

Corporate Assessment Report

October 2006



Corporate Assessment

Haringey London Borough Council

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Introduction

- 1 Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) is the means by which the Audit Commission fulfils its statutory duty under Section 99 of the Local Government Act 2003 to make an assessment, and report on the performance, of local authorities. Corporate assessment is one element in the overall assessment that leads to a CPA score and category.
- 2 The purpose of the corporate assessment is to assess how well the Council engages with and leads its communities, delivers community priorities in partnership with others, and ensures continuous improvement across the range of Council activities. It seeks to answer three headline questions which are underpinned by five specific themes.

What is the Council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?

- Ambition
- Prioritisation

What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?

- Capacity
- Performance management

What has been achieved?

- Achievement

Considered against the shared priorities of:

- sustainable communities and transport;
- safer and stronger communities;
- healthier communities;
- older people; and
- children and young people.

- 3 Corporate assessments are normally aligned with a joint area review of services for children and young people (JAR). In practice this means that the Council's achievements in relation to children and young people are assessed using the evidence provided from the JAR. In addition, examples of outcomes and activity, which are relevant to the other themes and which are identified through the JAR, are considered within the corporate assessment.

- 4 The JAR covers all services for children and young people that are directly managed or commissioned by the Council, as well as health and youth justice services provided by other bodies. It focuses on the contributions made by services to improving outcomes. The separate JAR report covers the leadership and management of services for children and young people and, in particular, the way that such services work together to improve outcomes. The description and judgement in respect of children and young people in this report is summarised from the JAR report.

Executive summary

- 5 Haringey Council is performing well. Rapid progress has been made in improving services over the past five years. This has been delivered within a complex and challenging borough where competing demands have been prioritised effectively. The Council is now starting to reap the awards of its hard work with achievements in areas such as anti-social behaviour being recognised nationally. It has worked well with partners and the locality to set an ambition and priorities that are stretching and challenging as well as addressing local needs. Well founded plans add substance to the ambition.
- 6 The top five priorities give a focus to the overall ambition which is to: 'Measurably improve the quality of life for the people of Haringey by tackling some of our biggest problems and making it a borough we can all be proud of'. The priorities address the most pressing concerns for local people, namely, crime, litter, children and young people and educational attainment. These also reflect national priorities. The Council prioritises well, is focused and does not become distracted. This is further enhanced by a strong three-year medium term financial strategy (MTFS). Resources are shifted to support priorities and there has been a clear move away from back office functions to frontline services. However, not all plans to deliver on priorities are sufficiently supported by outcome-focused targets.
- 7 Community cohesion, user focus and diversity are significant strengths for the Council. They are at the heart of decision-making and are successfully threaded through its ambitions, priorities, culture and working practices. The Council is leading the way locally on these themes in areas such as domestic violence. The People's Network, area assemblies (which include the police and health representatives) and neighbourhood management play a key role in the Council's work and add value. The complex nature of the community is understood, and services are able to respond proactively to meet the needs presented. The differences in the community are celebrated, and the cohesion of the community is good. Seventy-six per cent of residents agree that the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. Access to services is good overall, but performance in customer services has deteriorated in recent months, making it less easy for residents to make contact with the Council. ICT resources are not yet fully exploited, thereby limiting the added value they currently bring.
- 8 Haringey is a good community leader and works well in partnership across a range of sectors. It is respected by partners and is seen as an ambitious Council. It works especially well with the Police on community safety issues and the local Teaching Primary Care Trust (TPCT) on for example, children's services. It is acknowledged by the Council and its partners that partnership working could be further exploited and this is being progressed. Members are very active in their communities championing residents' concerns.

