

## **Cabinet – 1 March 2006**

### **Beacon index – quarter 3 performance 2005/06**

**Portfolio:** Councillor Marco Longhi

**Service Area:** Performance Management – corporate focus

**Wards:** All

**Forward Plan:** No

#### **Summary of report**

This report presents Beacon Index performance for the first nine months of 2005/6. 69% of Performance Indicators (PIs) in the Index are on track (green), 15% need close monitoring to ensure performance remains on track (amber), and 16% of indicators are red. Corrective action plans are attached for the five indicators which have become red during this period and there is still time to take corrective action to maximise performance in 2005/06. All amber PIs are being monitored via directorate performance boards with a view to taking positive action.

#### **Recommendations**

To note and debate the third quarter performance of the Beacon Index.

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

The Beacon Index provides a focussed overview of the council's performance to enable continuous improvement and good service provision.

#### **Citizen impact**

The Beacon Index is reported quarterly to cabinet and EMT and contains what are considered to be the most important indicators of current performance. These reports are a public demonstration of how the council seeks to ensure continuous service improvement. This data must be used proactively to manage performance, continuously targeting resources to improve outcomes.

#### **Community safety**

Several PIs relate to community safety issues. These include 2.3.1, 2.3.2, and 2.3.3 which measure the number of victims of anti social behaviour, all recorded crime and the number of alley-gating schemes implemented respectively.

## **Environmental impact**

Several PIs relate to environmental issues affecting the community. These include 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 which deal with the proportion of household waste recycled and fly-tipping.

## **Performance and risk management issues**

Regular performance monitoring and reporting is part of the performance management framework. This report includes PIs that are used within the scoring process for the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). Our focus is to improve council performance to benefit our residents and service users. The CPA uses PIs and inspection results to award an overall category to every council. CPA 2005 moves away from service inspections for Housing, Culture and the Environment, placing greater emphasis on PIs and other performance data. The CPA category is intended to show each council's performance relative to others. These high level PI targets are used to manage performance of services, teams and individuals; with targets set for individual employees through the internal IPM (appraisal) system.

Regular performance monitoring and reporting is used proactively to measure progress towards achieving targets and to compare our services with others. This enables services to take corrective action where necessary to ensure that performance stays on track and improves. PIs are monitored via the service plan review process, EMT and directorate performance boards. The Beacon Index is also monitored via scrutiny and performance panels, forming a key part of their performance management role.

## **Equality implications**

Several PIs monitor generic equality issues. These include 3.1.7 and 3.1.8 which monitor the % of disabled and minority ethnic staff employed by the council respectively. This monitoring enables council services to maintain a clear focus on these important aspects and thereby improve quality in both service delivery and employment matters.

## **Consultation**

Staff and councillors accountable for the performance of the services were consulted on the revised set of strategic indicators.

## **Vision 2008**

The Beacon Index reflects the council's vision, strategic priorities and pledges.

## **Background papers**

- CPA – The Harder Test – Audit Commission Oct 2005
- Service Assessment frameworks – Audit Commission Oct 2005
- Quarterly performance reports to cabinet in 2004/05 & 2005/06

- BVPI guidance 2005/06 – ODPM (February 2005)
- Walsall Council's Performance Plan 2005/06

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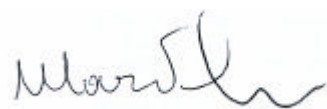
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**Signed:** .....

**Executive Director:** Carole Evans

**Date:** 13.02.06



**Signed:** .....

**Portfolio holder:** Cllr M. Longhi

**Date:** 17.02.06

## 1. Beacon Index for 2005/06

The Beacon Index tracks more closely the council's delivery of its vision, pledges and corporate health indicators and is shown in **Appendix 1**.

## 2. Summary of performance

Actual and predicted performance at quarter 3 is summarised in **Table 1**. The indicators that can only be reported annually have not been included in the analysis shown below.

**Table 1**

	Number of measures	Reported	Q3 2005/06		
			RED	AMBER	GREEN
LEVEL 1	13	7	14%	0%	86%
LEVEL 2	44	35	20%	11%	69%
LEVEL 3	16	13	8%	31%	62%
Overall			16%	15%	69%

At level 1 there has been no change to the position reported at quarter 2. A further update has been provided for 1.9.1 (extent to which residents feel the council listens to their concerns) which was reported red in Q1 and Q2. This annual measure will remain red for the rest of 2005/06. Indicator 1.10.2 measuring the % of transformational targets delivered by the strategic partnership will be removed from future reports as cabinet made a decision at its meeting on 18 January 2006 not to proceed with the partnership.

At level 2, performance remains on track for most PIs/measures to meet their targets (69% green). But 20% require corrective action to address performance gaps. Updates have been provided for 2.5.5 (supporting vulnerable to live at home) and 2.7.3a (% increase in library opening hours) which were reported red in Q1.

At level 3 there has been a significant improvement in the number of measures on target, increasing from 30% (Q2) to 62% at Q3.

Corrective action plans are attached at **Appendix 2** for measures:

- 2.2.2 (improve signposting within the borough)
- 2.3.1 (prevent and tackle anti -social behaviour)
- 2.3.3 (install alley gating schemes)
- 2.4.2 (construction of 6 new school ports and community facilities)
- 3.2.4 (speed of processing housing and council tax benefits applications)
- 2.4.3 (educational achievements of looked after children).

The result for 2.4.3 relates to actual attainment for summer 2005. Significant corrective actions are being taken that will lead to further improvements in summer 2006. However, this cannot be reported until 2006/07.

No corrective action plan has been produced for 2.6.3b (no of children registered on Ready Steady Summer scheme mentoring scheme) as this event has taken place. However the learning from this event has been considered by the service to ensure any similar measure adopted in the future is better placed to meet or exceed its targets.

**Table 2** sets out those PIs currently identified at risk of not achieving their target and those which remain amber. These must have proactive correction action to recover the position. This table is split to show those PIs where there is still an opportunity for robust corrective action to be taken and those where final performance data has been reported for 2005/06 and will therefore continue to be categorised as red for the rest of 2005/06.

