

## **Cabinet – 12 April 2006**

### **CPA improvement plan – monitoring report**

**Portfolio:** Councillor Marco Longhi

**Service Area:** Council wide – corporate focus

**Wards:** All

**Forward Plan:** No

#### **Summary of report**

This report sets out progress against the CPA improvement plan approved by Cabinet on 13 July 2005, using the traffic light system prevalent within the Corporate Integrated Planning and Performance Framework (CIPPF). The majority of actions are either complete or on track, and some are no longer relevant now we are planning for the new CPA/Joint Area Review (JAR) process; so it is proposed to terminate this plan and replace it with a more relevant one.

#### **Recommendations**

1. To note and endorse the progress made on delivering the CPA improvement plan at **Appendix 1**.
2. To terminate the CPA improvement plan now that it has served its purpose.
3. To agree to the development of a corporate assessment and joint area review action plan for approval and monitoring by Cabinet.

#### **Resource and legal considerations**

Individual accountable officers and Cabinet members are responsible for the actions outlined within the plan and delivery is subject to review by the Resources and Performance Scrutiny and Performance Panel.

#### **Citizen impact**

The corporate assessment report demonstrates that the council's corporate governance arrangements and corporate ability overall are now strong. This shows the continuous improvement to our corporate arrangements since the previous inspection in 2004. The council's implementation of the improvement plan will enable citizens to remain confident that our governance will help to deliver service excellence and illustrates our proactive approach to improving performance.

## Community safety

The report includes judgements relating to some elements of community safety. For example, that domestic burglaries and vehicle crime have decreased.

## Environmental impact

The report includes judgements relating to some elements of environmental impact. For example, that green waste collection is higher than predicted and that the Environment inspection achieved a score of 3 (good) in the 2005 CPA scoring process.

## Performance and risk management issues

Co-ordination of the CPA inspection and an overarching role regarding other inspections falls within the remit of the Corporate Performance Management service. The CPA lies at the heart of council activity and will support the organisation's aim of becoming an excellent council in both CPA and customer satisfaction terms by 2008. Cabinet approved this improvement plan on 13 July 2005. In harmony with the council's performance management process, this improvement plan is monitored by emt and cabinet and reported to scrutiny on a regular basis.

## Equality implications

The delivery of the CPA improvement plan will ensure improvements in service delivery and performance. In turn this supports the delivery of services in an inclusive way.

## Consultation

Colleagues from all directorates have been consulted and have provided information for the update on progress made.

## Vision 2008

The overarching vision for the council is to achieve excellence by 2008. The delivery of the improvements contained within this plan will substantially contribute to delivering this outcome.

## Background papers

### Contact officers:

Robert Flinter, Head of Performance Management, ☎ 3524, [flinterr@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:flinterr@walsall.gov.uk)  
Helen Dudson, Service Development Manager, ☎ 3618, [dudsonh@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:dudsonh@walsall.gov.uk)



**Signed:** .....

**Executive Director:** Carole Evans

**Date:** 31.03.06









**Signed:** .....

**Portfolio holder:** Councillor M. Longhi

**Date:** 31.3.06

## 1. IMPROVEMENT (ACTION) PLAN

- 1.1 The improvement plan (**Appendix 1**) sets out the actions responding to each of the issues arising in the Audit Commission's report. These actions are grouped into logical themes linking directly to the inspection report. Each theme has a nominated leader responsible and accountable for ensuring all actions within their theme are implemented to the required standard and within the required timescales.
- 1.2 Each recommendation/issue raised within the report is shown in the plan with relevant actions linked directly to it. Improvement actions are prioritised as either ① ② ③ with ① being highest priority. Blue priority ①s are of particular/critical importance. Each action has a named individual responsible for implementation. The relevant cabinet portfolio holder is also shown.
- 1.3 Many issues are cross-cutting and/or covered in other plans. Where appropriate, these connections are signposted. The final column shows the current status of each action against target. This enables the original version of the plan to be updated for monitoring and reporting purposes. The traffic light system in common use throughout the performance management framework also applies here. The final column also indicates when the action is entirely complete.

	means on target		Performance improving since previous report
	means slightly off target and/or not on target but entirely recoverable		Performance stable since last report
	means off target and at risk		Performance declining since last status report

- 1.4 A summary of performance against the various targets is as follows:

### CPA Improvement Plan – October 2005 – Summary of Performance

Section		Number of actions and RAG status				
		Total	Fully Complete	Green	Amber	Red
1	Ambition	2	1	1	0	0
2	Prioritisation	1	1	0	0	0
3	Focus	2	2	0	0	0
4	Capacity	4	0	3	1	0
5	Performance Management	2	0	2	0	0
6	Achievement of Improvement	21	6	6	2	7
7	Investment	2	0	1	1	0
8	Learning	1	0	1	0	0
9	Future Plans	3	2	1	0	0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>18%</b>

- 1.5 The table shows that a further 12 (32%) recommendations have been delivered and embedded with a further 15 of the outstanding 26 recommendations on target.

The slight increase in red rags is due to the availability of comparable quartile outturn data for 2004/5 because targets set were not achieved. However, significant improvement has been made and the RAG status does not taken into account performance during 2005/6.

