CLASSIFICATION	REPORT NO.	AGENDA ITEM
Overview and Scrutiny	6 March 2007	Unrestricted		
REPORT OF: Assistant Chief Executive ORIGINATING OFFICER(S): Sara Williams Louise Russell		TITLE: BUSINESS PROCESS IMPROVEMENT: MEMBERS' ENQUIRIES WARD(S) AFFECTED: N/A		

1. Summary

- 1.1. Officers, with Member input, have recently facilitated a review of the Members' Enquiry process, using Business Process Improvement (BPI) techniques.
- 1.2. Members' Enquiries are the formal requests for information from a Councillor and are logged onto the Siebel IT system and distributed to the relevant Directorate or external body for response. Raising an enquiry is one way in which Members can act for their ward constituents, and is a valuable opportunity for local issues to be brought to the attention of officers delivering services. It is notable that since the May 2006 election the number of Members' Enquiries raised has increased dramatically (up a third from 6,036 in 2005/06 to an estimated more than 8,000 in 2006/07), creating pressure on Members' Services whose resources have not increased. See Appendix 3 for 2006/07 monthly data.
- 1.3. The BPI project for Members' Enquiries was initiated amidst some concern amongst Members that responses to enquiries could take a long time, and that the quality of the responses they received was variable. Due to increasing numbers of Members' Enquiries, and reduced numbers of staff administering Members' Enquiries, the process was therefore recommended for BPI review.
- 1.4. The overall aims of the BPI project for the Members' Enquiry process can be summarised as follows:
 - To increase Members' satisfaction with responses
 - To increase the number of queries answered within target time
 - To reduce the amount of staff time spent dealing with enquiries

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Committee notes and comments on the proposed actions as identified in Appendix 1 of this report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97) LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE DRAFTING OF THIS REPORT	
<p>Brief description of background papers:</p> <p>8.1 Performance Management: Members Enquiries Nov 2006</p>	<p>Name and telephone number of holder and address where open to inspection:</p> <p>Sara Williams, 020 7364 4771 Mulberry Place, 4th Floor</p>

2. Background

2.1. A key aspect of the review was to involve all key stakeholders in the process including Members, Democratic Services staff and Directorate representatives handling enquiries.

2.2. The review started with an 'ideas generation' period where experiences of the process and suggestions for improvement were collected, through interviews with individual Members, and focus groups with Members' Services' staff, and with staff in Directorates. These ideas were captured and grouped into three areas for improvement by the BPI team:

- **Providing information to Members** in order to reduce the number of avoidable enquiries raised through the formal process
- **Improving the quality of responses** in order to ensure the *quality* of responses received are to the satisfaction of Members
- **Streamlining the end-to-end process** including reviewing the Siebel IT system and cutting out unnecessary steps and delays

2.3. The next stage of the process was the 'As-is' analysis. A workshop involving staff from across Members' Services and a number of Directorates took place on 16 January to focus on the 'as-is' state. This session was used to validate the research done by the BPI team to date, to discuss the implications of the 'as-is' state and where the problems lay in the process, and to think about potential improvement statements for each improvement area.

2.4. Before the next stage of the process – the 'To-be' analysis – the BPI undertook a number of activities. These included:

- Updating the 'as-is' information based on feedback from the workshop;
- Sampling almost 100 Members' Enquiries by type and by Directorate (see Appendix 2);
- Measuring the end-to-end Members' Enquiry process;
- Liaising with ICT about possible changes to Siebel;

- Identifying best practice from within the Directorates;
 - Identifying costings both in terms of time and money.
- 2.5. The focus of the 'To-be' workshop held on 24 January – which again involved staff from Members' Services and the Directorates – was to share some of the BPI team's ideas for improvement, to firm up some possible improvement statements and to estimate the potential benefits of the suggested improvements. The output is the draft Project Plan attached at Appendix 1.
- 2.6. It was at the 'Implementation Planning' stage that the BPI team presented their findings to the interim Service Head, as well as the new Service Head, for Democratic Renewal and Engagement. The main purpose of this meeting was to get some agreement on which ideas to pursue and to discuss impact and actions needed to implement them. In addition, the Lead Cabinet Member and other key Members have been briefed on emerging options.

3. Findings

- 3.1. The research activity undertaken by the BPI team as part of the 'As-is' and 'To-be' stages revealed some significant findings. These are highlighted below.
- 3.2. From the sampling exercise it was estimated that approximately 10% of enquiries were simple requests for service which could have been dealt with directly by the Customer Contact Centre. This was particularly the case with requests for housing repairs and confirmed anecdotal evidence from the workshops that some enquiries should really go straight to the Call Centre.
- 3.3. It was suggested that one of the reasons why Members preferred to raise an enquiry than go directly to the Customer Call Centre was to ensure that their activity was logged. If a way could be found to capture this activity by the Call Centre (i.e. a dedicated Member hotline and e-mail address) it was felt this could reduce the number which had to go through the full, more time-consuming Members' Enquiries process. This would need to be supported by clear guidance to Members about the types of calls appropriate to reporting in this way. Whilst the CCC would not be able to follow-up or feedback on action taken as a result of reports, it would nevertheless provide a more direct route to more straight-forward requests being addressed.
- 3.4. The sampling exercise, furthermore, revealed that if provision of information to Members was better and more accessible they may be able answer their own enquiries and therefore may not need to raise an enquiry. This was felt to be the case with approximately a third of the enquiries in the sampling exercise. It was noted, however, that Members would require support and guidance for this to work.

3.5. Ways in which the provision of information to Members could be improved included:

- Improving the content of the website and intranet, including developing the current Members' page on the intranet to contain useful links and FAQs;
- Producing information packs (as is currently done in Housing) for new policies.

3.6. The review found that Members' Enquiries are not administered or responded to in a uniform manner as no single process exists either for Members to raise enquiries in the first place, or for staff in Directorates to respond to them. Currently Members raise enquiries in a variety of ways, and each Directorate has a different process in place for responding to an enquiry. These differences lead to variations in both the quality and speed of response, and create an additional burden on Members' Services staff who currently have to check 100% of enquiries. In many cases this is duplicating work already done in Directorates. Some best practice was found in some of the Directorates where there are well-established and clear processes in place for dealing with enquiries (e.g. Adults Services and Children's Services).

3.7. These Directorates have clear processes and checking mechanisms at Director or Service Head level in place, and as a result the responses to enquiries were found to be of a higher quality. These Directorates were also more likely to meet the 10 day target. However, these Directorates generally received fewer enquiries. The review confirmed that Housing receives far more enquiries than any other Directorate. The process for responding to an enquiry in high volume services may therefore warrant some differences in approach to the other Directorates. Whether any exceptions are required, and what these would be, should be agreed as part of the Quality policy and process developed in the Members' Enquiry Quality Forum and agreed by Directorate Service Heads.

3.8. The review also identified a number of technical issues with the Siebel IT system, which if dealt with, could save up to 10 minutes for each enquiry raised. It was also felt that more could be done to show staff in Members' Services how to use the Siebel system fully.

4 Proposed Improvements

4.1 The following improvement statements were devised to seek to address the problems identified. Where possible, these have been quantified although in some cases baselines need to be set:

Issue	Improvement statement	Baseline	Target
Reducing the numbers of Members' Enquiries raised through the formal	Increase the number of hits to the Members' intranet page	N/a	100 hits per week
	Increase the number of	N/a	20 reports

process	times Members contact the CCC to report e.g. graffiti, ASB, abandoned vehicles		per week
	As a result of these activities, reduce the number of Members' Enquiries logged through the formal process	700 per month	630 (10% reduction)
Improving the quality or responses	Increase Member satisfaction with enquiries	N/a	To be set
	Decrease the amount of follow on enquires	7.5/wk	5/wk Reduce by 1/3rd
	Reduce % responses which fail the MS quality check	N/a	Zero
	Reduce % MS required to check	100%	60%
Streamlining the end-to-end process	Increase the % of enquiries inputted onto the Siebel system within 48 hours Move to a target of 24 hours once this achieved.	90%	100%
	Increase the % of enquiries responded to within the 10 day limit	75%	100%
	Reduce total staff time spent entering an enquiry and closing an enquiry on Siebel	30 mins	20 mins then 15

4.2 To achieve these targets, the following improvement actions have been identified following analysis and discussion with key stakeholders. These are:

Providing information to Members:

Reducing the numbers of Members' Enquiries

- Provide guidance to Members on the type of enquiries that can be raised via the Customer Contact Centre rather than as a formal Members' Enquiry
- Create a "Member Hotline/E-mail" within the Customer Contact Centre, and, via development to Siebel and SX3, devise a method through which this can identify and capture individual Members' activities
- Improve information provided through Members' pages on the intranet (including useful links and FAQs)
- Produce and distribute information packs for new policy initiatives/ changes
- Better information and training for Members so they can respond to residents directly on key policies (for example via FAQs and Alerts)

Improving the quality of responses:

Learning from best practice within the Council to bring up the quality

- Introduce a standard policy and process: for Members to raise enquiries
- Introduce a standard Quality policy and process: for Directorates to respond to enquires
- Launch a Members' Enquiry Quality Forum

Streamlining the end-to-end process

Cutting out unnecessary steps and delays

- Introduce a standard format for Members to raise enquiries; i.e. introduction of a template for enquiries via email or letter
- Increased up to date information on to the Siebel system
- Make basic improvements and alterations to the Siebel system to speed up data entry
- Introduce Siebel training to ensure system used to fullest extent
- Once Siebel improvements have been implemented, pilot direct entry of enquiries into Siebel by a small number of Members and review the success and impact
- Enable direct entry of answers into Siebel and logging off of enquiries by Directorates

4. Benefits

4.1. There are a number of benefits associated with the actions cited above, and these are summarised below. Note, however, that these should be treated with caution as due to time constraints some assumptions were made in calculating potential benefits. Further work to establish robust baselines and targets is programmed in the project plan.

Efficiency savings within Members Services

- Approximately 15 hours per week could be saved by Members' Services if those straightforward enquiries which could be dealt with by the Customer Call Centre could appropriately go directly to the Call Centre rather than being raised as Members' Enquiries;
- The introduction of a standardised policy and process in the Directorates could save up to 30 minutes per enquiry for staff in Members' Services;
- Changes to the Siebel system could reduce the time spent by Members' Services logging enquiries on and off the system and chasing enquiries by up to one day a week.

Increased satisfaction

- For Members who will not only see an improvement in the quality of responses, but will feel more empowered by being able to input directly onto Siebel, for example;
- Amongst staff in Members' Services who will spend less time logging on and off and chasing enquiries;

- For staff responding to enquiries in the Directorates who will get fewer 'follow up' enquiries and will have clear processes in place for dealing with enquiries.