**Table 2**

No.	Priority	Description	Accountable Officer	Q1 RAG	Q2 RAG	Q3 RAG
<b>Corrective action capable of improving 2005/06 annual figures</b>						
2.1.1	Ensure a clean and green borough	We will increase the proportion of household waste that is recycled and composted to 25% (PI Measure BVPI 82 a and b)	Keith Stone	A	A	A
2.2.3	Make it easier for people to get around	We will begin construction of the major improvement of the through route from the Arboretum to the Pleck Road junction	Keith Stone	A	A	A
2.3.2	Ensure all people are safe and secure	We will work with the police and other partners to reduce total reported crime in Walsall by 20% over the next three years (LPI - all recorded crime)	Nozmul Hussain	A	A	A
2.3.3	Ensure all people are safe and secure	We will work with Local Neighbourhood Partnerships to install up to 10 alleygating schemes in crime hotspots across the borough where there is community support for this	Nozmul Hussain	G	A	R
2.5.5	Make Walsall a healthy and caring place	We will support more vulnerable people to live in their own homes. PI Measure - LPI aim to increase the number of adaptations completed compared to 2004/05 (52) by at least 100%	Sue Byard	G	R	A
2.7.3a	Make it easier to access services	Percentage increase of Library opening hours outside 9-5, Mon-Fri (LLC 13)	Sue Grainger	G	R	R
2.2.2	Make it easier for people to get around	We will improve signposting within the borough. LPI - replacement of signs	Steve Lewis	G	G	R
2.3.1	Ensure all people are safe and secure	We will work with partners to use the range of legal powers available to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour (CRS 12)	Nozmul Hussain	R	A	R
2.4.2	Make our schools great	We will complete the construction of six new school sport and community facilities	Tim Challans	A	G	R
3.2.4	Corporate Health - Money	Speed of processing: new housing and council tax benefits (BV 78a)	Andy Burns	A	A	R
3.1.6	Corporate Health - People	Number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence per FTE (BVPI 12)	Paul Smith	A	A	A
3.1.8	Corporate Health - People	% of council employees from minority ethnic communities (BVPI 17a)	Paul Smith	A	A	A
3.2.2	Corporate Health - Money	% Of sundry debt collected in 3 months or less (£ value). Local PI to be developed	Vicky Crowshaw	A	A	A
3.2.3a	Corporate Health - Money	% of Council Tax collected	Andy Burns	A	A	A
<b>Corrective action not capable of improving 2005/06 annual figures</b>						
1.9.1	Listen to what local people want	LPI - Extent to which residents feel the council listens to the concerns of local residents	Karen Adderley	R	R	R
2.4.3	Make our schools great	We will improve the educational achievements of children who are looked after by the council (BVPI 50)	David Brown	N/A	N/A	R
2.6.3b	Encourage everyone to feel proud of Walsall	2.6.3b - No. of children registered on the Ready Steady Summer mentoring scheme (as mentees) (LLC 10)	Sue Grainger	N/A	R	R

**Table 3** shows those indicators where the RAG status has improved from Q2 to Q3. This demonstrates that effective monitoring, reporting and robust corrective action can lead to improved performance levels.

**Table 3**



No.	Priority	Description	Accountable Officer	Q2 RAG	Q3 RAG
2.5.3 b	Make Walsall a Healthy and Caring Place	The number of non-decent private sector housing units occupied by vulnerable households made decent (HL3)	Sue Byard	R	G
2.5.5	Make Walsall a Healthy and Caring Place	We will support more vulnerable people to live in their own homes. PI Measure - LPI aim to increase the number of adaptations completed compared to 2004/05 (52) by at least 100%	Sue Byard	R	A
2.7.2	Make it easier to access services	We will create a new, easy-to-use web site that will help local people access services around the clock	David Brown	A	G
2.8.1	Strengthen the local economy	We will develop plans which will bring about visible positive change in the main district centres of Aldridge, Bloxwich, Brownhills, Darlaston and Willenhall	Tim Johnson	A	G
3.1.7	Corporate Health People	% of Council employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition (BVPI 16a)	Paul Smith	A	G
3.2.3b	Corporate Health People	% of Business rates collected	Andy Burns	A	G

As the Beacon Index has been substantially revised for 2005/06 to make it more strategically focussed and more aligned with our corporate vision, aims and objectives, it is not possible to make any meaningful comparison with performance from previous years. However, year on year comparisons are routinely made for individual BVPIs and local indicators throughout the council, to aid learning, sharing of best practice and service improvement.

The improvement in the council's CPA rating to 3 stars and performance management score of 3 out of 4 recognises improvements already made and the procurement and implementation of the corporate performance information management system (PIMS) system will further enhance the monitoring and reporting capabilities within the Council.

### Interpreting the data

The information in **Appendix 3** is set out as follows

No.	Description	Accountable officer	3rd Quarter update 2005/06	3rd Quarter 2005/06 performance compared to		RAG
				2nd Qtr 2005/06	3rd Qtr 2004/05	
2.4 - Make our schools great						
2.4.1	Over the next 2 years we will make £32 million available to improve the quality of our school buildings	Carole Evans	£10.501m			G

**No.** – identifies the unique Beacon Index reference number.

**Description** – What the PI is and also highlights the priority or pledge being monitored.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter update 2005/06** - the actual performance for the first nine months of 2005/06.

**3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2005/06 performance compared to:**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2005/06** - compares 9 month performance with that in Q2 of 2005/06.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2004/05** – compares 9 month performance with the 9 month performance in 2004/05.

↑	Indicates improvement against those figures
↔	Indicates performance is the same as those figures outturn
↓	Indicates declining performance against those figures

**RAG status** – The traffic light system indicates if the 2005/06 target is likely to be met.

**Green** – Performance on track to meet the 2005/06 target

**Amber** - Performance may not reach the 2005/06 target, and therefore requires close monitoring and may require corrective action.

**Red** - Performance not on track and the target at risk of not being met, so immediate corrective action is required. These will be closely monitored within directorates to ensure that performance improves.

**05/06 & 06/07 & 07/08 Targets** - For level one measuring vision delivery, 3 year forward target are set to measure the vision of reaching excellence by 2008. For levels 2 and 3 targets are only shown for 2005/06 as these levels measure the delivery of annual pledges and key corporate health indicators.

No.	Description	3rd Quarter update 2005/06	3rd Quarter 2005/06 performance compared to		RAG	05/06 Target	07/08 Target
			2nd Qtr 2005/06	3rd Qtr 2004/05			
<b>1.1 - Ensure a clean and green borough</b>		72%	N/A	G	70-74%	74-78%	78-82%
1.1.1	LPI - Overall satisfaction with local area as a place to live (tracker)						
<b>1.2 - Make it easier for people to get around</b>		Annual		n/a	103.3	104.5	105..4
1.2.1	LPI – Vehicle traffic flows						
<b>1.3 - Ensure all people are safe and secure</b>		Annual		n/a	-1%	-2%	-2%
1.3.1	LPI – Reduce the fear of crime						
<b>1.4 - Make our schools great</b>		Annual		n/a	7%	7%	6%
1.4.1	PI - Proportion of residents satisfied with our schools. % increase based on 2004/05 baseline						
<b>1.5 - Make Walsall a healthy and caring place</b>		Annual		n/a	-22%	-28%	-35%
1.5.1	PI - reduction in teenage conceptions (BVPI 197) (1998 baseline)						
<b>1.6 - Encourage everyone to feel proud of Walsall</b>		Annual		n/a	40-44%	42-46%	44-48%
1.6.1	LPI - favourable perceptions of the borough (Clarke Associates Survey)						
<b>1.7 - Make it easier to access services</b>		56%	N/A	G	50-60%	55-65%	60-70%
1.7.1	LPI - Citizens satisfied with the overall council service (tracker)						
<b>1.8 - Strengthen the local economy</b>		Annual		n/a	80.4	80.8	81.2
1.8.1	LPI – Average wages per head, UK = 100						
<b>1.9 - Listen to what local people want</b>		49%	N/A	R	50-55%	55-60%	60-65%
1.9.1	LPI – Extent to which residents feel the council listens to the concerns of local residents						
This specific indicator is basically updated on an annual basis using a general survey type approach. This would either be through the Walsall Borough Citizens' Panel or general user satisfaction survey. In this instance this measure came from the tracker survey in April / May 2005 and under normal circumstances would be due for a repeat in the near future. However, as this year also sees the repeat of the triennial best value survey in September 2006, this measure will be repeated only then. To do so earlier may cause apathy or over familiarity with the question through too frequent a use and result in a drop in satisfaction ratings, as service areas would not have had sufficient time to tackle the areas of weakness identified previously and demonstrate improvement. To mitigate this situation and to keep a perspective on this measure since the tracker survey, action plans have been put in place to tackle identified issues.							
<b>1.10 - Transform Walsall into an excellent authority</b>		3	N/A	G	3	3	3
1.10.1	a - CPA Corporate Assessment Score	2	N/A	G	min 2	min 2	min 2
	b - CPA Core Service Score Level 1	2	N/A	G	min 2	min 2	min 3
	c - CPA Core Service Score Level 2	2	N/A	G	min 2	min 2	min 3
	d - Overall CPA rating	3 star	N/A	G	2 star/ 3 star	3 star	3 star
1.10.2	LPI - Strategic Partnership (% of transformational targets delivered)	The proposed partnership and contract with Fujitsu has been considered by Cabinet members and a decision made not to proceed.			75%	85%	95%