## **2. PATH TO EXCELLENCE**

- 2.1 The overall aim is to secure excellence by 2008. This improvement plan (**Appendix 1**) addresses the recommendations from the CPA inspection in March 2005. Since then the CPA framework has been revised following the publication of 'CPA 2005 – The Harder Test'. Whilst delivering the improvements identified in this plan the council's focus continues to be on performance and service improvement in the widest sense, an increasing amount of which is to proactively prepare for assessment under the revised CPA framework.
- 2.2 Therefore, the original plan and format is no longer relevant under the new arrangements, so it is proposed to terminate the CPA improvement plan and replace it with a corporate assessment/joint area review action plan in preparation for the assessments covering these areas during 2007/8. Any outstanding relevant actions from the CPA improvement plan have been included within the appropriate service plans. A draft corporate assessment and JAR action plan will be submitted to cabinet for approval, and progress reports every four months. Meanwhile, whilst delivering the outstanding actions from this plan all services are working more proactively to prepare for the CPA assessment.

# **COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT**

## **CPA Improvement Plan**

### **IMPLEMENTATION MANAGER:**

Robert Flinter

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[flinterr@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:flinterr@walsall.gov.uk)

### **PERIOD OF PLAN**

1 June 2005 TO 31 March 2008

Monitoring Report to Cabinet 22 April 2006

Approved by Cabinet 13 July 2005

Update / merge of plan approved by Cabinet on 14 July 2004

## CONTEXT

This improvement plan is in respect of the corporate Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) inspection reports dated March 2004 and April 2005.

This plan addresses all the issues for improvement identified within the two reports as either specific recommendations or comments made indicating where improvement is required or is possible. The mainstream performance improvement agenda for the services covered by this plan are contained within the relevant service plans, team plans, and individual performance targets as part of the Individual Performance Management scheme. There are also cross cutting issues, which are already being dealt with as part of other improvement plans (for example the annual audit letter). This plan does not seek to replicate those actions, and certain issues are therefore signposted to other plans to ensure the relevant connections are made.

This plan focuses on the improvement agenda, so does not cover the many strengths and good practice identified within the report.

The actions for improvement have been devised using SMART principles to ensure clear focus and the best outcomes, as follows:

S	Specific	What exactly are we going to do/change? Absolute clarity is vital.
M	Measurable	How much observable and quantifiable change is planned? What will be different and what will it look like?
A	Action-oriented	What action are we going to take that will ensure the change? How will we know when you've succeeded?
R	Realistic	Our timescales and targets should be stretching and realistic. Identify the critical path to ensure foundation targets are achieved first.
T	Time-based	By when are we going to do it/complete it?

The actions in this improvement plan are grouped into logical themes. Each theme has a nominated “theme leader” who is responsible and accountable for ensuring all actions within their theme are implemented to the required standard and within the required timescales.




Each recommendation/issue raised in the report is shown in this plan; relevant actions are directly linked to it. Improvement actions are prioritised as either: ①, ② or ③, with ① being the highest priority. **BLUE** priority ①s are of particular/critical importance. Each action has a named individual, responsible for implementation. The relevant Cabinet portfolio holder is also shown.




Many issues are cross cutting and/or covered in other plans. Where appropriate, these connections to other plans and/or sections of this plan are signposted. Each theme leader should liaise with the Implementation Manager of the other plans to ensure actions are neither duplicated nor missed. Some issues have been raised during both the 2004 and 2005 inspection, particularly if there is still potential for improvement. Where possible the recommendations have been merged to avoid duplication in respect of the actions being taken to achieve improvement.

The key for other plans is as follows:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AAL – annual audit letter (formerly known as annual management letter) issued by the Audit Commission</li> <li>• ACAR – Audit Commission audit report action plan</li> <li>• BMCM – budget management and control manual</li> <li>• C.Exec – WBSP Commissioning Executive</li> <li>• CS – communication strategy</li> <li>• EAP - equality action plan (directorate level)</li> <li>• EP – environment improvement plan</li> <li>• HP – housing improvement plan</li> <li>• IAAR – internal audit report action plan</li> <li>• liP – investors in people action plan (in service/directorate)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BIP – benefits improvement plan</li> <li>• MTFP/S – medium term financial plan/strategy</li> <li>• NRF – neighbourhood renewal fund plan</li> <li>• OP – OFSTED improvement plan</li> <li>• RMP – risk management policy</li> <li>• RR – risk register</li> <li>• SP – service plan (stating which one)</li> <li>• SSP – social services improvement plan</li> <li>• DIS – Delivery and Improvement Statement</li> </ul>
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The final column shows the current status of each action against target. This enables the original version of the plan to be updated for monitoring and reporting purposes. The traffic light and arrows system in common use throughout the performance management framework, also applies here:

	means on target
	means slightly off target and/or not on target but entirely recoverable
	means off target and at risk

	Performance improving since previous report
	Performance stable since last report
	Performance declining since last status report

The final column should indicate when the action is **COMPLETED**.

The themes within this improvement plan are as follows: Key responsibilities/frequencies are as follows:

<b>THEME</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>SHORT TITLE</b>	<b>LEADER</b>	<b>TEL</b>
1	Ambition	<b>Jamie Morris</b>	<b>3203</b>
2	Prioritisation	<b>Carole Evans</b>	<b>2910</b>
3	Focus	<b>Carole Evans</b>	<b>2910</b>
4	Capacity	<b>Jamie Morris</b>	<b>3203</b>
5	Performance Mgt	<b>Carole Evans</b>	<b>2910</b>
6	Achievement	<b>Carole Evans</b>	<b>2910</b>
7	Investment	<b>Jamie Morris</b>	<b>3203</b>
8	Learning	<b>Carol Brown</b>	<b>2863</b>
9	Future Plans	<b>Jamie Morris</b>	<b>3203</b>