5 Risks and Success Factors

- 5.1 Member buy-in is crucial if the full benefits of the review are to be realised. Involvement of Members in the implementation of the actions should help to ensure this. A Project Board will be set up and the Lead Member, Cllr Sirajul Islam and the Overview and Scrutiny lead for Excellent Public Services have been briefed and are engaged in the implementation of the proposals.
- 5.2 Some of the areas for improvement rely on Directorates changing their processes for dealing with enquiries. Proposed procedures include:
- Members' Services or Members or Directorates log on enquiry
 - Directorate expert would respond to enquiry using agreed template within agreed timescales
 - Members Enquiry & Complaints Officers (MECOs) – Directorate link officers who currently receive the Siebel requests – would check responses for content, tone and grammar
 - Senior staff (or their representative) would be responsible for final checking of responses to enquiries
 - MECOs would sign off enquiries on Siebel
 - MECOs would send response to Member (and/or resident).
- 5.3 It is recognised that a number of these are already happening but this needs to be standardised. The new activities, relating to logging, signing off and sending of enquiries are estimated to take up to an additional 15 minutes per enquiry. However, the proposed procedures would aim to remove duplication of activities between Members' Services and Directorates.
- 5.4 In addition, the improvements will depend on Members signing up to a standard process for raising Members' Enquiries, including providing as much information about the client as possible, using a standard template and submitting enquiries electronically wherever possible.
- 5.5 The times given above would ensure response within the Member-to-Member target time of 10 days. It is essential therefore that all Directorates are bought into the implementation stage.
- 5.6 Further development work to the Siebel system is important to reduce the length of time taken to administer enquiries. We are currently awaiting an upgrade to Siebel due in April 2007 during which time improvements to Siebel have been put on hold. The Siebel Team's work programme for 2007/08 includes a number of required improvements to different aspects of the Siebel system – the overall work programme will be determined by April 2007. This suggested development work will be

assessed alongside other improvements being requested. In the meantime, the improvement actions which do not rely on these improvements will be taken forward.

- 5.7 A proposed scheduling, indicating these dependencies, is included in the Project Plan at Appendix 1. This project plan will be formally managed by a designated Project Manager using the Council's corporate project management methodology. Progress will be regularly monitored and risks logged. A progress report will be made to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in six months time.

6 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 The Members' Enquiries system seeks to ensure that all local residents, including those who require advocacy or support from their elected representatives, have access to the Council's services and information. Improving the process is therefore key to ensuring equal access for all.

7 Comments from the Chief Finance Officer

- 7.1 Any costs associated with implementing the action plan will be met from existing Chief Executive's Directorate budgets.

8 Concurrent Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal)

- 8.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

9 Sustainable Action for A Greener Environment

- 9.1 A number of Members' Enquiries relate to reports of environmental issues such as dumped rubbish or condition of streets and estates. Mechanisms which facilitate the rapid resolution of these issues will support the Council's Living Safely and cleaner, greener objectives. It would be environmentally desirable to make the Members Enquiry process paper-free as far as possible.

10 Anti Poverty Comments

- 10.1 The Members' Enquiries system seeks to ensure that all local residents, including those who require advocacy or support from their elected representatives to access benefits or income maximisation, have access to the Council's services and information. Improving the process is therefore key to supporting our anti-poverty activity.

11 Risk Management Implications

- 11.1 The risks of implementation have been addressed in section 5 above. A proposed scheduling, indicating these dependencies, is included in the Project Plan at Appendix 1. This project plan will be formally

managed by a designated Project Manager using the Council's corporate project management methodology. Progress will be regularly monitored and risks logged. A progress report will be made to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in six months time.

Appendix 1: Project Plan

No.	Action	Milestones	Lead	Expected Benefit	Timescale From-To	
1	Baselines and targets for all improvement standards to be set and agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify outstanding information Identify where further sampling would be useful Agree targets with key stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members Support Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong understanding of current situation and where the project is aiming to reach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End February 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early April 2007
2	Provide guidance to Members on what should be raised as a Members' Enquiry, or dealt with by the Customer Contact Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Dependant on establishment of Members' Enquiry Quality Forum (9)</i> Develop guidance in consultation with MECOs using ME Quality Forum Publish guidance and distribute to Members and include on Members' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members Support Manager MECOs Members Support Manager Customer Contact Centre Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased confidence of Members to choose fastest means of resolving query Other Benefits dependant on establishment of hotline (see below) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early April 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End April 2007 Review annually

No.	Action	Milestones	Lead	Expected Benefit	Timescale From-To	
		intranet/ internet page <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review guidance annually Establish hotline 				
3	Create a "Member Hotline/E-mail" within the Customer Contact Centre, which could identify and capture individual Member's activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Dependant on production of Guidance (2)</i> Pilot with 5 Members Review pilot Roll-out to all Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Contact Centre Manager Members Support Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streamlined enquiry process to raise service requests for action (increased satisfaction) – up to 1 week per ME Reducing unnecessary bureaucracy around basic service requests (reducing the end-to-end process, reducing officer time spent processing enquiries) – 44 hours per month staff time in MS and Directorates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early April 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot by May 2007 Launch by June 2007 Review after six months
4	Introduce a standard policy and process: for Members to raise enquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>To take place simultaneously with 2</i> Develop policy and process Consult key Members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members Support Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased confidence of Members to choose fastest means of resolving query 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early April 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End of April 2007

No.	Action	Milestones	Lead	Expected Benefit	Timescale From-To	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch policy and process 				
5	Standard format for Members to raise enquiries i.e. introduction of a template for enquiries via email or letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop standard format for all methods of Member communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members Support Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faster responses to MEs though faster inputs (reducing the end-to-end process, reducing officer time spent processing enquiries) – 39 hours per month staff time in MS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early March 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End March 2007
6	Review and develop the Members' page on the intranet/ Internet (include useful links and FAQs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Dependant on launch of new intranet</i> Establish what information can usefully be included on Members' page Publish information Publicise Members' page Regularly update Members' page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members Support Manager IT Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced numbers of Members Enquiries as information available, sharing best practice (increased Member satisfaction, reducing officer time spent processing enquiries) – 109 hours per month staff time in MS and Directorates – <i>this is the expected benefit of all information to Members actions combined</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early March 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By early April 2007 Update monthly
7	Produce and distribute information packs for new policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directorates identify relevant and useful information for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MECOs MECOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced numbers of Members' Enquiries as information available Increased confidence of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early March 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing (possibly Bi-Monthly)

No.	Action	Milestones	Lead	Expected Benefit	Timescale From-To	
	initiatives/ changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members Information pack containing information produced Information pack distributed to Members Information pack published on the Intranet/ Internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members Support Manager Members Support Manager 	Members to respond directly to residents (increased Member satisfaction, reducing officer time spent processing enquiries) – 109 hours per month staff time in MS and Directorates – <i>this is the expected benefit of all information to Members actions combined</i>		
8	Better information and training for Members so they can respond to residents directly on key policies (e.g. FAQs and Alerts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish what information and training is required Produce training material Set training dates Conduct training Support page on Members' page on intranet/Internet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members Support Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced numbers of Members' Enquiries as information available Increased confidence of Members to respond directly to residents (increased Member satisfaction, reducing officer time spent processing enquiries) – 109 hours per month staff time in MS and Directorates – <i>this is the expected benefit of all information to Members actions combined</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early April 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing (review six-monthly)

No.	Action	Milestones	Lead	Expected Benefit	Timescale From-To	
9	Launch Members' Enquiry Quality Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and commence Members' Enquiry Quality Forum Regularly hold ME Quality Forum meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members Support Manager Members' Enquiry & Complaints Officers (MECOs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing good practice Improved communication between Members' Services and Directorates <i>This action enables improved quality actions to be implemented (2 and 10)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early March 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives agreed by end of March 2007 Regular monthly meetings ongoing
10	Introduce a standard Quality policy and process: for Directorates to respond to enquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share and agree on good practice Agree standard policy and process Consider whether exceptions are required for high volume services Sign off policy and process Implement training for staff drafting responses based on best 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MECOs MECOs MECOs MECOs Directorate Service Heads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved quality of responses as best practice <i>[including sign off by Service Head or representative]</i> implemented as 'standard' and greater ownership of quality by Directorates – increased Member satisfaction Increase the proportion of MEs resolved first time, therefore reducing the number of follow-on enquiries raised – 10 hours per month staff time saved in MS, increased Member satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> From first Quality Forum meeting (end March) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mid-May 2007

No.	Action	Milestones	Lead	Expected Benefit	Timescale From-To	
		practice		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faster responses to MEs through more efficient process (reducing the end-to-end process, reducing officer time spent processing enquiries) – up to 5 days per ME for 100% of enquiries 		
11	Increased up to date information on to the Siebel system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify information sources for inclusion on the system Up load information to system Regularly review and upload further information onto the system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Siebel Team Leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faster responses to MEs though faster inputs (reducing the end-to-end process, reducing officer time spent processing enquiries) – 12 hours per month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start may be dependant on completion of upgrade (12) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-going – review six-monthly
12	Make basic improvements and alterations to Siebel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Authorise promotion of Members' Enquiries in Siebel Team's work plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CMT Members Support Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faster responses to MEs though faster inputting and logging off enquiries (reducing the end-to-end process, reducing officer time spent processing 	<i>Start date to be determined by prioritisation of Siebel work programme</i>	<i>Likely to take 2-3 months once work initiated</i>

No.	Action	Milestones	Lead	Expected Benefit	Timescale From-To	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm list of requirements • Consider viability of requirements • Make changes to system • User Acceptance Testing • Launch upgrade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siebel Team Leader • Siebel Team Leader • Members Support Manager • Siebel Team Leader 	enquiries) – 23 hours per month		
13	Introduce Siebel training to ensure system used to fullest extent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce training material • Set training dates • Conduct training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siebel Team Leader • Members Support Manager • Siebel Team Leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster responses to MEs though faster inputting and logging off enquiries (reducing the end-to-end process, reducing officer time spent processing enquiries) – 18 hours per month 	<i>TBC Dependent on completion of action 12</i>	<i>TBC Dependent on completion of action 12</i>
14	Pilot direct entry into Siebel by Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dependant on launch of Siebel upgrade and improvements</i> • Produce training material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siebel Team Leader • Members Support Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased Member satisfaction as greater control of process • Faster responses to MEs though faster inputs (reducing the end-to-end 	<i>TBC Dependent on completion of action 12</i>	<i>TBC Dependent on completion of action 12</i>

No.	Action	Milestones	Lead	Expected Benefit	Timescale From-To	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and guidance • Set training dates • Conduct training • Conduct pilot • Evaluate pilot and review guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members Support Manager • Siebel Team Leader • Members Support Manager • Members Support Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> process, reducing officer time spent processing enquiries) – 6 hours per month staff time in MS <i>based on an assumption of 5% take-up</i> 		
15	Direct entry into Siebel and logging off of enquiries by Directorates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dependant on launch of Siebel upgrade and improvements</i> • Produce training material and guidance • Set training dates • Conduct training • Conduct pilot • Evaluate pilot and review guidance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Siebel Team Leader • Members Support Manager • Members Support Manager • Siebel Team Leader • Members Support Manager • Members Support Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster responses to MEs though faster inputs as not required to go back to MS (reducing the end-to-end process, reducing officer time spent processing enquiries) – up to 4 days faster per ME • Increased ownership of enquiry, leading to increase in quality 	<i>TBC</i> <i>Dependent on completion of action 12</i>	<i>TBC</i> <i>Dependent on completion of action 12</i>

Appendix 2: Members' Enquiry Sampling Exercise

97 sample enquiries were looked from across the council. They were divided into theme, directorate, quality of response and Member.

The results are as follows;

Code	Description	Total	H	E&C	D&R	C	A&S	CE
	A request for service that could have been sent to the Contact Centre	12	5	6				1
	Request for information or an explanation for services received, further services, on behalf of a resident	45	20	12	5	4		4
	Enquiry raising concern with the standard of service requesting explanation (not on behalf of a resident)	5	1	3	1			
	An enquiry concerned with a specific policy or initiative requesting information	30	5	5	5	6		9
	Enquiry for a partner/external organisation	4						
	Total	96	31	27	11	10	0	14

Of the 96 enquiries, 3 did not have a response attached.

For the remaining 93 enquiries a simple quality check was undertaken, enquiries were graded according to whether they fully answered their query and their tone was appropriate, these responses would have been graded 1. **84%** of enquiries were graded 1.