No.	Description	Accountable officer	3rd Quarter update 2005/06	3rd Quarter 2005/06 performance compared to		RAG	05/06 Target
				2nd Qtr 2005/06	3rd Qtr 2004/05		
2.1 - Ensure a clean and green borough							
2.1.1	We will increase the proportion of household waste that is recycled and composted to 25% (PI Measure BVPI 82 a and b)	Keith Stone	24.88%	↓	↑	A	25%
2.1.2	We will reduce fly-tipping by effective enforcement action (PI Measure BVPI 199d - Enforcement plans )	Keith Stone	Grade 2/Effective	↔	↔	G	Grade 2/Effective
2.1.3	We will ensure that all libraries and leisure facilities are clean, welcoming and accessible.						
	2.1.3a - Percentage of residents satisfied with Libraries facilities (tracker)	Sue Grainger	44%	↔	n/a	n/a	See comments below
	2.1.3b - Percentage of residents satisfied with Leisure Centre facilities (tracker)	Tim Challans	35%	↔	n/a	n/a	
A draft action plan has been produced to address general satisfaction issues within Leisure and Culture and includes specific actions to improve performance against BV119 a, b, c, d and e. A second meeting is to be scheduled to discuss progress.							
2.1.4	We will ensure our parks and open spaces are well maintained and safe places to enjoy, and that local groups are involved in their development and improvement.						
	2.1.4a - Percentage of Play Areas that conform to National Standards for Local Equipped Play Areas (LEAP's) (LLC 3)	Tim Challans	35.8%	↑	n/a	G	35%
	2.1.4b - Percentage of Play Areas that conform to National Standards for Neighbourhood Equipped Play Areas (NEAPs) (LLC 4)	Tim Challans	15%	↑	n/a	G	10%
	The number of friends/action groups supporting parks and open spaces development (LLC 5)	Tim Challans	23	↔	n/a	G	21
2.2 - Make it easier for people to get around							
2.2.1	We will improve the condition of the borough's roads - increasing the amount of roads that we repair	Keith Stone	51km	↑	n/a	G	50kms
2.2.2	We will improve signposting within the borough. LPI - replacement of signs	Steve Lewis	0	↔	n/a	R	Gateway signage - 16 locations Railway Stations - 4 locations
All of the work delivering the infrastructure for the erection of new gateway signage; site identification, foundations, hard landscaping, as well as necessary consultation has been completed or is on target to be delivered by 31st March 2006. This will result in the delivery of 27 new gateway signs; 7 more than we pledges at the beginning of the year. The sign artwork however will not be erected on site until July 2006 following slight delay with funding approval and because of the need to undertake consultation on the new signage artwork to ensure community involvement.							
2.2.3	We will begin construction of the major improvement of the through route from the Arboretum to the Pleck Road junction	Keith Stone	Awaiting DfT approval for funding	↔	n/a	A	Construction to begin 05/06/2005
Still awaiting funding approval which is expected imminently. Once this is in place, all necessary preparations will be made over a 4 to 6 week period. Construction should then commence mid March.							

No.	Description	Accountable officer	3rd Quarter update 2005/06	3rd Quarter 2005/06 performance compared to		RAG	05/06 Target
				2nd Qtr 2005/06	3rd Qtr 2004/05		
2.3 - Ensure all people are safe and secure							
2.3.1	We will work with partners to use the range of legal powers available to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour (CRS 12)	Nozmul Hussain	8956	↓	↓	R	9,077 crimes. (9% reduction from 02/03)
See Performance Action Plan							
2.3.2	We will work with the police and other partners to reduce total reported crime in Walsall by 20% over the next three years (LPI - all recorded crime)	Nozmul Hussain	20,799	↓	↓	A	5.2 % reduction from a total of 26,720. (25,330)
2.3.3	We will work with Local Neighbourhood Partnerships to install up to 10 alleygating schemes in crime hotspots across the borough where there is community support for this	Nozmul Hussain	0	↔	n/a	R	10 schemes implemented
Work continues towards the implementation of at least ten schemes this financial year. The initial list has been further prioritised to concentrate on sites where success in relation to this is most likely. An exact figure can not be given as the process is complicated and dependant on a number of factors. Consultation is well under way but we have already received a number of objections/reservations about certain schemes that need where possible to be resolved. There are also residents who have failed to respond and from whom consent is required if we are to proceed. Once consultation is complete and an order placed a fabrication period follows which we have been informed is currently in the region of six weeks, after which installation can begin. As such we are working hard to achieve these very tight deadlines but are also reliant on a number of factors outside our direct control. The situation is monitored closely by the project team.							
2.4 - Make our schools great							
2.4.1	Over the next 2 years we will make £32 million available to improve the quality of our school buildings	Carole Evans	£10.501m	↑	↑	G	05/06 £16m
2.4.2	We will complete the construction of six new school sport and community facilities	Tim Challans	5	↔	n/a	R	6
See Performance Action Plan							
2.4.3	We will improve the educational achievements of children who are looked after by the council (BVPI 50)	David Brown	34%	NA	↓	R	50%
2.5 - Make Walsall a healthy and caring place							
2.5.1	We will work with our partners to reduce the number of teenage conceptions in the borough (BVPI 197)	David Brown					-22%