<b>OVERALL PLAN</b>	
Implementation Manager	<b>Rob Flinter</b>
Cabinet Member	<b>Cllr Marco Longhi</b>
Resources S&P Panel	<b>Quarterly</b>
Reporting to Cabinet	<b>Quarterly</b>
Reporting to EMT	<b>Quarterly</b>




## 1. AMBITION

Maintaining high ambition, achieving our vision

**THEME LEADER:**

Jamie Morris

REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
1a (1b)	Council is addressing its leadership of the LSP	Consolidate the new arrangements seek to embed them and constantly review.	②	Tim Johnson	Adrian Andrew	October 2005	Community Plan and LAA Submission (Dec 2005)	 <b>COMPLETE</b>


**COMMENT:** The structure and working of the LSP has been reviewed in the context of Walsall's success at obtaining LAA status in June 2005. Essentially the theme Group have been aligned with both the LAA themes and the new community plan. A permanent Director has taken up post in January 2006 and is developing an approach to ensure effective strategic leadership in the WBSP.



Report to WBSP Board in January 2006 received support to alignment of LNPs to their structures, with governance and membership now falling under the remit of the local strategic partnership. LNPs are currently developing neighbourhood agreements which are being used by the LSP and their pillar groups to inform and influence how their pillars are developed and commissions taken forward. Recent criteria agreed by WBSP board include the requirement for all pillars to evidence how they have developed appropriate and mutual links to LNPs, demonstrating the pillar plans have given the local community a voice/say in the use of resources.

## Understanding what matters most, and dealing with that first.

Carole Evans

REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
2a	No explicitly stated non-priorities. <i>Section 36 of 2005 CPA Report.</i>	The 2006/07 budget process will specifically address this point.	③	Vicky Crowshaw	John O'Hare	February 2006	Budget process	 <b>COMPLETE</b>
<b>COMMENT: The 2006/7 budget process is complete. The focus of the budget was on ensuring funding followed priorities. Efficiency savings were identified and reflected in the budget. In addition, policy changes resulting in changes in policy and service impact were identified, reflecting less priority areas.</b>								

Keeping focussed on improvement, not getting sidetracked by irrelevance.

# Carole Evans

REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
3a (3c)	Strategic housing was a priority within reinventing Walsall yet a recent inspection identified it as remaining a poor service	Improve strategic housing service to achieve a service score of 3 by 31.03.08	①	Sue Byard	Melvyn Pitt	31.03.08	HP	☺ COMPLETE
COMMENT: Achieved score of 3 in December 2004.								
3b (3e)	Some scrutiny councillors have yet to develop an understanding of their new role and how it can contribute to delivering improvement	Arrange peer support and challenge from an authority where scrutiny is working better. Training is ongoing.	②	Rob Flinter	Marco Longhi	Ongoing		☺↑ COMPLETE
COMMENT: Figures for current year confirm that more training is being undertaken by members than in previous years which, is indicative of the way scrutiny members are embracing their role. Members are building their own links with other authorities through the external training they are attending. The scrutiny team are also embarking on a performance review in conjunction with IDeA. The purpose of which will be to produce an improvement plan to drive the service forward and raise the profile of scrutiny and its role in local government. This improvement plan will include delivery against this recommendation.								

<b>4. CAPACITY</b> Ensuring the council is fit for purpose, and has the people and tools to deliver	<b>THEME LEADER:</b> Jamie Morris
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Ensuring the council is fit for purpose, and has the people and tools to deliver	Jamie Morris
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<b>THEME LEADER:</b> Jamie Morris
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Jamie Morris

REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
4a (4d)	There continue to be some gaps in staffing capacity	Implement action plan to tackle hard to fill vacancies	②	Dave Martin	Alan Paul	Ongoing 2004/5	SSP	😊
<b>COMMENT:</b> The social work trainee scheme is now well established and consideration is being given to a further round of overseas recruitment. Social work progression criteria have been reviewed and we are currently concluding a skill mix review of OT's. We have already created technical officer posts, reducing our dependence on hard to fill OT posts. Service areas have workforce development strategies and many aspects of our Recruitment and Retention programme are now in place.								
4b (4g)	Isolated high pockets of sickness	Use overall sickness policy to target specific pockets to reduce sickness. 05/06 = 9 days	②	Paul Smith	Zahid Ali	31.03.05	HR SP	😐
<b>COMMENT:</b> A senior officer working group was established following leadership forum to lead on improving still further the implementation of the policy. The Sickness Absence Policy & its implementation will be reviewed during 2006/07 with a view to streamlining processes. Improved management reports are now available through People manager and the intranet & Human Resources Account Managers are reporting absence data to management teams to enable pockets to be identified and remedial action taken.								
4c	Lack of clarity of member roles. <i>Section 45 and 50 of 2005 CPA Report.</i>	• Review of constitution		Bhupinder Gill	Zahid Ali	31.12.05		😊
		• Clarify member role on LNPs		Julie Ball		Ongoing		😊
<b>COMMENT:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated Member Services Officer in post – available as first point of contact for member issues</li> <li>• Members' digest published monthly – information for Councillors from both in-house and external sources</li> <li>• Dedicated officer support provided to members appointed to outside bodies</li> <li>• Provision of broadband internet access pending</li> <li>• Standards Committee bulletin published to members quarterly.</li> <li>• LNP Information pack, including role of Councillors, to be published in February 2006</li> </ul>								



- New senior officer support arrangements for LNPs to be in place by May 2006
- We have negotiated with the IDeA to extend the existing mentoring contract until March 2006, members continue to have full access to a range of development opportunities. In June of this year we have successfully achieved the Primary Member Charter status
- Member induction sessions to be held after May 2006 elections outlining their role in light of alignment to WBSP structures.