Of the 8 that did not score 1, 1 was from an external organisation (police).

A score of 2 was given if the response answered the enquiry but if the tone was in some way inappropriate, e.g. abrupt. This is a very subjective measure, and shouldn't be looked at as fact. 3 responses were graded as 2. Whilst replies did answer the enquiry raised (requests for information or services on behalf of a resident), they were curt in their reply.

4 responses were graded as 3, or did not answer enquiry. Again depending on the enquiry, this is quite subjective.

Appendix 3: Numbers of Members' Enquiries raised 2006/07

	Members' Services	Executive Office		Scrutiny	Total
		Cabinet	Leadership		
April	395	239	82	132	848
May	372	58	8	22	460
June	546	81	51	102	780
July	537	66	18	87	708
August	504	98	47	98	747
September	456	72	31	84	643
October	479	114	17	94	704
November	490	97	62	70	719
December	281	79	10	50	420
January					
February					
March					
Total	4,060	904	326	739	6,029

Agenda Item 9.1

Committee Overview and Scrutiny	Date 7 March 2007	Classification Unrestricted	Report No.	Agenda Item No. 9.1
Report of: Assistant Chief Executive Originating Officer(s): Alan Steward, Scrutiny Policy Manager		Title: Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Tracking Report: Update Ward(s) affected: All		

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides a progress report on Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Recommendations.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the progress in implementing its recommendations.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97)

LIST OF "BACKGROUND PAPERS" USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT

Background paper

Name and telephone number of and address where open to inspection

Recommendation Tracking Report – 6 October 2007

Angus Dixon
020 7364 4850

3 Report

- 3.1 As part of its regular work programme, Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives a regular, 6-monthly, recommendation tracking report to monitor progress in implementing past recommendations. This covers all its recommendations since 2003/04 including those from the Committee and Working Group reviews.
- 3.2 Overall, services are implementing many of the recommendations made by Overview and Scrutiny. This takes a number of forms from being mainstreamed into ongoing service development through to specific initiatives.
- 3.3 Appendix 1 provides an update of the tracking system. It is organised by the broad themes from the Strategic Plan with the additional area of health for the Health Scrutiny Panel. Where there are changes since the last update they are highlighted like this.
- 3.4 As noted in that report to 6 October 07 meeting, many of the updates will not change significantly from one tracking report to the next given the nature of the recommendations. For each recommendation there is an indication of whether monitoring should continue and, if so, when a detailed update will be sought.
- 3.5 Appendix 1 shows those recommendations that are either outstanding or ongoing. Recommendations that have been achieved and reported back are not shown. Appendices 2-8 show the progress on the Committee's reviews monitored on a 6-monthly basis. The appendices show the recommendations made, response by Cabinet and an update. Reviews completed before June 04 only provide an update as these were produced under the previous scrutiny arrangements.
- 3.6 As with other corporate monitoring reports, a traffic light system is used to indicate progress. Red highlights an area where there has been no progress or there is significant delay in implementing the recommendations. Yellow indicates that the recommendation is in the planning stage or that, although there is some progress, this is less than satisfactory. Green shows that the recommendation has been achieved or progress in its implementation is satisfactory.
- 3.7 The report shows that in terms of the 14 issues monitored, 12 are at green with 2 to be confirmed once the update is available.
- 3.8 In considering the monitoring and tracking of scrutiny recommendations in the future, it may be useful for members to consider revisiting a review to look at progress, its impact and the potential lessons for future reviews. This could be achieved through a one-off challenge session on a review topic or through a briefing session for the Scrutiny Lead. This can be considered as part of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2007/08

4 Concurrent Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal)

- 4.1 Under Section 21 Local Government Act 2000, the Council has a duty to deliver an effective and robust Overview and Scrutiny function. Monitoring the progress and impact of recommendations made by Overview and Scrutiny is one of the elements to ensure the proper and effective management of the function.

5 Comments of the Chief Financial Officer

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

6 Equal Opportunity Implications

- 6.1 Equal opportunities are central to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A number of reports and reviews have specific equalities themes including access to sexual health services for young people and access to council services for disabled people.

7 Anti Poverty Implications

- 7.1 Anti-poverty is central to some aspects of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee particularly work within Creating and Sharing Prosperity such as that on Planning Obligations.

8 Sustainable Action for a Greener Environment

- 8.1 The Committee has considered sustainable action for a greener environment through its update on the Cleaner Safer Places Best Value Review.

9 Risk Management

- 9.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report. Monitoring of the implementation of the Committee's recommendations is important to make sure that the Council responds to the suggestions and findings of Overview and Scrutiny's work.

Appendix 1 Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Tracking Update

Appendix 2 Progress on Street De-clutter Recommendations

Appendix 3 Progress on Domestic Violence Recommendations

Appendix 4 Progress on Youth Services Plan Recommendations

Appendix 5 Progress on SACRE Recommendations

Appendix 6 Progress on Access to Services Recommendations

Appendix 7 Progress on Consultation on the Council's Budget Recommendations

Appendix 8 Progress on Access to Services for Disabled People Recommendations

Appendix 9 Progress on the Role of Ward Councillors in the Tower Hamlets Partnership Recommendations

Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Tracking Update

Living Well

Issue Educational attainment of children looked after	Rec Date 5 Apr 05	green
Monitoring Status – No further monitoring		
Recommendation That Overview and Scrutiny maintain annual monitoring of this service.	Response / Progress This is now incorporated into the Work Programme of the Scrutiny Lead for Learning, Achievement and Leisure.	

Issue Housing Needs Survey	Rec Date 9 Nov 04	green
Monitoring Status – No further monitoring		
Recommendation That a seminar for all members is organised on the results of the Housing Needs Survey.	Response / Progress Information from the Housing Needs Survey has been included within the members' seminars on the Local Development Framework (LDF), Supporting People and Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs).	

Living Safely

Issue Urban Junk or Urban Funk – Street De-clutter	Rec Date 7 Jun 05	green
Monitoring Status – Maintain annual monitoring		
Recommendation This review considered the issue of street de-clutter in the borough and how it could be reduced. The Working Group made 16 recommendations to Cabinet.	Response / Progress The report was submitted to Cabinet on 7 Sep 05. 14 of the 16 recommendations were accepted. A full update on implementation is provided in Appendix 2 which shows good progress. The review of the Street Design Guide is now planned for 2007/08.	

Issue Review – Domestic Violence	Rec Date 4 Apr 06	green
Monitoring Status – Maintain annual monitoring		
Recommendation This review considered domestic violence in Tower Hamlets and the multi-agency response to the issue. The report made 12 recommendations for action.	Response / Progress The report was submitted to Cabinet on 6 Sep 06 and all recommendations were accepted. A full update on implementation is provided in Appendix 3 which shows good progress.	

Creating and Sharing Prosperity

Issue Fair Shares Review	Rec Date 10 May 05	To be confirmed
Monitoring Status – Maintain annual monitoring		
Recommendation This review considered how local communities benefited from the borough's high levels of economic development and regeneration. The Working Group made 10 recommendations to Cabinet.	Response / Progress The report was submitted to Cabinet on 7 Sep 05. All of the recommendations were accepted. The update is in preparation and will be available at the meeting.	

Learning Achievement and Leisure

Issue Youth Services Plan Review	Rec Date 10 May 05	green
Monitoring Status – No further monitoring		
Recommendation This review considered the Council's Youth Services Plan with focus on accommodation and partnership working. The Working Group made 17 recommendations to Cabinet.	Response / Progress The report was submitted to Cabinet on 8 June and further considered in Aug 05 as part of the Youth Services Plan 2005/06. All the recommendations were accepted. Most of the recommendations are now implemented fully, with the two showing good progress. It is therefore proposed to stop monitoring these recommendations. A full update is provided in Appendix 4.	

Issue Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE)	Rec Date 10 Jan 06	green
Monitoring Status –No further monitoring		
Recommendation This challenge session made 7 recommendations for the directorate to consider.	Response / Progress The directorate accepted all recommendations. A full update is provided in Appendix 5 which shows that all recommendations have now been implemented. It is therefore suggested that there is no further monitoring.	

Issue School Exclusions	Rec Date 4 Apr 06	To be confirmed
Monitoring Status – To be confirmed		
Recommendation This review looked at school exclusions within the borough to increase understanding of the issues, the support available and action being taken to deal with them. It made 10 recommendations to Cabinet.	Response / Progress The report was submitted to Cabinet on 6 September 2006. All the recommendations were accepted, although some only partially. The update is in preparation and will be available at the meeting.	

Excellent Public Services

Issue Review - Access to Services	Rec Date 1 Apr 04	green
Monitoring Status – Maintain annual monitoring		
Recommendation This major review conducted by the Excellent Public Services Scrutiny Panel in 2003/04 resulted in a report with 13 recommendations for action.	Response / Progress All recommendations were accepted and good progress in implementation. A full update is provided in Appendix 6.	

Issue Consultation on the Council's Budget	Rec Date 8 Feb 05	green
Monitoring Status – Maintain annual monitoring		
Recommendation This review considered the Council's consultation on its budget. The Working Group made 7 recommendations to Cabinet.	Response / Progress The report was submitted to Cabinet on 11 May 05 and all recommendations accepted. A full update is provided in Appendix 7 which shows significant progress in implementing the recommendations.	

Issue Access to services for Disabled People	Rec Date 7 Jun 05	green
Monitoring Status – No further monitoring		
Recommendation This review considered access for disabled people to council services. The review considered Council policy and practice and the accessibility of Council buildings, documents and the website. The Working Group made 11 main recommendations to Cabinet.	Response / Progress The report was submitted to Cabinet on 7 Sep 05 and all the recommendations accepted. A full update is provided in Appendix 8 which shows significant progress has been made in implementing the recommendations. Since the review was completed, the Council has agreed its Disability Equality Scheme. This incorporates most of the aspects of the review's recommendations. This will be monitored by the Committee through the Equalities Action Plan. It is therefore suggested that these recommendations are no longer monitored.	

Issue The role of Ward Councillors in the Tower Hamlets Partnership	Rec Date 7 Feb 06	green
Monitoring Status – Maintain annual monitoring		
Recommendation This review was conducted in 2005/06 and considered the role of councillors in the Partnership. It resulted in a report with 11 recommendations for action.	Response / Progress All but one of the recommendations were accepted. Many have now been achieved. The Local Government White Paper has changed the context for a number of recommendations and although there has been progress, these will be explored further once the details of the proposals are known. A full update is provided in Appendix 9.	

Health

Issue Access to Sexual Health Services for Young People	Rec Date 5 Apr 05	green
Monitoring Status – Maintain monitoring with update in Mar 08		
Recommendation This review considered local sexual health services for young people. It made 24 recommendations to the Council, Tower Hamlets PCT and Barts and the London Acute Trust.	Response / Progress The review recommendations were considered and accepted by all organisations. An update report on progress made was submitted to the Health Scrutiny Panel in March 06. A further update is scheduled for the Panel's first meeting of next municipal year	

Issue Delivering Choosing Health: A Case Study of Obesity	Rec Date 26 Sep 06	green
Monitoring Status – Maintain monitoring with update in Mar 08		
Recommendation This review considered the Government's Delivering Choosing Health initiative through a case study of services and initiatives aimed at tackling obesity. It made 12 recommendations to the Council and Tower Hamlets PCT.	Response / Progress The review recommendations were considered and accepted by all organisations. An initial response was submitted to the Health Scrutiny Panel in December 06. This is being further considered by Cabinet in April 07.	