No.	Description	Accountable officer	3rd Quarter update 2005/06	3rd Quarter 2005/06 performance compared to		RAG	05/06 Target
				2nd Qtr 2005/06	3rd Qtr 2004/05		
2.5.2	We will develop a borough wide network of children's centres to support children and their families	David Brown	6	↔	n/a	G	6 children centres identified and services being offered in each by March 2006
Original plan agreed by the Council was to establish 14 children's centres in Phase 1 (by March 06) of the DfES programme. After national confusion about the original DfES targets, the annual figure has been clarified as 6. Current position in Walsall is that 3 centres are now formally established and a further 3 are offering services, but only 3 are classed as 'designated' by the DfES so far. The other 3 will be established by end of March thus meeting DfES requirements. 4 further centres are due to open by Sept 06. Variation from the original plans is due to delays with the associated building projects. This has in some cases been caused in part by the need for review of some projects as costs have come in much higher than the original estimates.							
2.5.3	We will increase the number of homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard in social rented housing compared to 2004/05 by 10% and increase the proportion of private housing in decent condition occupied by vulnerable groups to at least 65%.						
	2.5.3a - Increase the number of homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard in social rented housing by 10% (HL 2)	Sue Byard	Annual				57%
	2.5.3b - The number of non-decent private sector housing units occupied by vulnerable households made decent (HL 3)	Sue Byard	112	↑	n/a	G	150
<b>Update on Q2 Corrective action plan:</b> Mapping exercises have been completed that show corrective action detailed at the end of quarter 2 has now taken affect and there are sufficient jobs programmed for completion in quarter 4 for the indicator target to be achieved.							
2.5.4	We will establish a shopmobility scheme for Walsall town centre	Bryan Pell	On track	↔	n/a	G	Scheme established by 31 March 2006
The go ahead was given on Friday 27/01/2006 to commence building the Shopmobility scheme. It is anticipated that this will take 8 weeks and is therefore on target for completion by end of March.							
2.5.5	We will support more vulnerable people to live in their own homes. PI Measure - LPI aim to increase the number of adaptations completed compared to 2004/05 (52) by at least 100%	Sue Byard	67	↑	n/a	A	104
<b>Update on Q2 Corrective action plan:</b> Mapping exercises have been completed that show corrective action detailed at the end of quarter 2 has now taken affect and there are sufficient jobs programmed for completion in quarter 4 for the indicator target to be achieved.							
2.5.6	We will complete the build of three new young people's fitness centres (LLC 7)	Tim Challans	3	↔	n/a	G	3 by December 31 2005
2.5.7	We will ensure that schoolchildren are provided with and encouraged to eat healthy and nutritious meals and have the opportunity to participate in at least two hours of physical activity each week.						
	2.5.7a - Percentage of Primary Schools that have adopted a "Healthy Menu" (LLC 8)	Tim Challans	74%	↔	n/a	G	72%
	2.5.7b - DFES target to ensure 75% of 5-16 year olds participate in 2 hours per week high quality physical education (LLC 9)	Tim Challans	Annual				75%

No.	Description	Accountable officer	3rd Quarter update 2005/06	3rd Quarter 2005/06 performance compared to		RAG	05/06 Target
				2nd Qtr 2005/06	3rd Qtr 2004/05		
2.6 - Encourage everyone to feel proud of Walsall							
2.6.1	We will improve the key routes into the Borough including the A454 and A461 corridors as part of our gateways programme	Tim Johnson	1	↑	n/a	G	3 improvement schemes implemented
2.6.2	We will improve the environment in Walsall Town Centre by completing further phases of the Quality Streets programme including the Civic Quarter	Tim Johnson	Phase 1 Civic Quarter Awaiting Completion	↔	n/a	G	All milestones on target
Civic Quarter Phase 1 to be completed 1/2/06. Phase 2 commenced 1/1/06.							
2.6.3	We will develop a Summer Programme for our young people.						
2.6.3	2.6.3a - Delivery of a Ready Steady Summer programme	Sue Grainger	Programme successfully delivered	↔	n/a	G	Summer programme delivered
	2.6.3b - No. of children registered on the Ready Steady Summer mentoring scheme (as mentees) (LLC 10)	Sue Grainger	103	n/a	n/a	R	144
	Annual PI which was reported at the end of Quarter 2 and completed a CAP at that time.						
	2.6.3b - Percentage of activites provided through Ready Steady Summer meeting 2 of the 5 'Every Child Matters' outcomes (LLC 11)	Sue Grainger	Annual	100%	n/a	G	100%
	2.6.3d - Population percentage of children and young people aged 8-19 participating in Ready Steady Summer (LLC 12)	Sue Grainger	Annual	22%	n/a	G	15%
2.7 - Make it easier to access services							
2.7.1	We will increase the availability of interpretation and translation services to ensure that all our communities have access to our services	Karen Adderley	On track	↔	n/a	G	Contract and service plan in place for the whole council by 31 March 2006
Improved arrangements for services and in particular the first stop shop in place. Monitoring of contract taking place							
2.7.2	We will create a new, easy-to-use web site that will help local people access services around the clock	David Brown	Completed November 05	↑	n/a	G	New website launched
2.7.3	Library services will stay open at more convenient times, with greater access to books and information, particularly on-line.						
	2.7.3a - Percentage increase of Library opening hours outside 9–5, Mon–Fri (LLC 13)	Sue Grainger	0	↔	n/a	R	5%
	Library opening hours – the overall hour has increased from 666 to 672.5 per week. However, because of the unplanned necessity to compensate for the closure of Shelfield these are mainly opening Aldridge and Pelsall an extra day each and NOT outside the hours of 9-5. Delays in the implementation of the service review will further compromise our ability to progress in meeting this target.						
	2.7.3b - Percentage of requests for books met within 7 days (LLC 14)	Sue Grainger	Annual				52%

No.	Description	Accountable officer	3rd Quarter update 2005/06	3rd Quarter 2005/06 performance compared to		RAG	05/06 Target
				2nd Qtr 2005/06	3rd Qtr 2004/05		
2.8 - Strengthen the local economy							
2.8.1	We will develop plans which will bring about visible positive change in the main district centres of Aldridge, Bloxwich, Brownhills, Darlaston and Willenhall	Tim Johnson	3 projects completed	↑	n/a	G	All milestones on track
Bloxwich Park (April - June 2005);Bloxwich Market Place (July - September 2005) Elmore Green (October - December 2005);2 further potential projects to be completed during Q4.							
2.8.2	We will implement nine LNPs each specific to local communities and addressing local priorities. LNP plans approved by April 2005	Julie Ball	Annual				9
2.9 - Listen to what local people want							
2.9.1	We will engage young people to participate in improving the quality of youth services to ensure that they have a positive impact on their lives.						
	2.9.1a - Number of individual young people actively involved in Youth Opinions Unite (LLC 15)	Andy Driver	202	↑	New indicator for 05/06	G	175
	2.9.1b - Minimum number of meetings Youth Opinions Unite will hold with council officials in 2005/06 (LLC 16)	Andy Driver	15	↑		G	10
2.9.2	We will expand our Citizens' Panel of residents and use it as one way of shaping our services to reflect local needs and priorities	Karen Adderley	Achieved	↔	n/a	G	Expanded 'refreshed' panel established by 30 June 2005
2.9.3	We will produce and distribute a new civic newspaper to all households in the borough, with all households to receive 4 newspapers during 2005/06	David Brown	4	↑	n/a	G	4
2.10 - Transform Walsall into an excellent authority							
2.10.1	We will identify efficiency savings of at least 2.5% of the council's budget, and plough those savings into priority services and tasks. PI Measure - Delivery of Gershon Targets	Vicky Crowshaw	2.50%	↔	↔	G	2.50%
2.10.2	We will continue to exercise sound financial management, delivering our targets within budget.						
	2.10.2a - LPI - Revenue budgets delivered as per target	Vicky Crowshaw	Annual				Revenue + or - 2.5%
	2.10.2b - LPI – Capital budgets delivered as per target	Vicky Crowshaw	Annual				Capital + or - 5%