4e	Community and voluntary sector not maximised. <i>Section 49 of 2005 CPA Report.</i>	Develop action plan with clear outcomes and responsibilities based on conclusions and priority issues from 'Realising our vision' event. Agree phase II of Local Compact; develop action plan (as above)	②	Karen Adderley	Zahid Ali	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2006	Policy Unit Team Plan	
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**COMMENT:** Inter-agency discussions held involving Community Empowerment Network and Walsall Voluntary Action, with Walsall Borough Strategic Partnership; action plan developed; external review of infrastructure that supports the sector commissioned and currently under consideration at a partnership level; joint work with aforementioned partners to maximise involvement of community and voluntary sector in Local Neighbourhood Partnerships.

Local Compact re-launched on September 28th 2005 jointly with the new Community Plan for the Borough. This includes a set of policy statements, developed by council, community and voluntary sector, Walsall tPCT and WBSP, and others. Compact circulated within the council and externally, and programme of awareness raising has commenced. Partnership based Compact Steering Group to develop action plan to maintain awareness, embed principles, and develop clearing house for queries and regarding the implementation of Compact principles by the partners.

<b>5. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT</b> Making our framework robust, to deliver excellence by 2008	<b>THEME LEADER:</b> Carole Evans
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REF	REPORT			BY WHOM?			SIGNPOST	CURRENT
5	RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER	BY WHEN?	TO OTHER PLANS	STATUS V TARGET
5a (5c, 5m & 8d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Benchmarking and the routine evaluation of value for money are underdeveloped.</li> <li>Front line services do not sufficiently use benchmarking.</li> <li>Routine benchmarking is underdeveloped.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map current benchmarking.</li> <li>Identify gaps and develop policy.</li> </ul>	③	Rob Flinter	Marco Longhi	ongoing		 







**COMMENT:** Initial work on mapping and gap analysis has been completed. The Corporate Performance Management Service has developed a benchmarking policy, action plan and guidance and has commenced coordinating corporate records of benchmarking activity. The preliminary actions will be progressed in the current financial year, by the end of which each directorate will have a status review, action plan and benchmarking register. The longer term aim is progressing from data benchmarking to full process and performance benchmarking in all priority areas. Benchmarking strategy was presented to the CPA Use of Resources Working Group during October and a follow up meeting was attended on 1 March to update progress. Directorate benchmarking awareness sessions have been held. Each directorate has been asked to provide a list of recent benchmarking activity and consider 3 areas for focus in the coming year. This work is also supporting vfm delivery.






## Improving services, making a difference to users

# Carole Evans

REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
6c	35% of 2002/3 BVPIs have deteriorated since 2001/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.5% BVPIs deteriorating @ 31.03.06</li> </ul>	1	Rob Flinter & relevant managers	Marco Longhi	31.03.06	Path to excellence	
<p><b>COMMENT:</b> Given the 2004/05 outturn on this improvement target (26%) and an average of 33% over the last three years, it is considered extremely unlikely that the target of 2.5% for 31.03.06 will be achieved. Recommendation is that these targets will be updated to reflect CPA 2005 and the service assessment framework for Housing, Environment and Culture as this would be more productive for our path to excellence.</p>								
6d	Only 16% of PIs are in the top quartile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>33% of PIs in top quartile for 2004/5</li> <li>50% of PIs in top quartile for 2005/6</li> <li>66% of PIs in top quartile for 2006/7</li> </ul>	1	Rob Flinter & relevant managers	Marco Longhi	31.03.05	Path to excellence	
						31.03.06		
						31.03.07		
<p><b>COMMENT:</b> All PIs are monitored through the service plan review process and Beacon Index PIs are reported to cabinet and EMT on a quarterly basis. Analysis carried out on the 2004/05 quartile data published by the Audit Commission in January 2006, shows an increase in PIs in top 2 quartiles from 34% - 50% against All Mets data and from 29% - 46% for All England data. This illustrates significant improvement.</p>								
6e (6f)	66% of BVPIs are in the bottom 2 quartiles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45% of BVPIs in the bottom 2 quartile @ 31.3.05</li> <li>10% of BVPIs in bottom quartile @ 31.03.06</li> </ul>	1	Rob Flinter & relevant managers	Marco Longhi	31.05.05	Path to excellence	
						31.03.06		
<p><b>COMMENT:</b> All PIs are monitored through the service plan review process, Directorate Performance boards and Beacon Index PIs are reported to cabinet and EMT on a quarterly basis. Analysis carried out on the 2004/05 quartile data published by the Audit Commission in January 2006 shows that 54% of BVPI's fall in the bottom 2 quartiles (All England data).</p>								

<b>6f (6g)</b>	Crime in the Borough remains high.	Reduce all violent offences per 1000 population to: • 22.19 by 31.03.06	②	<b>Nozmul Hussain</b>	<b>Melvyn Pitt</b>	31.03.06	<b>SP</b>	 <b>Estimated Outturn 27.76</b>
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**COMMENT:** A change in the Home Office definition of violence against the person (now including sexual offences and robberies) has impacted on the amount of crimes reported since April 2005 compared to previous years.

A large proportion of these offences occur around the town centres and the most deprived, disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Since 2002 the capacity of Walsall Town centres licensed premises have increased from 2,000 to over 10,000 persons with limited expansions of Local Authority resources to deal with the disorder and violence. Marketing and promotions from clubs and the licensing trade in the past has encouraged a culture of heavy drinking to develop.