Update on Overview and Scrutiny Committee Working Group on Street De-clutter

Recommendation	Response	Date	Update Feb 07
R1 That the Council's Street Design Guide be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance	Development and Renewal and Environment and Culture officers advised against this recommendation, as it is not appropriate. However the Section 38 Design Guide for Adoptable Roads does need to be formally incorporated into the Street Design guide and can then be adopted as a whole by Cabinet.	Not agreed	Delayed A review of the entire Street Design Guide will be included in Street Management Service Plan for 2007/8 due to a lack of resources available to deliver project in 2006/7.
R2 The Environment and Culture directorate prepare a regular assessment of the Street Design Guide's effectiveness	Review new schemes in the light of a sample of effectiveness after completion. The first report to be incorporated into Cabinet report on review of Street Design Guide.	Dec 05	Included as above
R3 Inter disciplinary training opportunities be taken up by all professionals managing, co-ordinating and designing streets in the borough	Agreed as opportunities available such as links with Urban Design London for Officer development.	Ongoing	Implemented Street design training organised and undertaken in March 06 for all Transportation & Highways officers. 2 further staff are enrolled on a new street Design course and the Group Manager Design is acting as a mentor to the new national design group (PRIAN)
R4 Street design and decluttering be part of the Council's strategic priorities and be incorporated into the Strategic Plan	Street design and decluttering be considered as part of the debate when formulating the Council's strategic priorities. This could be included in the 2006/07 Strategic Plan.	Dec 05	Implemented A number of street design projects are included in the Strategic Plan Living Safely category.

Recommendation	Response	Date	Update Feb 07
R5 The Environment and Culture directorate work towards developing an informal compact between the Council and utility companies	All of the recommendations relating to utility companies are interlinked. Tower Hamlets staff work informally with utilities at every opportunity. There are a number of regular Forums for liaison to develop.	Ongoing	Implemented Forums continue to be held regularly and particularly strong joint working is being established with Thames Water who have agreed to fund an additional post to facilitate this work.
R6 The Council should lobby through pan London organisations against some of the changes which may be introduced under the Traffic Management Act	Officers and Members to lobby on every opportunity if recommendations are detrimental to the interests of the residents of Tower Hamlets.	Ongoing	No detrimental schemes have been encountered to date.
R7 The Council should publish and regularly update the Register of Street Works via the Council's website	There is a major GIS project to link the current software with the Council's website and pan-London information banks. With resources allocated from the growth programme it should be possible to deliver by end of March 06. This is part of the Council's IEG statement for delivery this financial year.	Mar 06	Implemented This went live in April 06.
R8 Through local news media the Council should encourage members of the public to access the Register of Street works to improve monitoring of utility companies	As above in R7.	No date set	GIS connectivity makes website links possible.
R9 A Street Clutter Audit be carried out and targets be set annually for the reduction of clutter as a whole in the borough	Street Clutter Audits for selected defined areas be carried out. It is proposed that this is tied into the Asset Management Plan for Highways and Footways being developed. Year on year audits to develop into a five-year programme.	Mar 06	Implemented Audits carried out on funded schemes 2006/7 – Bethnal Green Rd, Hackney Rd, Manchester Rd, Westferry Rd, Mile End Gateway and Poplar High St.

Recommendation	Response	Date	Update Feb 07
R10 When planning major projects on specific roads consideration should be given to measures outside of the scheme that will reduce stark contrasts with surrounding areas	Considering street clutter in the vicinity when planning major projects is recognised good practice and can be adopted where funding and ownership permissions can be secured. Please note that some clutter is not within the control of the Council.	Ongoing	Taken into consideration in scheme design. (Included in above schemes)
R11 The first option in putting in new signage should be to fix signs to existing posts and walls. To assist this a legal pro-forma should be developed to be used for attaching signs to walls	This is adopted as general good practice but often ownership cannot be established to secure permission and thereby remove Council liability. There are also restrictions on the types of signs which can share posts.	Ongoing	Implemented This is standard practice.
R12 Consideration should be given to the balance between capital and revenue funding for projects in order to maintain the appearance of new works	Significant new resources have been allocated to highways repairs and street cleaning as part of a Cleaner Safer Tower Hamlets.	Not agreed	Implemented Each scheme continues to be considered on its own local merits.
R13 Consider measures to reduce the number of duplicate posts for signage	Agreed. This will be incorporated as good practice in all schemes.	Ongoing	Implemented Included in all schemes.
R14 As part of the Budget for 2006/07, the Council allocate significant extra resources (capital and revenue) for street works	The allocation of capital and revenue resources will need to be considered as part of the Council's overall service and financial planning process for 2006/07. As reported to Cabinet in Aug 05, the early indications from Government are that there is unlikely to be substantial growth in the resources available to the Council in 2006/07. This is likely to limit the scope to allocate additional resources to street works without corresponding reductions elsewhere.	May 05	Implemented 2007/8 allocations due to be confirmed by April 2007 Cabinet.

Recommendation	Response	Date	Update Feb 07
R15 An audit of Third Party insurance claims against the Council be compiled, to be taken into account when considering future projects	Agreed. We are already working with the Insurance Section to understand site histories.	Ongoing	Ongoing – detailed information has not been supplied by Insurance Group.
R16 Target organisations responsible for significant amounts of flyposting with Anti Social Behaviour Orders	Agreed. Joint work between the Safer Neighbourhood Teams and the Local Enforcement Teams will target particular problems with a clean, enforce and educate approach. Events will be programmed to harmonise with LAP steering group objectives. This work will be much assisted by new powers in the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and enhanced by the Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005.	Jan 06 and ongoing	Implemented The Anti-graffiti and flyposting action plan was launched in Dec 05 with support from the Council's Anti-social Behaviour Action Group and the Cleaner Safer Tower Hamlets Campaign's "Use It Report It" programme. The "Working Together for a Better Tower Hamlets" Campaign in summer 06 has seen graffiti intervention in Whitechapel and further anti-graffiti publicity.

Update on Scrutiny Working Group Report on Domestic Violence

Recommendation	Comments / Update: Feb 07	Responsibility	Date
<p>R1 The Council consider further opportunities for improving the ability of victims to report domestic violence. For example through the use of the Council’s internet, I-kiosks and one stop shops.</p>	<p>The Domestic Violence (DV) Team continues to promote domestic violence services in partnership with the Domestic Violence Forum. This includes provision of information in community languages at a range of outlets and events. 25 outreach stalls have been held at community venues across the borough with approx. 2,000 information packs distributed to members of the public. Advertisements have been included in the Schools Menu Guide which is distributed to all parents every term, and the Council’s Domestic Violence web-pages have been updated. We have continued to promote awareness of DV issues and services through the local media, with regular news items in East End Life in particular.</p> <p>Work is also underway with mainstream service providers so that staff are able to address DV proactively with their service users if they have concerns. 2 projects are underway to develop these approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCH Barika Project: is currently working with 9 schools, and pupil referral units providing staff training, parents’ workshops and information sessions and workshops for pupils. • THPCT has secured NRF funding to develop policy and practice on DV. Training for Health Visitors has been prioritised to equip them with the skills to identify and assess the needs of families with young children where DV is occurring. <p>An LAA target has been adopted to measure performance on improved access to services: LAAs 103 “Reduction in the average amount of time victims experience domestic violence before seeking help from a specialist service”, 2004-05 baseline 4.6 years. The outturn on this indicator in for April to December 2006 was 3.2 years, a far greater improvement than anticipated.</p>	<p>Andy Bamber, Head of Community Safety Services</p>	<p>Rolling programme of work – progress report – March 2007.</p>

Recommendation	Comments / Update: Feb 07	Responsibility	Date
<p>R2 The Council should regularly assess that the balance of services provided matches the profile of victims of domestic violence. This will ensure those of different gender, ethnicity and age are given the help they need.</p>	<p>The DV team has responsibility for the strategic role in monitoring the balance of service provision. Research is carried out by the DV team through the Tower Hamlets Partnership to identify gaps in provision particularly focusing on areas of under-reporting to ensure services are up to date and planned in line with needs. Existing services are monitored by the team in terms of information on ethnicity, age and gender which helps to inform how services can meet the needs of those facing barriers around language or gender. The profile of victims coming to the attention of the DV Team from April-December 2006 was as follows:</p> <p>Number of victims: 399 Gender: Male: 29 (7%) Female: 370 (93%)</p> <p>Tower Hamlets Victim Support Scheme has secured funding for a part-time LGBT worker who primarily provides support to victims of homophobic crime. This worker has also been trained to support victims of same-sex DV and is able to support male victims of DV.</p> <p>Age: 18-25: 104 (26%) 26-40: 173 (43%) 41-60: 76 (20%) 60+: 8 (2%) Unknown: 34 (8%)</p> <p>Disabled: Yes: 25 (6%) No: 374 (94%)</p> <p>Language support needed: Yes: 88 (22%) No: 311 (78%)</p> <p>Unfortunately data on ethnicity is not available at present because of a database problem – this is being resolved with the database developers.</p>	<p>Andy Bamber, Head of Community Safety Services</p>	<p>Rolling programme of work – progress report – March 2007</p>

Recommendation	Comments / Update: Feb 07	Responsibility	Date
R3 The Council's Corporate Policy on Domestic Violence be revised and updated to reflect changes nationally, across London and locally to domestic violence.	A preliminary paper review of the policy has been completed, but progress on this work has been delayed due to departmental restructure and relocation. It is proposed that a Members' working group focused on Domestic Violence be established to progress this recommendation, with a revised milestone to re-launch the policy by November 2007.	Andy Bamber, Head of Community Safety Services	December 2006
R4 The Council's Corporate Policy be developed in consultation with the Domestic Violence Forum and the Living Safely Community Plan Action Group.	As above R3	Andy Bamber, Head of Community Safety Services	December 2006
R5 The Council's definition of domestic violence reflects the national definition of domestic violence.	As above R3 The national definition has been incorporated into the new DV web pages and all new public information materials.	Andy Bamber, Head of Community Safety Services	December 2006
R6 The Council consider further how it can improve and monitor the consistency of the response given to domestic violence victims. This should also be discussed through the Violent Crime Action Group.	The Violent Crime Action Group has discussed the issue and key partners have provided information on how they manage DV cases to ensure consistent standards, however, as practice is continually evolving and new services are developing, victims who have used services over a period of time may notice changes. It is proposed to address the issue of consistency in Council services as part of the Corporate DV policy review (see R3, R4, R5).	Andy Bamber, Head of Community Safety Services	September 2006.