Level 3 Corporate Health

2005/06 Beacon Index

Appendix 1

Type	No.	Description	Accountable officer	3rd Quarter update 2005/06	3rd Qtr 2005/06 performance compared to		RAG	05/06 Target	06/07 Target	07/08 Target
					2nd Qtr 2005/06	3rd Qtr 2004/05				
People	3.1.1	Employee Satisfaction – Proud to work for Walsall. Agree – tend to agree - neutral	Carol Brown	Annual				78%	79%	80%
	3.1.2	Equality Standard overall level achieved (BVPI 2a)	Karen Adderley	Annual				Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	3.1.3	Investors in People - % of council recognised	Helen Dudson	Annual				90%	95%	100%
	3.1.4	% of top 5% of earners that are women (BVPI 11a)	Paul Smith	37.84%	↓	↑	G	37.0%	38.5%	40.0%
	3.1.5	% of top 5% of earners from black and minority ethnic communities (BVPI 11b)	Paul Smith	10.96%	↑	↑	G	11.0%	12.0%	13.5%
	3.1.6	Number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence per FTE (BVPI 12)	Paul Smith	9.12%	↑	N/A	A	8	7.75	7.5
	3.1.7	% of council employees declaring they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition (BVPI 16a)	Paul Smith	2.65%	↑	↑	G	2.00%	2.50%	3.00%
	3.1.8	% of council employees from minority ethnic communities (BVPI 17a)	Paul Smith	9.48%	↓	↑	A	10.5%	12.0%	13.5%
Money	3.2.1	Year end general reserves £ value as at 31 March (cross reference 2.10.3)	Vicky Crowshaw	Annual			G	£4.5m	£5m	£5m
	3.2.2	% Of sundry debt collected in 3 months or less (£ value). Local PI to be developed	Vicky Crowshaw	Not available	New PI for 2005/06	New PI for 2005/06	A	89.90%	90.10%	90.30%
	Due to the volatility of this indicators results, it is not possible to provide an update for Quarter 3									
	3.2.3a	% of Council Tax collected	Andy Burns	77.32%	↑	↓	A	96.8%	97.1%	97.4%
	3.2.3b	% of Business Rates collected	Andy Burns	87.08%	↑	↑	G	98.1%	98.3%	98.8%
	3.2.4	Speed of processing: new housing and council tax benefits (BV 78a)	Andy Burns	74.92	↓	↓	R	45 days	36 days	33 days
Buildings	3.3.1	% of council buildings open to the public in which all areas are suitable for and accessible to disabled people (BVPI 156)	Keith Stone	21.1%	↔	↑	G	25%	30%	35%
Service delivery	3.4.1	a) BVPIs on target	Rob Flinter	61%	N/A	N/A	G	60%	65%	70%
	3.4.2	b) CPA PIs on target	Rob Flinter	72%	N/A	N/A	G	50%	60%	70%
The figures provided for 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 are based on predicted performance provided by services for all statutory BVPIs at quarter 2.										

## PERFORMANCE ACTION PLAN

### PI INFORMATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

<b>PI NUMBER &amp; TITLE</b> Identify type of PI – BV,CPA,PAF,Local, etc.		2.2.2 - We will improve signposting within the borough.	
<b>SERVICE</b>	Environmental Regeneration	<b>DIRECTORATE</b>	Regeneration
<b>OFFICER</b>	Steve Lewis	<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	Cllr Andrew

### PERFORMANCE DATA

LAST YEAR			THIS YEAR				NEXT YR		
Target	Outturn	Quartile	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Est'd outturn	Target
n/a	n/a	n/a	20	0	0	0	0	0	n/a

### WHY IS CURRENT/PROJECTED PERFORMANCE NOT ON TARGET?

***Briefly explain the reasons. List the most significant reasons first. Be clear and up-front. Mention targets, resources, environment, change, other issues.***

The sign artwork will not be erected on site until July 2006 following slight delay with funding approval and because of the need to undertake consultation on the new signage artwork to ensure community involvement.

### WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE?

***What has already been done? To what extent has it worked? What else is planned? What else needs to happen? Exactly how and why will these actions make a positive difference? When will we see a difference and by how much?***

All of the work delivering the infrastructure for the erection of new gateway signage; site identification, foundations, hard landscaping, as well as necessary consultation has been completed or is on target to be delivered by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006. This will result in the delivery of 27 new gateway signs; 7 more than we pledged at the beginning of the year.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES?

***What issues/factors may adversely impact on performance and stop you achieving your targets? What are you doing to reduce this risk? What else needs to happen e.g. a change in council policy? Why? When? By whom?***

None

### SIGN OFF

<b>YOUR NAME</b>	Steve Lewis	<b>YOUR </b>	
<b>ED's SIGNATURE</b>	Tim Johnson	<b>DATE</b>	3/02/06

**PERFORMANCE ACTION PLAN**

<b>PI INFORMATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY</b>			
<b>PI NUMBER &amp; TITLE</b> <b>Identify type of PI –</b> <b>BV,CPA,PAF,Local, etc.</b>		2.3.1 - Reduce the number of people who became victims of anti-social behaviour.	
<b>SERVICE</b>	Community Organisation & Leisure & Culture	<b>DIRECTORATE</b>	RHBE
<b>OFFICER</b>	Nozmul Hussain	<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	Councillor M. Pitt

<b>PERFORMANCE DATA</b>									
<b>LAST YEAR</b>			<b>THIS YEAR</b>						<b>NEXT YR</b>
<b>Target</b>	<b>Outturn</b>	<b>Quartile</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Est'd outturn</b>	<b>Target</b>
NA	NA	NA	9077	3060	2834	3062	Est 2948	11904	NA

**WHY IS CURRENT/PROJECTED PERFORMANCE NOT ON TARGET?**

***Briefly explain the reasons. List the most significant reasons first. Be clear and up-front. Mention targets, resources, environment, change, other issues.***

Criminal Damage - Hotspots include Town centre/ Bloxwich/ Blakenall/ Darlaston.

More crimes are being reported due to increased policing and the presence of Wardens and PCSO's patrolling hotspot crime areas.

Increased licensed premises and a footfall increase of 2,000 to 10,000 has had an impact on this indicator, also increase licensed hours means more drinking hours.

This indicator is closely aligned to BV 127A Violent Crime, and as such it includes incidents of violent crime and criminal damage.

The Borough is not experiencing an Anti-Social Behaviour crime wave but as a result of an increase in violent crimes particularly around Walsall Town Centre and criminal damage has meant that the 05/06 target will not be achieved.

SWBP is encouraging the public to report ASB incidents and it is also considering improvements in its reporting mechanisms to the service providers, this will inadvertently increase the total recorded ASB for the borough.



### WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE?

***What has already been done? To what extent has it worked? What else is planned? What else needs to happen? Exactly how and why will these actions make a positive difference? When will we see a difference and by how much?***

Police initiatives such as Operation Torch, which targets damage and graffiti.

Longer-term measures include Diversion strategies, reprimands and medication, education, Street Care in the short-term stop and search takes place.

Operation Fort Alice is ongoing and is aimed at night time Anti Social Behaviour it consists of 10 constables and 1 Sergeant this is similar to Operation Strike out.

Increase police communication with door staff to assist in the prevention of anti-social behaviour.

The Safer Walsall Borough Partnership will be developing work to engage the local community in the LNP high crime areas, which should develop more community cohesion and a reduction in ASB.

Increase policing, Wardens and PCSO's in Hotspot areas.


### WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES?

***What issues/factors may adversely impact on performance and stop you achieving your targets? What are you doing to reduce this risk? What else needs to happen e.g. a change in council policy? Why? When? By whom?***

An increase in footfall population due to promotions in the town centre will increase town centre anti –social behaviour crime. Walsall is seen as an attractive place to visit for a night out due to its relatively safe atmosphere and reputation when compared to neighbouring authorities.

Actions need to be addressed via the Local Area Agreement (LAA) & by other means directly by partners of the SWBP as required to address this key indicator.

### SIGN OFF

<b>YOUR NAME</b>	Nozmul Hussain	<b>YOUR </b>	01922 611400
<b>ED's SIGNATURE</b>	Jamie Morris	<b>DATE</b>	27/01/06

## PERFORMANCE ACTION PLAN

PI INFORMATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY			
<b>PI NUMBER &amp; TITLE</b> <b>Identify type of PI –</b> <b>BV,CPA,PAF,Local, etc.</b>		Ref 2.3.3 - to install up to 10 alley gating schemes in crime hotspots across the borough where there is community support for this.	
<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>Community Organisation &amp; Leisure &amp; Culture</b>	<b>DIRECTORATE</b>	<b>RHBE</b>
<b>OFFICER</b>	<b>Nozmul Hussain</b>	<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	<b>Cllr Ali</b>

PERFORMANCE DATA									
LAST YEAR			THIS YEAR						NEXT YR
Target	Outturn	Quartile	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Est'd outturn	Target
NA	NA	NA	10	0	0	0		0	NA

### WHY IS CURRENT/PROJECTED PERFORMANCE NOT ON TARGET?

***Briefly explain the reasons. List the most significant reasons first. Be clear and up-front. Mention targets, resources, environment, change, other issues.***

Work continues towards the implementation of at least ten schemes this financial year. The initial list has been further prioritised to concentrate on sites where success in relation to this is most likely. An exact figure cannot be given as the process is complicated and dependant on a number of factors. Consultation is well under way but we have already received a number of objections/reservations about certain schemes that need where possible to be resolved. There are also residents who have failed to respond and from whom consent is required if we are to proceed. Once consultation is complete and an order placed a fabrication period follows which we have been informed is currently in the region of six weeks, after which installation can begin. As such we are working hard to achieve these very tight deadlines but are also reliant on a number of factors outside our direct control. The situation is monitored closely by the project team.

### WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE?

***What has already been done? To what extent has it worked? What else is planned? What else needs to happen? Exactly how and why will these actions make a positive difference? When will we see a difference and by how much?***

The programme is regularly monitored by the project team and the most viable sites for completion this year have been identified. Efforts have been and continue to be focused on these sites. A schedule of rates contract has been established and contractors are currently being appointed to it. These contractors have been approached and their availability to carry out immediate works discussed as this will form part of process by which orders are placed. Landscape Architect and Project Officer Capacity has been increased on a part time basis through secondments from Groundwork UK.


In future the policy and processes developed this year for site identification and implementation can be applied. This will ensure that this stage is reached earlier in the financial year and reduce subsequent time pressures on the consultation and implementation process.

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES?

***What issues/factors may adversely impact on performance and stop you achieving your targets? What are you doing to reduce this risk? What else needs to happen e.g. a change in council policy? Why? When? By whom?***

Implementation relies on successful and speedy consultation and schemes often cannot proceed until all relevant residents have responded and are in agreement with proposals. Any disagreements or none responses have to be looked into and where possible resolved. This also a busy time of year for contractors and fabrications times increase accordingly. These are factors that are outside the control of the project team.

### SIGN OFF

<b>YOUR NAME</b>	Nozmul Hussain	<b>YOUR </b>	<b>01922 611400</b>
<b>ED's SIGNATURE</b>	Jamie Morris	<b>DATE</b>	<b>02.02.2006</b>

## PERFORMANCE ACTION PLAN

### PI INFORMATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

<b>PI NUMBER &amp; TITLE</b> <b>Identify type of PI –</b> <b>BV,CPA,PAF,Local, etc.</b>		2.4.2 - We will complete the construction of 6 new school sport and community facilities	
<b>SERVICE</b>	Leisure, Culture and Lifelong Learning	<b>DIRECTORATE</b>	Neighbourhood Services
<b>OFFICER</b>	Tim Challans	<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	Garry Perry

### PERFORMANCE DATA

LAST YEAR			THIS YEAR					NEXT YR	
Target	Outturn	Quartile	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Est'd outturn	Target
	New for 05/06		6	0	0	5	5	5	N/A

### WHY IS CURRENT/PROJECTED PERFORMANCE NOT ON TARGET?

***Briefly explain the reasons. List the most significant reasons first. Be clear and up-front. Mention targets, resources, environment, change, other issues.***

**Walsall Airport Outdoor Activity and Environmental Learning Centre.** The original completion date was the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2006. This is now forecast to be 5<sup>th</sup> May 2006. The delay is due to the following reasons:

- The relocation of existing cabins and services (changing rooms and offices)- this should have originally been completed prior to the start on site but was added into the contract as this provided best value. This added 4 days to the contract.
- Original Architect had not accounted for the slope on the site this has led to the inclusion of a ramped access at the rear of the building and a redesign in the floor to beam and block.

#### **Frank F Harrison Community School- Fitness Suite and refurbished indoor changing rooms**

- Original completion date beginning of Jan 06
- Forecast completion date end of March 06. Reasons for delay:
- Building Control hadn't been notified before starting on site- this caused delay at Foundation Stage
- Technical Questions were not answered on the steel, therefore there was a delay on the ordering of the steel, and therefore block work could not be started until after Christmas.

## WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE?

*What has already been done? To what extent has it worked? What else is planned? What else needs to happen? Exactly how and why will these actions make a positive difference? When will we see a difference and by how much?*

- Meeting has been held between Tim Challans, Sport and Leisure Development Services, Keith Stone and Building Design to identify problems that have previously arisen and prevent future delays. For the Airport project it appears that this capital programme will now be completed in the early part of next year, however Frank F Harrison, is still just on target to be completed this financial year to take the total to 6 as projected. This is of course conditional on no further delays in construction.
- Officers involved in the project are more confident that all issues have now been identified and there will be no more unforeseen problems with the design of the project.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES?

*What issues/factors may adversely impact on performance and stop you achieving your targets? What are you doing to reduce this risk? What else needs to happen e.g. a change in council policy? Why? When? By whom?*

1. Unforeseen construction problems
2. Weather Delays
3. Members of staff not responding to problems quickly when they arise

Meeting already held to raise awareness of the issues that delay the build programme.

Need agreement that all Council Services identify the completion of the Frank F Harrison project as a priority for Neighbourhood Services.