The council currently has a very limited role with regards to the PSA 1 crime (robbery, burglary, Motor vehicle and violence) We have historically relied on police contribution to achieve these targets. Clearly the council needs to become more engaged and involved through allocation of resources.


The Council aims to make Walsall a thriving borough welcoming and encourage inward investment etc, in order to achieve this we need to lower our crime rates, before neighbouring borough with far lesser crime rates capitalise on their safety records.

<b>6g (6h)</b>	Domestic burglary and theft is in the worst quartile.	Decrease rate per 1000 h'holds to: • 13.5 by 31.03.06	②	<b>Nozmul Hussain</b>	<b>Melvyn Pitt</b>	31.03.06	<b>SP</b>	 <b>Estimated Outturn 15.09</b>
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**COMMENT** The borough has benefited from falling levels of domestic burglary for a number of years and challenging targets have been set within the new 2005/08 Crime, Disorder and Drug Misuse Reduction Strategy. The crime audit showed that burglary of dwellings in Walsall in 2004 had fallen by over 10% and the 04/05 target was achieved.


A recent spate of burglaries has meant that close attention needs to be made to this indicator in order for this target to be achieved by the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006.

The Homesafe project is continuing this year whereby victims of burglaries are offered the chance of a free security upgrade, therefore reducing the likelihood of the property being targeted again in the future. This help is being targeted at high crime hot spot areas and the neighbouring properties of a domestic burglary are also being offered advice to help reduce the likelihood of them falling victim.


<b>6j (6k)</b>	Education – more than half of BVPIs are in the bottom 2 quartiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90% of BVPIs in the top 2 quartiles @ 31.03.06</li> <li>• No BVPIs in bottom quartile by 31.03.07</li> </ul>	①	<b>David Brown</b>	<b>Eddie Hughes</b>	31.03.06  31.03.07	<b>OP Path to excellence</b>	
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**COMMENT:** Attainment Results Presentation to EMT gave detailed analysis of improvement trends in attainment, attendance, and


exclusion rates for all children and young people, those looked after and those with SEN. These targets will not be reached and discussions are taking place with Education Walsall to agree revised targets in relation to no BVPIs in bottom quartile by 31.3.07. Negotiations between Education Walsall and the DfES have resulted in revised attainment targets being agreed. These will be incorporated into the Best Value Performance Plan.

<b>6k (6l)</b>	School attendance is weak.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary to 94.2% and secondary to 91.7% by 31.03.06</li> </ul>	①	David Brown	Eddie Hughes	31.03.06	School imp'ment plan	 <b>COMPLETE 2006</b>
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**COMMENT:** The outturn figures for BVPIs 45 and 46 show that the targets set for March 2006 have been achieved. (Primary 94.3%, Secondary 92.07%). Future attendance targets agreed with the DfES have been included in the targets for the Children and Young Peoples Block in the Local Area Agreement

<b>6l (6m)</b>	Increases in the volume of waste collected.	Within overall context of waste strategy targets to 2016/17 and 2023/24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>increase recycling and composting to 25% by 31.03.06</li> </ul>	②	Keith Stone	Marco Longhi	31.03.06	Waste Strategy	
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**COMMENT:** This is a pledge for 2005/06 and the current target set is 25%. This is 1% higher than the statutory target of 24%. Third quarter indicators show that kerbside is slightly behind where we need to be, green waste is higher than predicted. BVPI 82a target 13% actual 10.36%. BVPI 82b target 12% actual 14.52% Total 24.88 %. A range of activities have either been completed or are underway to maximise performance including the following. Black Country Recycling consortium has secured funding for a waste minimisation promotion campaign. Lots of effort has been put in to improve BV82a such as calendars to every resident and door knocking/leafletting In some areas to those not participating. This, coupled with regular press release, should help improve the third quarter figure. BV82b is usually lower in the fourth quarter due to less residents gardening and using their brown bin. Forecast outturn is between 24.0% and 25.5%.


<b>6m (6n)</b>	Condition of non-principal roads shows a mixed picture and some are poor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resurfaced 50km by 31.03.06</li> <li>Resurfaced 40km by 31.03.07</li> </ul>	①	Keith Stone	Marco Longhi	31.03.06 31.03.07		 <b>COMPLETE 2006</b>
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**COMMENT:** projected outturn is to have resurfaced 53km by the end of the current financial year and, as such, the target will have been exceeded.


<b>6n (6q)</b>	Housing – slow assessment of homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determine 90% of homelessness investigations within 33 days and 98% within 60 days by 31.03.06</li> </ul>	①	Sue Byard	Melvin Pitt	31.03.06	HSP	 
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**COMMENT:** 83% of homeless investigations were completed in 33 days during the first 9 months of 2005/6. This is a significant and continued improvement on the 77% in 2004/5 and 53% in 2003/4 though slightly short of the 90% challenging target. 99% were completed in 60 days over the same period slightly above the 98% target



We continue to aim for targets to further improve performance during 05/06 which have been set with the service aiming to complete 90 % of investigation in 33 days and 98 % within 60 days.