Recommendation	Comments / Update: Feb 07	Responsibility	Date
R7 A scheme, modelled on the Safety Net Scheme in Camden, be developed. This should involve and consult service users in its development.	The Living Safely CPAG rejected a proposal to set up such a scheme in 2004. Without support at this level it is not possible to progress this recommendation.	Andy Bamber, Head of Community Safety Services	
R8 The Council recognises that peer support is important in recovery from domestic violence and supports and secures sustainable funding for the Warrior Women project.	6 courses have been completed so far this year, with a further 6 to be completed by end March 2007. This programme received a Mayor of London's Domestic Violence Award in November 2006. Funding has been secured to continue the programme in 2007-2008 with a target to deliver 15 courses, including at least 3 courses for young women (16-18).	Andy Bamber, Head of Community Safety Services	March 2007
R9 The Council recognises that supporting women to choose to stay in their own home safely is immensely valued by those recovering from domestic violence and secures sustainable funding for the Sanctuary project.	Funding has been secured for the Sanctuary Project through the Homelessness Prevention Fund for 2006-2007 and 2007-2008. 32 cases were accepted on to the Sanctuary project to end January 2007, with a target of 40 to end March 2007. The services offered by the Sanctuary project have been enhanced with the provision of care alarms, mobile phones and one-to-one safety planning sessions.	Andy Bamber, Head of Community Safety Services	March 2007

Recommendation	Comments / Update: Feb 07	Responsibility	Date
R10 When victims of domestic violence are re-housed outside of Tower Hamlets, the Council should ensure that receive information about the domestic violence services they can access.	<p>NRF funding for floating support to support victims of DV placed in temporary accommodation by the LBTH Homelessness Service has been secured for 2006-2008.</p> <p>The project is being delivered by Tower Hamlets Women's Aid. Service provision includes completion of a risk and needs assessment and a support plan, with weekly home visits to support victims to build safe, independent lives for themselves and their children. The service has capacity to work with 40 households a year.</p>	Andy Bamber, Head of Community Safety Services	March 2008
R11 The Council develops an Action Plan to deal with the perpetrators of domestic violence. This should recognise the need to improve the way perpetrators are dealt with by the police and criminal justice system and outline action to rehabilitate perpetrators to ensure re-offending does not occur.	<p>A report "Getting away with it?" Domestic Violence Perpetrators in Tower Hamlets" was presented to the Living Safely CPAG in November 2006. This report made several recommendations. The agreed priorities for action are</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide specialist training in working with DV perpetrators to key staff (funding has been secured to train 32 key professionals in 2007-2008) 2. To work towards establishing a specialist DV Court at Thames Magistrates Court. This is a more challenging area of work as it requires a high level of partnership co-ordination between the key criminal justice agencies (Police, Crown Prosecution Service, Thames Court and Probation) there are issues of capacity in all agencies to progress this. <p>In addition to the above, the terms of reference of the multi-agency DV Safety Planning Panel have been revised so that the panel now deals with identified prolific and persistent DV perpetrators – the membership of the Panel has been expanded to include offender focussed services including the Drugs Intervention Programme and Community safety Operations who can offer interventions focussed on the offender.</p>	Andy Bamber, Head of Community Safety Services	December 2006

Recommendation	Comments / Update: Feb 07	Responsibility	Date
<p>R12 Information be developed across services and provided to domestic violence victims about the services that are available to them and the standards of service they should expect.</p>	<p>A consultation session has been held with the borough Domestic Violence Forum to review the Forum's agreed good practice guidelines, with a view to using this as the basis for a DV services "customer promise" that would be promoted to the public. It is proposed to include these standards within the DV services directory (due to be updated in April 2007).</p> <p>It is further proposed that the revised corporate policy would also include standards that Council services will adhere to in DV cases.</p>	<p>Andy Bamber, Head of Community Safety Services</p>	<p>December 2006</p>

Update on Youth Services Plan Review

Recommendation	Response	Date	Update: Feb 07
R1. That a hub-centre be identified in Local Area Partnership 1.	The Service aims to identify a suitable hub-centre for LAP1.	Mar 06	Recommendation fully implemented. We are working with the new youth work contractors to develop the concept of the hub-centres. The LAP1-3 youth work contracts have been in-sourced and we are negotiating with St. Hilda's Community Centre for them to act as the hub centre for LAP 1. We are putting additional recourse into Meath Gardens.
R2. That investment is maximised by a more rigorous approach to maintenance and asset management.	The issue will be addressed in 2005/05 Service Plan and in the retendering of the youth service contracts.	Mar 06	Recommendation fully implemented. We have undertaken an audit of the buildings that we currently use for youth work so that we have a good knowledge of their condition. As a result we are developing a more robust accommodation strategy and building programme, to ensure that our future investment in maintenance and development is maximised.
R3. That future capital investment be allocated on the basis of identified need taking into account the location of existing youth centres.	Accommodation improvements funded through NRF have reflected areas of greatest need identified at Key Stage 3. The LEA and its partner organisation are working towards improving youth accommodation e.g. Parnell Road in Bow. The re-commissioning of the youth service contracts will be used to ensure that future allocation is based on need.	Mar 06 and ongoing	Recommendation fully implemented. Accommodation improvements funded through NRF have been completed at Whitechapel, Weavers, Atlee Centre, Limehouse, Kingsley Hall, Poplar Boys and Girls, St. Andrew's, St. Hilda's, Meath Gardens, Parnell Road and the Davenant Centre.
R4. That where appropriate, property leases be promptly transferred to contracted providers.	Where appropriate, leases will be transferred. Property Services will determine the leases in light of the new providers following recommissioning.	Mar 06	Recommendation fully implemented. We have worked closely with Property Services and, where appropriate, leases have been transferred to the new contractors.

Recommendation	Response	Date	Update: Feb 07
R5. That signage and lighting outside existing centres be improved.	Signage and lighting are being dealt with alongside accommodation issues. The service is working with building technical services to identify buildings where lighting and signage can be put in place as soon as possible.	Mar 06	Recommendation fully implemented. Signage and lighting has been addressed as a key part of all of our building developments in 2005/06. In 2006/07 we have also included new signs at 5 further centres. Further improvements will be funded in the future through the establishment of the Capital Fund, a new DfES funded initiative where young people themselves apply for grants to improve their buildings.
R6. Review the size, responsibility and powers of the Council's central team in relation to the contracted providers.	This work will be undertaken during 2005/06 and will inform the tendering process.	Mar 06	Recommendation fully implemented. In the new contracts we have clarified the responsibilities of the central team and increasing our capacity to provide leadership and strategy, quality assurance and monitoring and developmental support to contractors.
R7. Extend and make better use of data and mapping information in determining the distribution of resources.	Grants criteria will be amended for future years to ensure that future funding more clearly meets identifiable need and takes into account existing provision.	Mar 06	Recommendation fully implemented. At the request of Elected Members, the Council reviewed the commissioning framework and eligibility criteria across all mainstream grant funding streams and Grants Panel considered proposals in December 2006. We have aligned our eligibility criteria with the Every Child Matters outcomes and we have used the GIFTS grant making software to map grant funded provision and reduce duplication. We also reviewed our Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) funding and as a result have developed a group of preferred providers who have a demonstrable ability to deliver high quality activities.

Recommendation	Response	Date	Update: Feb 07
			Our summer grants for 2006 had a tighter assessment process to ensure that provision is not duplicated.
R8. Strengthen further contract monitoring arrangements including performance and value for money.	All organisations to receive a monthly monitoring visit assessing quality and performance. There will be a new programme of peer inspections	Mar 06	Recommendation fully implemented. All youth work contractors undertake regular monitoring visits to their youth projects to assess their quality and performance. In addition our programme of peer inspections, involving officers from the central team and youth work managers from other areas of the borough, ensure that we directly monitor every youth project once every six months. Under the new youth work contracts this will increase to three times a year.
R9. Reduce the per-person disparity of funding between LAP areas.	New specifications for the Youth Service contracts will reduce the per-person disparity of funding between LAP areas.	Mar 06	Recommendation fully implemented. The ceiling values for the new Youth Service Contracts were developed using a funding formula based on the number of young people in each LAP and the principle that existing provision should remain open. There has been a reduction in the disparity of funding.
R10. The distribution of third sector mainstream grants be reviewed to ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are based on identifiable need and take into account existing provision • They provide good value for money. • The Council's administrative requirements are proportionate. 	The grants criteria will be amended for future years to ensure this. Clearer service level agreements will be developed, where appropriate.	Mar 06	Recommendation fully implemented. See answer to R7. In 2006/07 16 organisations were given three-year service level agreements, which mean their administrative burden was reduced. In 2007/08 a further 9 organisations are expected to sign three-year service level agreements.

Recommendation	Response	Date	Update: Feb 07
R11. Youth provision funded by other Council Departments is co-ordinated to ensure that it supports the strategic approach outlined in the Council's Youth Service Plan.	All Council provision will be reflected in LAP plans. There will be greater inter-department service planning and there will be common management information collected across all funding streams.	Mar 06	Recommendation fully implemented. We are updating our LAP Youth Plans in partnership with other departments, Area Directors and LAP steering groups, taking account of the new contractors in each area. We have widened the scope of our management information systems to ensure that similar data is collected across our contracts, mainstream grants, summer grants, Crime Prevention Initiatives, PAYP and NRF funding streams.
R12. The Council works with its third sector partners to develop a borough-wide register of youth providers and projects and considers an accreditation badge scheme for those meeting quality standards.	An Annual Register of Providers will be established.	Mar 06	We are working with Community Organisations Forum (COF) to pilot with 8 organisations the new youth work quality standards we have developed. This will be rolled out more widely across Third Sector youth work providers from April 2007. Achievement of the quality standard will qualify organisations to join the annual register of providers which we will develop concurrently. From 2008/09, being on the register will be the gateway to accessing youth work funding and capacity building support.
R13. The Council develops further its links with the Community Organisations Forum to promote good practice throughout the borough	Links will be further developed through seminars/workshops with Community Organisation Forum. In addition, the service will participate in Voluntary Sector Children and Young People's Forum meetings.	Mar 06	Recommendation fully implemented. We have held three seminars in partnership with COF, on the themes of the Youth Service Plan, the recommissioning of the Youth Service contracts and youth participation. The Service has also regularly participated in Voluntary Sector Children and Young People's Forum meetings. We funded COF to undertake an

Recommendation	Response	Date	Update: Feb 07
			audit of the development needs of youth organisations in 2005 and we have given them further funding in 2006/07 to deliver a capacity building programme addressing their recommendations.
<p>R14. That further consideration be given to the following issues within the Youth Service Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the Youth Service Directory to ensure that it is accessible and easy to use • Widening participation and reaching out to all young people in the borough. 	<p>A revised Directory will be produced and disseminated.</p> <p>A number of measures will address this with a focus on underrepresented groups including young women, and young lesbians and gay men.</p>	Mar 06	<p>Recommendation fully implemented.</p> <p>A revised directory for professionals and other service providers was published in April 2006. We also produced a 'z-card' directory for young people, which were published for the launch of Children's Services on 1st September 2006.</p> <p>New sessions for young women have been developed in Poplar, Mile End and Bethnal Green and additional activities your young women are being undertaken at a further 7 projects. New training in working with young women has been built into our training programme and we have established a 'Work with Young Women Forum' to share good practice.</p> <p>An action plan for work with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) young people has been developed in partnership with Step Forward (in Bethnal Green), The Metro Centre (in Greenwich, but used by young people from Tower Hamlets) and Options, the young people's sexual health</p>

Recommendation	Response	Date	Update: Feb 07
	<p>The Special Education Needs and Inclusion action plan will be updated in order increase the number of young people with disabilities reached by services.</p> <p>The Service will also fund a project to build the capacity of the Somali community in Tower Hamlets to deliver high quality and effective youth work and to promote equality of access for Somali young people to Youth and Community Services provision.</p>		<p>service. Oxford House invested in additional in work with LGBT young people last year.</p> <p>We have established new arrangements for Special Educational Needs provision within the new Youth Service contracts, where all providers have responsibility for increasing the number of young people with disabilities reached by their services.</p> <p>Initiated in July 2005, to date the Somali Youth Work Development Project has: undertaken an audit of the youth work opportunities available to and taken-up by Somali young people; reinitiated the Somali Youth Strategy Group, to oversee the development of the project and promote networking amongst Somali youth organisations; delivered the Somali Young People's 50:50 Dinner, a special event during Local Democracy Week designed to bring together Somali young people and local decision makers; produced and disseminated Somali Youth Bulletin, a monthly newsletter distributed to all organisations working with Somali young people; and provided information, advice and developmental support to Somali youth organisations. The project is continuing into 2007/08 and we undertook a successful 12-month review on July 2006.</p>

Recommendation	Response	Date	Update: Feb 07
R15. That each LAP receives an annual report which provides details of the progress of the youth service locally and an opportunity for feedback.	Annual report to each LAP providing details of the progress of the youth service locally and an opportunity to feedback.	Mar 06	We are updating our LAP Youth Plans in partnership with other departments, Area Directors and LAP steering groups, taking account of the new contractors in each area. These will include a report on progress achieved locally in 2006/07. They are informed by the Service's new three-year strategy, which was published during Youth Week in November 2006.