## SIGN OFF

**YOUR NAME**

Tim Challans

**YOUR ☎**

0336

**ED's SIGNATURE**

Jamie Morris

**DATE**

27/01/05

## CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN

### PI INFORMATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

PI Number & title PAF A2 BVPI 50		2.4.3 - Educational Qualifications of Children Looked After (Joint Working) BV50 (PAFA2)	
SERVICE	LAC	DIRECTORATE	Children's Services
OFFICER	Bob Heighway	CABINET MEMBER	Eddie Hughes

### PERFORMANCE DATA

LAST YEAR			THIS YEAR					NEXT YR
Target	Outturn	Quartile	Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Est'd outturn
52.0	64.5	Top	50.0	NA	NA	34.0		34.0
								55.0

### WHY IS CURRENT/PROJECTED PERFORMANCE NOT ON TARGET?

*Briefly explain the reasons. List the most significant reasons first. Be clear and up-front. Mention targets, resources, environment, change, other issues.*

- Difficult to predict and monitor cohort
- Cohort usually small in number hence amendments to data impacts significantly on overall figure.
- Increase in cases for remand have had a negative impact on figure

### WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE / ENSURE THAT THE TARGET IS MET?

*What has already been done? To what extent has it worked? What else is planned? What else needs to happen? Exactly how and why will these actions make a positive difference? When will we see a difference and by how much?*

- Key partners within the appropriate agencies have addressed the issues presented and have convened a Strategic Multi Agency Working Group.
- Membership agreed and group met for the first time on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov 05 & 19<sup>th</sup> Dec 05.
- Updated Action Plan agreed to address the immediate shortfall of the target.
- Action Plan will also assist and monitor the planning for performance in 2006

### WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES?

***What issues/factors may adversely impact on performance and stop you achieving your targets? What are you doing to reduce this risk? What else needs to happen e.g. a change in council policy? Why? When? By whom?***

Risk Assessment as previously identified in Spring 05 remains the same :

- Small cohort within this year group and can be subject to a full statement or have complex social and learning needs therefore capacity to reach the performance target is greatly reduced.
- Seek to provide evidence that LAC is achieving value added educational attainment.
- Such evidence to exist with investment in schools Designated Teachers and their monitoring of educational information as part of the LAC Personal Education Plans.
- Significant development of a joint database to monitor and track children's educational attainment (to be confirmed in Dec 05)
- All LAC have access to a PC or a Laptop for educational purposes.

### ACTION PLAN START / REVIEW DATES

**Date action plan commences**

23<sup>rd</sup> November 2005

**Date to review action plan**

19<sup>th</sup> December 2005 and monthly thereafter

### SIGN OFF

**LEAD OFFICER**

**Bob Heighway**  
Strategic Manager for LAC

**YOUR ☎**

**8353**

**DATE**

**03/02/06**

**ED's SIGNATURE**



## PERFORMANCE ACTION PLAN

PI INFORMATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY			
<b>PI NUMBER &amp; TITLE</b> <b>Identify type of PI –</b> <b>BV,CPA,PAF,Local, etc.</b>		<b>Measure 3.2.4 - speed of processing:</b> <b>new housing and council tax</b> <b>benefits(BV78a)</b>	
<b>SERVICE</b>	Revenues and Benefits	<b>DIRECTORATE</b>	Corporate Services
<b>OFFICER</b>	Andy Burns	<b>CABINET MEMBER</b>	John O'Hare

## PERFORMANCE DATA

Current overall CPA rating for Benefits is “2” (fair). Latest actual and projected performance against the BVPI's that form just part of this judgement are as follows:

BVPI	Description	Actual 2004/5	Target 2005/6	Performance to qtr 3 05/06	Estimated outturn for year 5/06 <i>Appendix 2</i>	RAG status for 05/06
BVPI 78a	Speed of processing for processing new claims	68.93 days	45 days	74.92 days <i>average</i>	70.32 days <i>average</i>	Red
BVPI 78b	Speed of processing for processing changes of circumstances	20.93 days	17 days	47.72 days <i>average</i>	34.94 days <i>average</i>	Red
BVPI 76a	No claimants visited per 1,000 caseload.	7.16	125.00	65.36 <i>from August 2 005</i>	Estimated to meet target	Green
BVPI 76c	No. of fraud investigations per 1,000 caseload	23.31	24.00	17.49	Estimated to meet target	Green

The figures in the table above are overall averages of performance for the full financial year. The individual monthly performance figures (actuals from April to December 2005 and forecasts to March 2006) are included in *Annexe A*.

**Overall CPA rating :** the retention of the current performance assessment score of “2” (assessed on a total cumulative score of 238 points) is anticipated, based on current and projected performance to 31 March 2006. Points on claims administration speed of processing, and backlogs of appeals, may dip by up to 46 points, however this should be offset by a gain of 35 points in security on visiting and data matches due to changes to be implemented this quarter. The overall cumulative dip in score would be 11 points (227) to retain a rating of “2”.



## WHY IS CURRENT/PROJECTED PERFORMANCE NOT ON TARGET?

***Briefly explain the reasons. List the most significant reasons first. Be clear and up-front. Mention targets, resources, environment, change, other issues.***

### **Challenges in 2005/2006:**

- The closure of local offices, recentralisation of the benefit team in the civic centre, the introduction of greater validation of benefit claimants documentation and the opening of the first stop shop caused a significant increase in the number of customer contacts by telephone, post and in person, causing some backlogs in work being processed and conflict in the prioritisation of staff resources;
- In order to implement the new computer system (Sx3), the old system was closed for almost five weeks to enable data from the old system to be accurately transferred to the new system. No housing benefit claims could be processed or council tax/business rate bill issued during this time and backlogs further increased;
- The introduction of the corporate flexi scheme caused a work to rule in benefits for more than 12 months and two days loss of service through strike action;
- The expected transfer to Vertex has caused a number of R&B staff to leave the Council often to join agencies, supported by their increased marketability because of newly acquired Sx3 skills and the high number of neighbouring West Midlands Councils who are using or currently implementing Sx3;
- Linked in part to PtCF we have been unable to recruit staff of suitable quality which has left up to 24% vacancies unfilled for more than 6 months in benefits while also being unable to call on the capacity/investment promised under PtCF;
- These changes have impacted on staff morale, confidence; sickness levels and quantity and quality of outputs as staff strive to learn new systems, roles, responsibilities and working practices, at a time of increased work, escalating customer enquires, and continued uncertainty linked to the consideration of options for the Council in taking the service forward.

### **Achievements in 2005:**

- The successful implementation of a combined revenues and benefits (R&B) on- line data processing system (Sx3) on time and within budget (June );
- A holistic restructure for 200 team members combining five disparate service areas including obtaining corporate funding for the former Anti Poverty unit, and enabling significantly extended welfare rights advice and fairer charging assessments in customer's homes, and free school meals as in integral part of benefit assessment (June);
- The completion of the final verification framework modules to reduce fraud and error in benefit administration (August);
- Closer liaison, working and mutual support with Walsall Housing Group (WHG);
- The establishment of a joint R&B team with the Department of Works and Pension (DWP);
- The retention of a 2 star CPA rating;
- The refurbishment of the first floor offices within the civic centre (December);
- The delivery of front line of customer service via the First Stop Shop (June).

## WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE / ENSURE THAT THE TARGET IS MET?

***What has already been done? To what extent has it worked? What else is planned? What else needs to happen? Exactly how and why will these actions make a positive difference? When will we see a difference and by how much?***

Two new permanent joint heads of service (operations and support) are in place from 5 December 2005, and a robust recovery plan has since been developed and implemented, the key actions of which are:

- Team resources have been targeted to the Key BVPI's (new claims and change of circumstances). This has delivered reductions in backlogs despite the Christmas break. The specific allocation of work to team leaders/members are focusing efforts; closer monitoring enables remedial efforts as necessary. Perversely addressing backlogs increases the total number of days to process claims, this will have an adverse impact especially in January and February, as outlined in *Annexe A*.
- With Vertex assistance a number of 'quick wins' were identified and are being introduced.
- Staff consultation will take place to aid communication, engagement and feedback, improve morale and motivation, and address issues that impact negatively on customer service, team performance and individual well being and ability.
- Electronic document management system (EDMS) will be implemented during the next financial year. This system will improve the customer experience by enabling officers' instant access to the customers' documentation. It will also provide a secure storage environment and remove the potential loss of documentation that currently causes delays, complaints and extended customer waiting times.
- Regular discussion with officers from the DWP is proving beneficial both operationally and potentially financially. Practical assistance in applying for DWP funding to support additional training needs of newly recruited staff, the completion of the SX3 project and EDMS implementation has been offered to better ensure a successful bid. A BFI inspection is scheduled in March 06.
- Good practice is being obtained from other authorities and innovative ideas are being adopted.
- Regular meetings with registered social landlords and partnership working with WHG and DWP are improving cooperation, communication and joint working performance.
- The collection rate for council tax is currently 0.88% below the target achieved last year. Benefit procedures are designed to stop benefit being overpaid and therefore initially focus on ending benefit in payment. This increases the council tax liability and has an adverse effect on the % collected. The renewed focus on new claims reduces liability and assists council tax collection. Reductions in council tax liability have increased significantly in November and December which is helping address shortfalls in collection. Business rate collection is currently 0.04% above target.
- Performance forecast is outlined in *Annexe A*. January's anticipated dip in performance illustrates the drive in clearing oldest case first, this also impacts to a lesser degree in February. By March the aim will be to have cleared the backlog identified at the end of November. For changes of circumstances the March projected performance improvement reflects a large number of automated rent increases.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES?

***What issues/factors may adversely impact on performance and stop you achieving your targets? What are you doing to reduce this risk? What else needs to happen e.g. a change in council policy? Why? When? By whom?***

The R&B service has advanced significantly in terms of the introduction of modern systems and more joined up structure, however changes in service and team culture have been slower to achieve. The changes have caused cumulative challenges to team members and service delivery which has impacted negatively on meeting customer expectations and DWP higher quartile performance targets in the first three quarters of 2005. Despite increased resources through the use of agency staff during this period, recovery projections were not met; most agency staff contracts ended as originally budgeted and planned at the end of November.

Informal benchmarking with other Councils shows from experience that each of the change activities undertaken causes large dips in performance and no other Council has attempted this scale of change within such a tight timeframe; the current need to resource enquiries within the FSS wholly from R&B staff has exacerbated progress to recover from the consequences of the changes above.

There are three key areas to improved performance which we are currently working towards mitigating:

1. Resource planning and monitoring linked to DWP performance targets;
  2. The prevailing culture and performance ethos evidenced in working practices and procedures, competencies and morale, quality and focus, performance planning and monitoring;
  3. Customer expectation within the first stop shop delivery concept, facilities and realities.
1. Regular discussion with officers from the DWP is proving beneficial operationally and potentially financially. Good practice is being shared in a supportive manner and innovative ideas are being adopted; for example a new working practice has been piloted in January whereby potential claim forms are retained by customers until such time as all relevant documentation is received; claims processing is then fast tracked within a specified number of days. This reduces paperwork being held in pending and encourages the customer to deliver missing documentation promptly.

Practical assistance in applying for DWP funding to support additional training needs of newly recruited staff, the completion of the SX3 project and EDMS implementation has been offered to better ensure a successful bid.

A BFI inspection is scheduled for March which will be informed by the discussions and work currently in progress. An earlier intervention has been avoided due to the mutual openness and the supportive actions of all officers.

2. A redefinition of all team efforts to support the improvement of benefit processing since mid December has delivered reductions in backlogs despite the Christmas break. The introduction of team targets and the specific allocation of work to accountably responsible team leaders and members are focusing efforts and enabling closer monitoring and remedial efforts as necessary. Perversely addressing backlogs automatically increases the total number of days taken to process a claim, and this will

continue to be reflected at least until the end of January.

A staff forum is being established in February by the head and joint heads of service at the request of staff to better aid communication, engagement and feedback, to improve morale and motivation, and to address issues that impact negatively on customer service, team performance and individual well being and ability.


3. The first stop shop went live in June. The improvement in facilities for customers is commensurate with the Council's aspiration for excellence. However the required infrastructure to support service delivery. For example a fast track service provided by other FSS staff is not yet in place; therefore all enquiries are currently being handled by R&B staff. Some generic working is in place, the close proximity of both revenues and benefits staff within the same counter area is enabling customers to have both types of enquiries dealt with, however this is impacting on queuing times. The number of overall counter positions collectively available for R&B enquiries has reduced in the FSS and because revenues staff are still located in the council house referrals of more complex enquires to senior officers and the ability to react quickly to peaks in demand are more cumbersome.

From experience first stop shops increase the number of customer visits and the extra capacity promised under the PtCF partnership will require review and alternative solutions development. In the interim both revenues and benefits have allocated staff and team leaders to deal with front line enquiries. A combined team leader support is planned Most significantly the electronic document management system is still to be implemented, therefore immediate and on line access to information pertaining to customer enquiries is not yet available. Telephone contact in search of paper documents in the back offices (council house and civic centre) interrupts processing of backlogs, prolongs the time taken to deal with the enquiry and extends the waiting time for the next customer.

A review of FSS targets at peak times to reflect actual rather than aspirational performance would assist in addressing customer expectations and reducing perceived pressures by staff.

The implementation of the EDMS system in R&B also needs to engage wider corporate support especially with reference to other FSS delivered services, staff and working practices.

### SIGN OFF

<b>YOUR NAME</b>	Andy Burns Assistant Director of Finance	<b>YOUR </b>	3554
<b>ED's SIGNATURE</b>	Carole Evans	<b>DATE</b>	

### Benefits Performance Forecast 2005/06

#### Benefits monthly performance 2005/2006

Key Performance  
Indicators

#### **BVPI 78A Speed of Processing**

average number of days to process new claims (from date of receipt to date of full determination).

month	Apr-05	May-05	Jun-05	Jul-05	Aug-05	Sep-05
actual	52.22	56.4	68.18	66.27	77.29	84.26
month	Oct-05	Nov-05	Dec-05	Jan-06	Feb-06	Mar-06
actual	88.75	86.15	85.3	100	75	45

#### **BVPI 78B Speed of Processing**

average number of days to process change in circumstances (from date of notification of change).

month	Apr-05	May-05	Jun-05	Jul-05	Aug-05	Sep-05
actual	26.33	29.1	43.04	53.83	51.05	56.11
month	Oct-05	Nov-05	Dec-05	Jan-06	Feb-06	Mar-06
actual	50.89	43.16	67.75	85	45	15

BVPI 78a Days to process claims					
Quarter	Claims	Days	Average	Cumulative	
1	3000	165585	55.1950	55.1950	
2	3282	263508	80.2888	68.3052	
3	2858	255653	89.4517	74.9175	
estimate 4	3054	172759	56.5681	70.3219	

BVPI 78b Days to process a change of circs					
Quarter	Claims	Days	Average	Cumulative	
1	1679	35422	21.0971	21.0971	
2	4883	264103	54.0862	45.6454	
3	4028	205834	51.1008	47.7204	
estimate 4	18968	527479	27.8100	34.9428	