<b>6o (6s)</b>	Serious weaknesses in respect of assessment and provision of disabled facilities grant work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18% (18 months) by 31.03.06</li> </ul>	①	Sue Byard	Melvin Pitt	31.03.06	HP	
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**COMMENT:** As of the 31<sup>st</sup> January the waiting list stands at 716 people waiting for assessment. This includes 233 category A referrals and 483 Category Bs. The longest wait for an assessment now stands at 28 weeks for both Cat A and Cat B cases. The average wait is 9-12 weeks for a Cat A and 12-15 weeks for a Cat B. ADL Smartcare assessment clinics have been operating since October but there have been some technical problems which have limited its usage to date. These have now been resolved and when fully operational we will expect to assess up to 30 people per day. Further use of external agencies has also been used. A training programme to enable non-occupational therapy staff to assess for minor equipment and adaptations has been set up by training and the OT Service. In the Housing Directorate the Private Sector Team is processing 30 to 40 new cases per month. All new referrals are visited within 3 weeks. Waiting times for new service users requiring adaptation work has significantly improved. 83 adaptations have been completed as of 31<sup>st</sup> January. Projected numbers of adaptations expected to be completed by the end of March show there will be a 100% improvement on works completed in the previous financial year.


<b>6p (6t)</b>	Need to increase percentage of planning applications delegated to officers	Increase delegations to officers  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 83% by 31.03.06</li> <li>• 85% by 31.03.07</li> </ul>	①	Keith Stone	Marco Longhi	31.03.06 31.03.07		 <b>COMPLETE 2006</b>
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**COMMENT:** 6 month performance (2005/6) is 92.8% and the service remains ahead of schedule to exceed the remaining targets. 2004/05 target achieved (91.7%). A restructured and improved delegation system has significantly improved service delivery.

<b>6q (6u)</b>	Need to increase speed of processing planning applications	Increase speed of major planning applications to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 55% by 31.03.06</li> <li>• 60% by 31.03.07</li> <li>• 62% by 31.03.08</li> </ul> Increase speed of minor app's to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 62% by 31.03.06</li> <li>• 65% by 31.03.07</li> </ul>	①	Keith Stone	Marco Longhi	31.03.06 31.03.07 31.03.08   31.03.06 31.03.07	BVPI 109a	 <b>COMPLETE 2006</b>   
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 68% by 31.03.08</li> </ul> <p>Increase speed of other app's to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80% by 31.03.06</li> <li>• 82% by 31.03.07</li> <li>• 85% by 31.03.08</li> </ul>				31.03.08	BVPI 109b	COMPLETE 2006 
						31.03.06 31.03.07 31.03.08	BVPI 109c	COMPLETE 2006

**COMMENT:** 9 month performance (2005/06) is Major: 67.9%, Minor: 82.09% and Other: 91.4% and therefore the service is on schedule to exceed the remaining targets.


<b>6r (6v)</b>	Benefits – need to improve speed of processing of claims.	<p>Speed of Processing – Average time for processing new claims.</p> <p>05/06 – 70 days</p> <p>06/07 – 42 days</p> <p>07/08 – 33 days</p> <p>Speed of processing – Average time for processing notifications of changes of circumstances.</p> <p>05/06 – 35 days</p> <p>06/07 – 9 days</p> <p>07/08 – 8 days</p>	①	Lynn Hall	John O'Hare	31.03.06	R&B SP BVPI 78a BVPI 78b	
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**COMMENT:** Prior to the implementation of the new Sx3 computer system processing speed had improved. Staff have been learning a new on line system and procedures at the same time as dealing with backlog and increased enquires following the 'down time' for conversion from the old to the new system. At the same time a new structure was implemented. The backlog of work has reduced and proficiency on the new system has increased. However clearing older work from the backlog has resulted in processing times increasing. While the backlog has reduced and the teams are clearing the equivalent of current work, improvement in performance has been hampered by several factors including problems in recruiting and retaining both permanent and temporary staff, essential subsidy work. Coaches have recently been appointed to the teams; these will play a key role in supporting teams in improving the service. There are still a high number of customer enquiries via telephone and the First Stop Shop. To achieve the council's priority of a balanced budget, agency staff who have been backfilling vacancies and dealing with the backlog of work have been released. This has had an adverse impact on performance. Currently there are permanent vacancies that amount to 21% of the full structure. Managers are reviewing operations to ensure performance is maximised and a revised recovery plan is being prepared for agreement with DWP. A new Document management System was due to be implemented in January 2006. Unfortunately the implementation of this project has been stalled due to contractual issues and therefore the anticipated gain associated with this software will not be realised in the next six months.

**Additional funding of £400,000 has been secured from the DWP performance standards fund; this will assist with the clearance of backlogs and the training of new staff that are due to be recruited in March. It is expected that positive results will be evidenced from these activities during quarter 1 of 2006/2007.**

<b>6s (6w)</b>	Benefits – need to reduce overpayments and increase their speed of recovery	Overpayments are identified due to proactive work like checking data mismatches, and because claimants may be late telling us things. Target is to increase the % of recoverable repayments recovered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 58% by 31.03.06</li> <li>• 59% by 31.03.07</li> <li>• 60% by 31.03.08</li> </ul>	①	Lynn Hall	John O'Hare	31.03.06 31.03.07 31.03.08	R&B SP	 <b>COMPLETE 2006</b>
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**COMMENT: The Impact of not raising and recovering invoices will have impacted on performance The transfer is now complete and went live from 09.01.06. The new debtor's system is integrated with the benefits system and so this will make the recovery process more efficient. We have introduced credit, debit card, internet and telephone payments which have allowed more varied payment options to our customers. We have a significant amount of aged debt that requires write off during March 2006. Action is being taken at the point of receipt of a notification of a disadvantageous change of circumstance to suspend the claim to prevent the value of the overpayment growing. As backlogs are cleared in the next few months the value of debt may increase. The percentage of recoverable repayments recovered will be 65% by the end of the financial year which exceeds the target set for March 2006.**