Update on SACRE Challenge Session Recommendations

Recommendation	Update: Feb 2007	Timescale
R1. That the good work of SACRE be acknowledged.		
R2. That SACRE and the LEA consider actions to raise awareness of SACRE and its work. This might include a wider circulation of SACRE's Annual Report, an article in East End Life and further efforts to emphasise the importance of SACRE amongst teachers.	The launch of the Agreed Syllabus was publicised widely and reported in local papers, including East End Life. The work of SACRE was highlighted at the launch event and the Annual Report has been circulated to all schools. It will also be sent to libraries, Ideas Stores and other local institutions.	Completed (February 2007)
R3. That SACRE and the LEA consider the potential of an Annual SACRE Development Plan, which is linked to the Council's Education Development Plan.	SACRE members have consulted and used the OFSTED self- evaluation document to create a draft development plan. This will support the direction of their work.	Completed (January 2007)
R4. That the LEA consider SACRE's request for funding schemes of work to support the agreed RE syllabus.	The LA allocated additional funds for the production of schemes of work to support the Agreed Syllabus. Schemes of Work will be completed by July 2007	July 2007
R5. That the LEA consider options for providing a specialist RE advisor. This might include purchasing support on behalf of interested schools or participating in a regional arrangement.	After consultation with headteachers, the LA has decided not to have a specialist adviser for RE	Completed
R6: That SACRE and the LEA further consider how best to monitor schools' RE performance given the revised inspection arrangements.	The monitoring of schools' RE performance continues to be a regular item on the agenda of SACRE meetings. This includes liaising with schools to get exam result and offering support through training. The SACRE includes the Head of RE of a secondary school and the main support is provided by a Link Officer for primary schools. This ensures that there is good intelligence for the SACRE around RE performance.	Ongoing

Recommendation	Update: Feb 2007	Timescale
R7. That SACRE and the LEA explore the potential for joint work with neighbouring boroughs.	Some joint work has begun – mainly through the chair’s attendance at meetings of SACRE chairpersons. Additionally three of the SACRE members are on other SACRE groups and as a result there is some sharing of good practice.	Ongoing

Update on Excellent Public Services Scrutiny Panel Access to Services

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Recommendation	Update: Feb 2007
<p>R1. The Excellent Public Services Scrutiny Panel should continue to monitor progress on delivering the e-government strategy with particular emphasis on increasing access to services. (Note: Work of EPS now subsumed into Overview and Scrutiny Committee with EPS Scrutiny Lead holding monitoring role).</p>	<p>No response required</p>
<p>R2. IT solutions to promote the reduction of double keying of information should be prioritised.</p>	<p>This has been improved through the Customer Access programme including the workflow tools and CRM system.</p>
<p>R3. The development of the Council's Language and Translation Policy and Third Sector Strategy should include consideration of how they might help improve access generally (as well as specifically to a Customer Access Policy).</p>	<p>The Third Sector Strategy (TSS) is currently being updated to ensure Tower Hamlets remain at the forefront in this area of work. One of the strategy's 5 key aims has been developed as follows: 'Promote equity, equality, diversity and fair access for Black and Minority Ethnic organisations, those representing disabled people, women and other socially excluded groups; and for the people they represent.'</p> <p>The Council established alternative arrangements for Interpretation and Translation following performance issues under the previous contract. The service is now provided by Newham Language Shop and this arrangement is working satisfactory. Interpretation is available by phone and language cards will be distributed to all frontline service points to assist in language identification.</p>
<p>R4. A Telephone number policy should be developed to improve access to services and information for residents.</p>	<p>Following the successful launch of the Council Hotlines in 2005, when twelve easily-memorable phone numbers replaced the 120 previously advertised to facilitate easier access to high-demand services, further services have now been brought into the Hotline environment. The numbers are widely publicised, including prominently on the web site and weekly in East End Life. The Hotlines and freephone numbers currently deal with just over 100,000 calls each month. Continued expansion into additional services is planned.</p>

Recommendation	Update: Feb 2007
R5. Both the One Stop Shops and Call Centres service should have the same single corporate and political lead.	The creation of the Customer Access division in October 2005 brought the One Stop Shops, CCC, Housing Repairs Help Centre and Social Care Team together, along with a number of other customer facing teams. Subsequently the Social Services Complaints Team, Care Alarm service and Facilities Management teams have been brought into Customer Access to create a single service, within the remit of the Head of Customer Access and the Deputy Leader, to manage all aspects of the public's contacts with the Council, including the physical environment.
R6. Options for home visits and surgeries could be more fully explored, although the resource implications for such developments would have to be tested for value for money.	There are significant resource implications regarding the use of home visits as a way of providing information though benefit may be obtained by briefing staff who do visit as part of their day to day role on broad council issues.
R7. Any future One Stop Shops should be cognisant of the shop environment and market research might be conducted to inform location, typology, décor, etc., on a similar basis as that carried out with the Idea Stores.	The development of a multi agency approach to One Stop Shops continues to progress, with agreement in principle that work on location, physical design and service development needs to be in close association with both the Idea Stores and Local Housing Offices. Initial contact has also been made with the PCT regarding some degree of co-location, and this strand will continue with other appropriate external organisations. Final decisions on location will be made in conjunction with the Council's Accommodation Strategy.
R8. The Council strengthens the use of policy development, research and best practice from outside Tower Hamlets in developing Customer Access services locally.	The Customer Access division continues to take a leading role in the national Call Centre Benchmark Group which focuses on both performance and best practice through quarterly KPI benchmarking and discussion/presentation forums. Current initiatives being examined through the Group include customer satisfaction measurement and call recording and quality monitoring. The division is also actively represented on the Customer Services for London Group which holds regular best practice seminars and is currently working on new initiatives for out-of-hours service provision.
R9. The Council prioritises customer needs in developing improved access to services by ensuring effective staff training and well co-ordinated links between all Council services. This would include a range of practical steps (including the implementation of a corporate script, enabling	Putting customers first is the cornerstone of the Customer Access Strategy and the Strategic Plan for the coming year includes improved measurement of customer satisfaction and of service delivery. The division continues to train staff towards more generic working across multiple services, as well as continuing to promote the Institute of

Recommendation	Update: Feb 2007
<p>staff to obtain the Institute of Customer Services training, dissemination of relevant contact numbers within the organisation) and more strategic issues (including improved long-term links between services).</p>	<p>Customer Services awards. Information systems continue to be reviewed and renewed, and the forthcoming development of the Corporate intranet will continue this work. Regular liaison between Customer Access and back office service providers is in place and will continue to be developed to ensure improved services at the point of delivery.</p>
<p>R10. The Council ensures that targets set for improved access to services are both realistic and challenging. These should balance the need for the Council to meet both national and local targets as well as delivering improved access, which is clearly apparent to the wider community.</p>	<p>The Council's Customer Promise is now well established and creates a firm performance framework for the Customer Access division and the Council's Hotlines. Performance within Customer Access is monitored against the Customer Promise standards and reported through the Council's BVPI monitoring framework. Performance is also benchmarked quarterly against a wide range of public sector contact centres nationally. At the same time, development work is planned to fine tune the performance indicators and to extend these to other areas of the customer experience including quality of contact and customer satisfaction.</p>
<p>R11. The Panel welcomes proposals for a Customer Access Policy. The following must however be considered within its formulation to ensure effectiveness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recognition of the growing shift in the Council's role from 'service deliverer' to 'enabler' and the potential for innovation practice that this creates • The growth of the 24/7 economy and the extent to which Council services could or should follow suit • The needs of the whole community, i.e. multilingual services, disability needs etc. • Balancing the existing high demand for Housing information with information and access to other services • Determining where the responsibility for One-Stop Shops should be located, especially if they become multi-agency access points • Ensuring improvements in customer satisfaction ratings • Monitoring staff skills and training needs and developing appropriately 	<p>The Customer Access Strategy is currently at the internal consultation stage. The Strategy focuses on three key strands governing the customer's access to and experience of the Council's services;</p> <p>Choice - the customer chooses how and when to access services through a range of access channels, ie face to face, telephone, internet and including self-service options.</p> <p>Quality – the same high-quality, 'first time fix' services delivered through all access channels and at all available times.</p> <p>Efficiency to ensure the Council is working in line with the efficiency agendas set out in the Gershon and Varney Reports, eliminating unnecessary calls through improved back office performance, improved self-service and improved service signposting.</p> <p>The Council's enabling role is embedded into the strategy to reflect the fact that many services are now provided by external partners rather than directly by the Council itself.</p>

Recommendation	Update: Feb 2007
R12. The Council should lead discussion via the Local Strategic Partnership and the Excellent Public Services CPAG to ensure the development of improved customer access is multi-agency and maximises service improvement to the whole community	As referred to above, the drive towards a multi-agency approach to Customer Access, particularly in delivering face-to-face services, is continuing and is integral to the future decisions on the proposed location of One Stop Shops.
R13. The Scrutiny Lead for Excellent Public Services should be used as a key link with all Members to ensure effective monitoring of the development of the Customer Access Policy.	This will be considered further as part of the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2007/08. The current review looking at Leaseholders as a Customer Care Case Study will assist with this. This is scheduled to report in April 2007.

Update on Budget Consultation Recommendations

Recommendation	Comments	Date	Update: Feb 07
<p>R1. The Council develops a strategy for consultation on the budget alongside its Medium Term Financial Strategy</p>	<p>The Council is committed to consulting and involving local communities about its services and activities. The budget is a key aspect of this.</p> <p>There are a number of developments that will affect the way the Council develops its consultation on the budget including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Government’s recent proposals to move toward 3 year budgets for the Council • the further development of the Council’s medium term financial strategy • the support of the recently appointed Consultation and Involvement Team. <p>These different strands will have an impact on future consultation on the budget. To take account of these, future arrangements for consultation will be considered as part of the design of each year’s budget process.</p>	<p>July 2005 (and ongoing)</p>	<p>Consultation on the 2007/08 budget took place in December 2006 and January 2007. Consultation on the budget is now an embedded part of the overall process. This year it included a survey in East End Life that was advertised in the Bengali press</p>
<p>R2. General consultation about the budget should take place during the summer so that it can affect the proposals and options being developed by directorates. The information should be incorporated into the Financial Outlook report presented to the Council in</p>	<p>Officers will bring forward the consultation strategy during the summer.</p> <p>Specific proposals for each year will be formulated in accordance with recommendation one and included in the budget timetable for that year. A budget consultation strategy will therefore be considered by Cabinet as part of the</p>	<p>August 2005 (and ongoing)</p>	<p>Consultation needs to take place in a timely manner so that it can be framed in the context of the known shape of the budget. The level of uncertainty and change in the budget for 2007/08 was such that it was felt appropriate to consult once the main parameters of the budget were known. It is important that the form of the consultation it is meaningful given the circumstances</p>

Recommendation	Comments	Date	Update: Feb 07
the autumn.	Council's overall budget planning. All consultation should be registered on the Consultation Calendar.		facing the authority, and to refresh the approach so that people are stimulated to take part. This will be considered further in the consultation for 2008/09.
R3. The Council should use the Residents' Panel as the principal means of consulting on the budget. It should consider other techniques as part of its budget consultation strategy.	The Residents' Panel will form the foundation of the Council's Consultation Strategy. Therefore future budget consultation will use the Panel as a key group for exploring the main issues. Additional consultation techniques will also be considered including qualitative and participative approaches where these are considered to add value and are cost effective.	August 2005 (and ongoing)	The Resident's Panel was again used as part of the consultation. In a new development, focus groups were held to provide more detailed information about resident views. Four sessions were held, across paired LAPs, in community venues, involving Borough residents, selected from the Residents' Panel. These workshops provided a space for local people to deliberate some of the decisions facing the Council in further detail. To encourage responses a small prize draw was held for those who submitted their views.
R4. The Council should make sure that its budget consultation is accessible to different communities and that the views of more hidden communities are specifically targeted.	The Council makes efforts to ensure that consultation meets the needs of all local communities. The Council is committed to making sure that its consultation methods are appropriate for the different communities that make up Tower Hamlets. Budget consultation will comply with agreed corporate consultation strategies and standards.	Ongoing	Information and consultation was available in the local English language and Bengali press. Residents were able to respond in a wide variety of ways including completing the survey online, via email, on the telephone through the customer contact centre, post their answers or drop their completed form into any One Stop Shop.

Recommendation	Comments	Date	Update: Feb 07
<p>R5 The Council should ensure that the results of the consultation on the budget are made available and publicised to local people, particularly through East End Life.</p>	<p>The Council's budget is reported through East End Life. In future this will highlight the results of the consultation undertaken to inform the budget.</p> <p>The Council circulates information about its budget and services with the Council tax demands and includes financial information with the summary of its Best Value Performance Plan. Consideration will be given to including the results of the budget consultation in these documents.</p>	<p>March 2005 (and ongoing)</p>	<p>As in past years, the outcome of the consultation for 2007/08 has been reported in East End Life.</p>
<p>R6 The Council should provide summary information about the budget to inform consultation exercises.</p>	<p>Information is provided generally about the Council's budget to all residents. We will ensure that further consultation exercises about the budget include relevant financial and service information that is appropriate to the consultation technique(s) utilised.</p>	<p>July 2005 (and ongoing)</p>	<p>The nature of the consultation exercise did not facilitate the provision of detailed financial information. The volume of information needs to be tailored to the techniques being used. This will be given further consideration in future years however.</p>
<p>R7 To help improve future consultation on budget issues the Council should evaluate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the consultation taking place on the 2005/06 budget (ii) how Local Area Partnerships (LAPs) are involved in allocation of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) money in their areas 	<p>The consultation on the 2005/06 budget was very useful and indicated resident's concerns. These were taken account of in setting the budget. An evaluation of the 2005/06 arrangements will be used to inform the budget consultation strategy for future years.</p> <p>The Excellent Public Services Community Plan Action Group (CPAG) should be asked to comment on proposal recommendation 7 (ii).</p>	<p>July 2005 (and ongoing)</p>	<p>The lessons learned each year are built into the following year's consultation. This year, for example, focus groups were used for the first time, which gave qualitative feedback to supplement the quantitative survey.</p>

Progress on Access to Services for Disabled People Recommendations

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Recommendation	Comments	Date	Update: Feb 2007
<p>1. Guidance That the Council promotes the use of its guidelines for ensuring disabled people have access in service provision by:</p> <p>1.1 Cross referencing the existing guidance documents</p> <p>1.2 Posting them on the Intranet in an intuitive and easy to find place</p> <p>1.3 Undertaking an internal awareness publicity campaign to promote inclusive access for disabled people</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Agreed. This will include articles in Pulling Together and the Managers' Briefing highlighting some of the common access barriers identified during the review and good practice advice.</p>	<p>Jan 06</p> <p>Jan 06</p> <p>Jan 06</p>	<p>Achieved. A further review of the intranet / internet will sustain this.</p> <p>The February 06 edition of Pulling Together includes the first in a series of Equalities-centred articles. The Council also agreed its first Disability Equality Scheme in November 06. This included further publicity around access for disabled people.</p>
<p>2 Consultation That the Council strengthens its consultation with disabled people by:</p> <p>2.1 Considering the representation of disabled people on existing consultation forums.</p> <p>2.2 Ensuring that diversity monitoring of consultation is more deeply embedded in all services</p>	<p>Agreed. The Consultation and Involvement Toolkit is currently being considered by Equalities and Inclusion to ensure that it reflects good practice. The revised toolkit will emphasise the importance of consultation forums reflecting local diversity and being fully accessible. It will also feature advice on diversity monitoring.</p>	<p>Nov 05</p>	<p>As part of developing the Council's Disability Equality Scheme, it was agreed to undertake a review of the way that the Council involves and consults with Disabled People. This is scheduled to report back in Sep 07.</p>

Recommendation	Comments	Date	Update: Feb 2007
2.3 Considering impairment modelling on a pilot basis	Agreed in principle. The Disability Rights Commission is currently considering this issue. If the DRC agree a provisional impairment monitoring guide, this will be implemented by the Council on a pilot basis.	Dep. on DRC	Draft guidelines have been developed to implement impairment monitoring on the basis of the DRC. These will be available for implementation from April 07.
2.4 Proactively seeking the views of disabled people in hard to reach groups	Agreed. The Council already makes efforts to seek the views of disabled people in hard to reach groups. The importance of this will be explicitly stated in the Consultation and Involvement Toolkit to encourage this across all services.	Nov 05	This will be considered further as part of the review of involving disabled people.
2.5 Encouraging services to use the Tower Hamlets Access Group	Agreed. This forum will be promoted in the internal awareness campaign (see 1.3) and in advice from the Council's Corporate Consultation and Involvement Team.	Jan 06	Services are encouraged to use the Tower Hamlets Access Group (THAG). Over the last 12 months, there has been significant consultation around the Local Development Framework and a number of Masterplans.
3 Promoting Accessibility That the Council promotes accessibility by:			
3.1 Maintaining its support and funding for DisabledGo	Agreed.	Oct 05	The Council supported and funded the implementation of the DisabledGo project, which was launched in October 2005.
3.2 Ensuring that the Council's major access points are assessed and featured on the DisabledGo website	Agreed. The DisabledGo website for Tower Hamlets will be launched in October 2005 and will provide access information about 1,000 venues in the borough. The service points featured will include the Council's major buildings used by the public.	Oct 05	The DisabledGo website for Tower Hamlets was launched in October 2005 providing access information about 1,000 venues in the borough. Access information about the Council's major buildings is included on the website. A further update of services and facilities was completed in January 07.

Recommendation	Comments	Date	Update: Feb 2007
<p>3.3 Identifying officers to inform DisabledGo of changes which affect the accessibility of buildings</p> <p>3.4 Ensuring that links are provided from the Council's website to DisabledGo and EnabledLondon</p>	<p>Agreed. Relevant Service Managers will be made aware of the need to inform DisabledGo of changes which affect the accessibility of buildings to ensure that the information about Council venues on the site is accurate.</p> <p>Agreed. Link is now provided from Council website to EnabledLondon. DisabledGo link will be created when the website is complete.</p>	<p>Oct 05</p> <p>Oct 05</p>	<p>Service Managers were made aware of the need to inform DisabledGo of changes that will affect the accessibility of buildings. This will ensure that the information about Council venues on the site is accurate.</p> <p>Links to DisabledGo and EnabledLondon are available on the Council's website.</p>
<p>4 Communications Guidelines That the Council improves the content and use of its accessible communications guidelines by:</p> <p>4.1 Removing the inconsistencies in the existing guidance</p> <p>4.2 Emphasising further the importance of accessibility in the Visual Identity Guidance</p> <p>4.3 Formally adopting Arial as the Corporate Typeface and 12 as the minimum font size</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Agreed. This will also be promoted in Pulling Together and on the Intranet.</p> <p>Agreed.</p>	<p>Nov 05</p> <p>Nov 05</p> <p>Nov 05</p>	<p>This has been done and new guidance was put on the intranet and published to managers in January 06. The Guidelines has just been reviewed again to take account of further changes in equalities legislation and practice.</p> <p>New summary guidance has been produced and issued to all managers. It was also discussed at a CEDs session. Pulling Together February contains a feature on the new guidance. All staff should use Arial 12pt wherever possible.</p> <p>The Council produces a publications calendar be produced showing all proposed publications. Publications can now only be</p>

Recommendation	Comments	Date	Update: Feb 2007
<p>4.4 Identifying appropriately trained officers to monitor and enforce the use of the guidelines, particularly for documents with a large circulation</p> <p>4.5 Ensuring that organisations providing communications on behalf or in partnership with the Council meet minimum standards of accessibility</p> <p>4.6 Acting on the specific findings from the evaluation of sample Council documents</p>	<p>Agreed. Monitoring all written documents may not be feasible. However, officers will draw attention to documents that fall below the Council's accessibility standards.</p> <p>Agreed. Reference will be made in future procurement guidance to the need for partner organisations to meet the Council's accessibility standards.</p> <p>Agreed. Officers will also use good practice to review key publications.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Mar 06</p>	<p>signed off at Service head and above to ensure adherence to the corporate identity and best practice standards. Copies of all publications will be sent to Corporate Communications where they will be evaluated to ensure accessibility standards are met and value for money achieved. A corporate working group is co-ordinating this work.</p>
<p>5 Easy Read That the Council improves the accessibility of its communications to residents with learning difficulties by piloting the use of Easy Read versions of commonly used documents and reviewing their effectiveness.</p>	<p>The Council in partnership with EnabledLondon is to undertake an eight month pilot using Easy Read on the Tower Hamlets Interfaith Website</p>	<p>Oct 05</p>	<p>This has been achieved. The results will feed into the improvement programme for the Intranet and Website.</p>
<p>6 East End Life That the accessibility of East End Life be improved by:</p> <p>6.1 Promoting the availability of the audio tape format</p>	<p>Agreed. The availability of the audio version will be promoted in East End Life.</p>	<p>Oct 05</p>	<p>The availability of East End life in an audio version is promoted within the newspaper.</p>

Recommendation	Comments	Date	Update: Feb 2007
6.2 Exploring the feasibility of a CD version and an audio-stream option on the Council's website	Agreed. An audio-stream option will be available on the Council's website by October 2005.	Oct 05	The use of audio streaming raised technical issues that are still being resolved but the website already allows for the use of Browsaloud which is a speech enabling software for PCs
6.3 Ensuring that the alternative versions includes the Council's job advertisements contained in the paper format	Agreed subject to demand. Following the promotion of the audio version outlined in 6.1, officers will explore the demand for a CD version and extending the transcription service so that it includes other elements such as the Council's job advertisements.	Jan 06	This also forms part of the Council's Disability Equality Scheme.
7 E-Government That the Council further develop the accessibility of its website by:			
7.1 Increasing the use of the on-line form	Agreed. Forthcoming user testing will also assess the accessibility of on-line forms and identify areas for improvement	Ongoing	Since January 2005 the number of web forms have increased from 45 to 72.
7.2 Rolling out the accessibility standards of the corporate section to the rest of the website	Agreed. The website is currently being audited against WAI criteria of accessibility. A key task for the forthcoming year is to bring up the standard of all parts of the website to meet the level of the corporate site. It is expected that the site will achieve level AA of accessibility by March 2006	Mar 06	This was achieved. A fundamental review of both the intranet and website is taking place over the next 12 months to improve them further. This will include accessibility standards.
7.3 Recruiting disabled people to test its accessibility and usability	Agreed. Work is underway to ensure that disabled people are involved in testing the website – this will include the Tower Hamlets Access Group. This will be in place by November 2005.	Nov 05	The Tower Hamlets Access Group will be consulted as part of the proposed improvement programme for both the intranet and website.