<b>6u (6y)</b>	Benefits – only 25% have improved since 2001/2 and only 30% are in the top 2 quartiles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 50% to have improved by 31.03.06</li> <li>• 25% to be in top 2 quartiles by 31.03.05 and</li> <li>• 75% by 31.03.06 and</li> <li>• 100% by 31.03.07</li> </ul>	①	Lynn Hall	John O'Hare	31.03.06  31.03.05  31.03.06 31.03.07	R&B SP	
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**COMMENT: Management information from the new Sx3 system is now being produced in part, and is being used to inform recovery plans to reduce backlogs. The financial assistance received from the DWP to support the removal of the backlog of claims will help in**



**improving performance. However, the plan to improve 50% and 75% of targets in the top two quartiles by 31.03.06 will not be achieved. The revised improvement plan will aim to achieve 50% improvement overall by 31.03.07.**

<b>6w</b>	Educational attainment remains low with particularly poor performance amongst Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage pupils. <i>Section 69 of 2005 CPA Report.</i>	Detailed school improvement strategy in new excellence in Walsall Plan.		<b>Dave Brown/ Education Walsall</b>	<b>Eddie Hughes</b>	<b>Summer Examinati on Results 2005 and 2006</b>	<b>Excellence in Walsall strategic plan</b>	
		All schools have set attainment targets for pupils from ethnic minority groups. (These are based on individual pupils records from each school)					<b>Excellence in Walsall strategic plan</b>	
		NRF Funding has been targeted at 4 secondary schools where underachievement of ethnic minority groups has been identified.					<b>Excellence in Walsall strategic plan</b>	
		The formula for the allocation of the Ethnic Minority Achievement group standards fund has been reviewed and updated in conjunction with Head Teachers.					<b>Excellence in Walsall strategic plan</b>	
		An Ethnic Minority Achievement group team member has been recruited to focus on the needs of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage pupils.					<b>Excellence in Walsall strategic plan</b>	
							<b>Excellence in Walsall</b>	



		The director for learning addressed the Cul-aaj forum to highlight the issues and investigate ways for the mosques to provide support.					strategic plan	
<b>COMMENTS: All of the above activities continue through this academic year – an additional school has been targetted for support using NRF funding. The new draft Excellence in Walsall plan has more detailed analysis of the performance and subsequent attainment targeting for children and young people from ethnic minority backgrounds. ('Narrowing the Gap' Targets have been set for minority ethnic groups as part of the raising attainment targets of the Local Area Agreement. It is anticipated that the Children and Young Peoples Executive Group continue to commission NRF funded interventions to support the achievement of these targets)</b>								
6x	Teenage pregnancies remain high. <i>Section 70 of 2005 CPA Report.</i>	To reduce by 5% the current under 18 conception rate (64.2)	①	David Brown	Eddie Hughes	31.03.07	Children's overarching strategy	 <b>COMPLETE 2006</b>
<b>COMMENT: The latest 2004 figures show a 27.5% improvement (48.7) on the previous years (2003) figure of 59.6 (the official recording of teenage pregnancy level has a two year delay). This out come is on course to reach the target and reflects the success of the support strategy in reducing numbers of second pregnancies and getting teenage mothers back into training and work; this attracted extra funding through Sure Start + and it will be important to maintain the trend when the funding ceases in March 2006. The prevention strategy has been pursued through funding a specialist nurse for Sex &amp; Relationship Education in schools, borough-wide provision of free condoms, projects with Looked after Children and the Arts into Health &amp; Education initiatives. Additional focus will be delivered by establishing a new joint strategy group on Teenage Pregnancy and running a 'Master class' in conjunction with the NRU to redesign our strategy and identify, and fill, service gaps.</b>								
6y	Social care for older people is weak (relates to PIs). <i>Section 71 of 2005 CPA Report.</i>	Increase the number of Older People receiving direct payments to : 25 in 2005/06 50 in 2006/07 75 in 2007/08  Improve the percentage of Older Peoples assessments started within timescale to:	①	Andrew Cross	Alan Paul	31.03.2006 31.03.2007 31.03.2008  31.03.2006 31.03.2008	BVPI 201 Delivery and Improvement Statement Service Plan  BVPI 195 Delivery and Improvement Statement Service Plan	




**to deliver a series of key projects e.g. St. Matthew's Quarter, Walsall Waterfront BLC that will create new job opportunities by progressing in line with agreed programmes.**

<b>7. INVESTMENT</b> Building and maintaining a sound foundation to deliver improvement	<b>THEME LEADER:</b> Jamie Morris
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Building and maintaining a sound foundation to deliver improvement	Jamie Morris
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<p><b>THEME LEADER:</b>          Jamie Morris</p>
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Jamie Morris

REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
7a	The council needs to invest more to engage the voluntary and community sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement action plan from recently concluded review of voluntary sector support and funding engaging with the voluntary sector via WBSP and other forums</li> </ul>	①	Carole Evans/ Clive Wright/ Ross Bell	John O'Hare		Voluntary sector review action plan	

**COMMENT:** Since the launch of the Community Plan in September 2005, work has been ongoing to produce a Local Area Agreement (LAA) for Walsall. The LAA identifies specific targets for the Partners to achieve in order to close the gap between our current performance and that of the best performing Local Authorities. The intention to procure VCS organisations and to utilise LNPs is made clear in the LAA.

**Walsall's Community and Voluntary Sector engagement strategy has been produced in consultation with partners from within the sector and was launched in March 2006. This identifies positive and practical ways in which the sector should be engaged.**

**Work has also been ongoing to further assist the WVA and CEN to transform themselves into organisations that are ‘fit for purpose’. Immanent reorganisation in both the WVA and CEN is anticipated.**

<b>7b</b>	Some aspects of the council's partnership working is less well developed, the framework of the WBSP is not yet making a significant contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Performance management framework aligned with council arrangements by 31.03.05.</li> </ul>	①	<b>Tim Johnson</b>	<b>Adrian Andrew</b>	<b>30.09.05</b>	<b>WBSP Improvement Plan</b>	
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**COMMENT:** Community Plan available on website. Official launch on 28/09/2005. Theme groups have been realigned and are working effectively, specifically in relation to the input into the LAA. An IDeA facilitated workshop was held in November to review the future role of the Commissioning Executive within the context of the new WBS structure. The CPM team is working with LSP to ensure adequate Performance Management arrangements are in place in the context of the LAA.

## 8. LEARNING

Ensuring the council is receptive to learning, and systematically uses its learning.


**THEME LEADER:**

Carol Brown



REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
8a	Learning from outside has been slower to develop in the regeneration service	Establish appropriate peer relationships and networks.	②	Tim Johnson	Adrian Andrew	ongoing		😊

**COMMENT:** In early 2005, on the initiative of the Council, IDeA were commissioned to perform a service review. The key objective of this project was to reflect on national and regional best practice and to identify opportunities to incorporate this into the work of the service; an action plan has been developed. A series of learning activities have been initiated for example, a programme of briefing sessions for staff on a range of topics to develop a learning culture within the service.

<b>9. FUTURE PLANS</b> Planning to achieve excellence by 2008.	<b>THEME LEADER:</b> Jamie Morris
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REF	REPORT RECOMMENDATION OR ISSUE	IMPROVEMENT ACTION	PRIORITY 1 2 3	BY WHOM?		BY WHEN?	SIGNPOST TO OTHER PLANS	CURRENT STATUS V TARGET
				MANAGER	PORTFOLIO HOLDER			
<b>9a (9f)</b>	The council does not yet have a clear or robust framework to inform local development	The UDP was formally adopted in March 2005. The Local Development Scheme was submitted to GOWM in March 2005. Work to finalise the Area Framework plan for the Walsall Regeneration Company area is well progressed.	①	Tim Johnson	Adrian Andrew	The WRC AF Plan is programmed to be complete by October 2005.	Community Plan	


**COMMENT:** The draft framework has been completed, but subject to a detailed process of consultation, business case development and formal Board/Cabinet endorsement by Jan 2006. The 2005/06 Local Development Scheme was approved by Government Office. A revision for 2006/07 is now being prepared in accordance with timescales to be confirmed by GOWM.

9b (9g)	The council's image is not yet fully turned around.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement consultation strategy.</li> <li>• Implement newly approved commissioning activities on economic infrastructure including improving the image of Walsall.</li> </ul>	①	John Pryce-Jones	Zahid Ali	Ongoing	CSP	 COMPLETE
				Tim Johnson	Adrian Andrew	First stage of image project complete Feb 2005. Ongoing.	NRF C/Exec	 COMPLETE

**COMMENT:** The consultation strategy **has been** implemented through a corporate steering group, consisting of nominated directorate representatives and co-opted individuals involved in consultation activities. The group has a co-ordinating and facilitating role, **promoting and employing** good practice in all consultation activities to ensure a positive approach. The group is also responsible for monitoring and developing specific corporate consultation activities such as **the Tracker survey, Walsall borough citizens' panel, and budget consultation for 2006-07.**

The communications unit has launched a new visual identity for the council with specifications across all major applications – including business stationery, web, literature, power point, livery and so on – which help to engage communities in a consistent and professional way. Press coverage is maintained at 90 per cent positive or neutral. The civic newspaper – Walsall Pride – is being maintained at a high standard (issue four to be distributed in December). The council's improved web site (now rated good by SOCITM) will be re-launched before the end of the calendar year. Dramatic improvements in perception of council image by employees and stakeholder survey also showed improvement in council perception. Major gateway improvement project publicised. Several successful campaigns with local press have been produced aimed at building pride in the borough (including work with leisure to achieve a 16 per cent rise in visitor numbers for Walsall Illuminations) and there is a continued programme to achieve awards for the council and build a positive image in local government media.

The council is working with the Walsall Borough Strategic Partnership on proposals for a Borough Summit in March 2006. This will showcase activity to inform on evolving Walsall 2021 vision and a new partnership based approach to the sustainability promotion and marketing of the Borough. A new Borough website is currently being developed and a provider has been appointed to develop a community TV network to help build pride across the borough. A new Joint Head of Communication is being appointed.

9e	No overarching regeneration plan. <i>Section 97 of 2005 CPA Report.</i>	The integrated Enterprise Strategy is complete. An overarching Borough Regeneration	①	Tim Johnson	Adrian Andrew	Enterprising Walsall Strategy is complete.	Community Plan	 COMPLETE
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		Framework which will integrate the outcomes of current strategy development focussing on the WRC area; the District Centres and the Enterprising Walsall Strategy is being progressed.				<b>The overarching Borough Regeneration Framework is programmed for completion in March 2006</b>		
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**COMMENTS:** The Council has been closely involved in the development of a range of key policies/strategies for example, WRC Regeneration Framework,; Black Country Study and the Enterprising Walsall Strategy. A key strategy – the District Centres Strategic Regeneration Framework is now complete and will be reported to Cabinet in March 2006. The outcomes of these key pieces of work will be brought together within an overarching integrated regeneration overview which is due for completion in March 2006.