Recommendation	Comments	Date	Update: Feb 2007
<p>8 Physical Access Issues from the Mystery Shopping Visits</p> <p>That the Council responds to the findings of the mystery shopping visits by:</p> <p>8.1 Providing a response to the specific physical access barriers identified during the visits</p> <p>8.2 Using the findings of the exercise, including the need to improve signage and doors, to inform the development of the access improvement programme</p>	<p>Agreed. A detailed response is being prepared on the issues identified. Where works are possible they would be recommended priorities in the current years' work programme for access improvements.</p> <p>Agreed. A corporate signage programme for public access points is being implemented and officers will ensure that all fittings comply with Part M requirements. A commentary on the recommendations and proposals to improve matters will be produced as part of the annual report referred to at 9.1 below.</p>	<p>Sep 05</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>These have been addressed.</p> <p>A corporate signage programme for public access points is being implemented and officers will ensure that all fittings comply with Part M requirements. This is in train.</p>
<p>9 Monitoring Progress of the Access Improvement Programme</p> <p>That it be made easier to monitor the progress of the Council in removing physical access barriers to its services by:</p> <p>9.1 Producing an annual report which outlines proposed access works, details of the consultation and prioritisation process, lists buildings not meeting relevant access standards and highlights any other</p>	<p>Agreed. Elements of this information are already provided within the annual BVPI return and Capital Programme Reports. A further report encompassing all of these elements will be produced to aid monitoring of progress. It is proposed that the report be in two parts; one about plans for the coming year and one about what was achieved in the</p>	<p>Mar 06</p>	<p>A report will be produced in the agreed format detailing projects undertaken to improve access to buildings and those proposed for future years. This is also part of the Council's Disability Equality Scheme.</p>

Recommendation	Comments	Date	Update: Feb 2007
<p>9.2 major accessibility issues Removing references to 'DDA Compliance'</p> <p>9.3 Participating in the work instigated by the London Borough of Camden to achieve a consistent approach in the calculation of BVPI 156</p>	<p>previous year. Agreed. The phrase 'compatible with Part M of the building regulations' as the definition of the BVPI indicator will be substituted.</p> <p>Agreed. This is not a problem unique to BVPI 156. We have contacted the London Borough of Camden and are awaiting information on how successful their request for information from other London Boroughs has been.</p>	<p>Aug 05</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Achieved</p>
<p>Customer Care Issues</p> <p>10 That the Council congratulates relevant staff on the positive feedback from the mystery shopping visits</p> <p>11 That the Council considers measures to further improve the level of customer care provided to disabled residents by:</p> <p>11.1 Ensuring that the campaign to promote inclusive access in service provision includes an emphasis on service delivery as well as the quality of initial</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Agreed. Work to promote the Customer Promise to staff will be linked with a drive to increase awareness of equalities issues in improving customer care and ensuring access to Council services. In addition, the internal campaign to promote accessibility (see 1.3) will emphasise this service delivery aspect.</p> <p>Officers will consider new approaches to mystery shopping to evaluate the quality of outcomes as well the responsiveness to contact.</p>	<p>Jan 06</p> <p>Jan 06</p> <p>Mar 06</p>	<p>The Customer promise was launched publicly in January 2006 and is now well-embedded. Improving customer care and physical access to services is a key objective in the Council's Disability Equality Scheme agreed in November 07.</p> <p>As part of monitoring the Customer Promise a review of the use of mystery shopping will be undertaken. As part of this, the requirements of disabled residents will be added the brief for any mystery shopping exercise.</p>

Recommendation	Comments	Date	Update: Feb 2007
<p>customer contact</p> <p>11.2 Using mystery shopping as a tool to monitor the level of service received by disabled residents using both mainstream channels and auxiliary aids such as textphone</p>	<p>Agreed. Officers will look at how existing consultation forums can use mystery shopping to inform policy and practice.</p>	<p>Jan 06</p>	
<p>12 Implementation and Monitoring</p> <p>That the Scrutiny Review be used as an opportunity to improve access to Council services for disabled people.</p> <p>12.1 That the Service Head, Equalities and Inclusion be responsible for co-ordination and implementation of the review's recommendations</p> <p>12.2 That the Scrutiny Lead for Excellent Public Services monitor progress and that this role be informed by the views of local disabled people</p> <p>12.3 That the findings of the review be used in the development of the Council's Customer Access Strategy</p>	<p>Agreed. The Tower Hamlets Access Group will be periodically asked for their comments on progress to inform the Scrutiny Lead's monitoring role.</p> <p>The Council has recently undertaken an equalities impact assessment of access channels and has agreed a series of actions to improve access. This work, and the findings of the Scrutiny Review, will be used to inform future choices and the Council's evolving access strategy.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Jan 06</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>The Service Head for Research and Scrutiny now has responsibility for Corporate Equalities.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Lead for Excellent Public Services ran a challenge session around the Disability Equality Scheme in Oct 06.</p> <p>This is now included as part of the Council's Disability Equality Scheme</p>

Update to Scrutiny Working Group report on the Role of Ward Councillors in the Tower Hamlets Partnership

Recommendation	Update: Feb 2007	Responsibility	Date
Defining the role of ward councillors in the Partnership			
<p>R1 A job description for ‘councillors as community leaders’ should be formulated with the involvement of both councillors and the wider Partnership. This would include the community leadership councillors provide through different partnership forums, cabinet, overview and scrutiny and casework.</p>	<p>A role description has been developed and agreed with the Member Training and Development Group. It covers Member responsibilities, activities and sets out the different duties in their role as community leaders, on Cabinet, on Overview and Scrutiny and on external bodies.</p> <p>It will be provided to all councillors in the new Council and is being used as the framework for the Members Induction programme following the May elections.</p> <p>The Job Description includes that Councillors will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend LAP and LAP Steering Group and other Partnership meetings to which they are invited • Lead and mediate between issues of concern within their LAP • Encourage and develop relationships to make people in the partnership valued, trusted and included, recognising people from different backgrounds. Empowering others to take responsibility. 	<p>Research and Scrutiny, Service Head</p>	<p>Achieved</p>
<p>R2 The role of councillors should be recognised in the Tower Hamlets Partnership Charter.</p>	<p>The Tower Hamlets Partnership Charter is agreed for all partners and is seen to apply to all regardless of the agency or sector they represent. To include specific elements of the Charter for councillors may suggest special privilege and this runs counter to a fundamental principle of partnership working generally and the Tower Hamlets Partnership specifically.</p> <p>Importantly, the principles contained in the Charter echo those set out in the role description for councillors for partnership</p>		

	working.		
Recommendation	Update: Feb 2007	Responsibility	Date
Developing the capacity, skills, expertise and knowledge of ward councillors			
R3	<p>Learning and development should include greater emphasis on the skills of councillors to engage with their local wards. This would include developing an understanding of accountability, community leadership, public and stakeholder engagement and service improvement.</p>	<p>This was achieved through LAP induction events in June/July 2006. The purpose of the ward based induction was to provide Members with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An opportunity to meet with key ward representatives from the Safer Neighbourhood Team, PCT, and voluntary sector, plus Area Directors, Partnership Support Officers and LAP Steering Group Members • An overview of the LAP including priorities and key issues for local residents • Key facts and data about the ward • Information about LAP action plans; and • An understanding of Members' role in the LAP 	<p>Democratic Renewal and Engagement, Service Head</p> <p>Jun 06 then Apr 07</p>
R4	<p>Support to councillors should include a greater emphasis on how to develop their role at LAP level as community leaders – beyond administrative support.</p>	<p>The new organisational structure in Members Services and the review of member's enquiries should improve support to ward councillors. This needs further discussion and exploration with councillors however, particularly with the proposed new powers for ward members proposed in the Local Government White Paper.</p>	<p>Democratic Renewal and Engagement, Service Head</p> <p>Dec 06</p>

Recommendation	Comments	Responsibility	Date
R5 Ward performance data should be provided regularly to councillors in an accessible format to enable them to formulate evidence-based judgements.	<p>THIS Borough has now been implemented and is accessible to all. Ward-based performance information and data is available through the system. We are currently setting a date within the Members' Learning and Development programme for training around this system.</p> <p>Presentations of ward based information were developed for each LAP Steering Group to inform Local Area Action planning. These are available via the THIS Borough system. The ward data report is also currently being updated and will be disseminated to ward councillors and the Partnership more widely.</p>	Partnership and Policy Advisor	Achieved
Improving linkages between the Partnership and ward councillors			
R6 The five scrutiny leads should have a standing invitation to the relevant Community Plan Action Groups and be encouraged to attend and participate.	CPAG papers are circulated to the relevant Scrutiny Leads to inform their work. The CPAG meetings are open meetings and the Scrutiny Policy Team incorporate the CPAGs into the activities of the Scrutiny Leads.	Head of Partnership Support Research and Scrutiny, Service Head	Achieved
R7 The accountability arrangements for Area Directors should be clarified to enhance the working arrangements of LAP steering groups.	<p>The Local Management Team, which the Area Directors form a part, is accountable to the Excellent Public Services Community Plan Action Group, with management reporting currently through Chief Executive Directorate of the Council.</p> <p>Following the Partnership Review, we need to further promote the links between the different parts of the Partnership. As part of this, we will clarify the role of the Area Directors and how they can act as a bridge between the LAPs and the wider partnership structures.</p>	Local Management Director	Oct 06

Recommendation	Comments	Responsibility	Date
	<p>We have been awaiting the publication of the Local Government white paper to consider how best to link area based working with the wider Partnership within the latest policy framework. This will now be considered as part of the Council's and Partnership response to the white paper and its implementation.</p>		
R8 The Partnership Support Team should play a key part in the Member induction programme.	<p>The Partnership Support Team was part of the Corporate team that planned and delivered the Member Induction programme. This included LAP induction sessions and information on the partnership role of being a councillor.</p>	Head of Partnership Support	Achieved
R9 A major role of the Partnership Support Team should be to enhance the skills and capacity of LAPs, including councillors. This would develop their ability to make the links between their work as ward councillors with the work of the wider Partnership.	<p>The Partnership Support Team is continuing to support and provide development opportunities for the LAPs (including councillors). The new role description places considerable emphasis on the councillors duties to not only attend Partnership events but to act as an advocate for the Partnership within their wards and other work.</p> <p>The Partnership Support Team organises four development sessions a year. These are informed by both the Partnership awaydays and discussions with LAPs. For example training on advocacy and questioning has been provided.</p> <p>It is important to deepen all councillors understanding of both the Partnership and the different agencies and organisations that contribute within it, so that they can maximise their contribution to the Partnership and act as advocates for the Partnership within their ward and other work.</p> <p>The formation of the Communities and Localities Directorate will help to increase the responsiveness of services with place, as outlined in the Local Government White Paper, and will strengthen the links between the Local Area Agreement and the wider Partnership.</p>	Head of Partnership Support	Jun 06 and then Apr 07

Recommendation	Comments	Responsibility	Date
Developing the involvement of ward councillors in the Partnership through Overview and Scrutiny			
R10 A LAP based scrutiny project should be piloted which could include how 'choice and personalisation' of public services is being delivered in a local area.	The Local Government White Paper has changed the context for this recommendation. There is significant new powers for Scrutiny including the Community Call for Action. This is being explored, including a planned session with Scrutiny members, to consider how best this can be implemented.	Research and Scrutiny, Service Head Local Management Team	Apr 07
R11 The monitoring of the Local Area Agreement through LAP-based performance indicators by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be developed.	This is being developed to coincide with the full first year's performance appraisal.	Policy and Partnership Advisor Research and Scrutiny, Service Head.	Jun 07

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