- 9 Political leadership at the Council is strong. Members are broadly representative of their diverse communities. Executive members have a good understanding of their portfolios and have used the time effectively since the May 2006 elections to gain a good understanding of their areas. Scrutiny works well overall but there is further scope to increase its involvement in areas such as value for money (VFM).
- 10 The Council's managerial leadership style is one of drive and openness, with a people and user focused approach. The Chief Executive and Leader work well together. There is a clear focus on improvement led from the top and performance management is a key part of this. Officer/member relationships work well. The Council's capacity to deliver its ambition is adequate overall. The Council benefits from having a motivated and committed workforce, however, recruitment and retention continue to pose real challenges in areas such as social care, planning and the youth service. The Council recognises that the current structure needs to be reviewed.
- 11 Financial management is sound. The Council is developing its approach to VFM, and has taken steps to implement consistent processes across all directorates. Assessments of the costs, performance and perception of each service have been undertaken, resulting in efficiency reviews in some areas which are high spending. There is an increasingly systematic approach with VFM being built into the business planning process, but this is not yet embedded. VFM is not comprehensively applied throughout the Council as a matter of routine.
- 12 Performance management is a strength for the Council and is at the heart of the decision-making process. The Council has been successful in instilling the right culture and values so that performance management is at the heart of decision-making. This has resulted in tangible improvements in key priority areas. Residents recognise the improvements made to services with 64 per cent saying that the Council is doing a good job, above the London average. Performance management in partnerships continues to develop.
- 13 In terms of achievement the Council is performing well, with particular strengths in community safety, the environment, older people and children and young people. The Council has a track record of improvement often from a low base. The Better Haringey programme has been successful in delivering real outcomes such as increased recycling and more effective removal of abandoned vehicles and graffiti. The Council works well with partners to improve the safety of the locality and it has been innovative in its approach to domestic violence engaging both the private and public sector in delivery. Older People feel empowered and have shaped the services they receive. Partnerships with health are good and there are a number of healthy living initiatives in place. Services provided by the Council and its partners for children and young people in Haringey are good. Children and young people are generally safe and those most at risk are well protected. Outcomes for children and young people have improved significantly over the last five years. The youth service, however, is inadequate, though actions to improve management and strengthen resources have recently been put in place.

- 14 Achievements in housing and regeneration are mixed. The Council continues to work with partners to increase housing supply in the borough and with the private sector to help create job opportunities for local people. However, levels of homelessness and worklessness continue to present a challenge for the Council. The lack of an overall strategy for health has not prevented the Council from starting to tackle the health of the community with partners however a clear strategy would further enhance this work.

Areas for improvement

- 15 There is scope to further improve how the Council works with others to achieve its ambitions. The Local Area Agreement will be a useful catalyst to strengthen partnership working. Opportunities could be exploited through joint service provision, joint problem solving in areas such as recruitment and retention, joined-up consultation and enhancing knowledge sharing and performance management. These improvements should help improve the Council's capacity.
- 16 The Council lacks an overarching approach to regeneration in the borough and this is limiting the Council's ability to make progress in dealing with some of the most challenging issues such as worklessness. The Council needs to define its overall approach clearly, including bringing together regeneration activity in a more coherent way and agreeing key quantifiable outcomes to enable the Council and its partners to measure progress.
- 17 The Council lacks an overarching strategy for improving the health of the locality that would bring together the various initiatives taking place. The Council needs to develop a strategy and ensure that the health and well-being agenda, in particular health inequalities, informs the development of the new community strategy.
- 18 The Council needs to make better use of the investment made in customer services and ICT to date. Customer service performance needs to improve and issues of consistency of use of IT need to be rectified. These improvements should help improve the Council's capacity.

Summary of assessment scores

Headline questions	Theme	Score*
What is the Council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?	Ambition	3
	Prioritisation	3
What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?	Capacity	2
	Performance management	3
What has been achieved?	Achievement	3
Overall corporate assessment score**		3
*Key to scores		
1 – below minimum requirements – inadequate performance		
2 – at only minimum requirements – adequate performance		
3 – consistently above minimum requirements – performing well		
4 – well above minimum requirements – performing strongly		

**Rules for determining the overall corporate assessment score

Scores on 5 themes	Overall corporate assessment score
Two or more themes with a score of 4 None less than score of 3	4
Three or more themes with a score of 3 or more None less than score of 2	3
Three or more themes with a score of 2 or more	2
Any other combination	1

Context

The locality

- 19 Haringey is a north London borough bordered by the boroughs of Barnet, Enfield, Islington, Hackney and Walthamstow. The borough covers an area of 30km². Some of the more familiar local landmarks include Alexandra Palace, Bruce Castle and Tottenham Hotspur Football Club. The area also includes more than 600 acres of parks, recreation and open spaces.
- 20 Haringey is the tenth most deprived borough in England and there is a clear east/west divide with 50 per cent of the Super Output Areas (a geographic hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales) in Tottenham amongst the 10 per cent most deprived in the country compared to only 10 per cent in the west. Just under a third (29.2 per cent) of Haringey households have no earned income and in parts such as Seven Sisters average annual household income is below the poverty line.
- 21 Population stands at 224,300 with approximately 3,548 known asylum seekers. 48.9 per cent of the population are from black and minority ethnic communities and an estimated 193 languages are spoken in the borough. The Council has initiatives in place directed towards the transitory population, for example, a forum for people in temporary accommodation. The borough continues to face inner London crime rates and remains a 'high volume' crime area. Crime is one of Haringey's residents' top concerns.
- 22 There are approximately 55,600 children and young people under the age of 20 living in the borough. Of these 204 are on the child protection register. Four-hundred and eighty-four children and young people are looked after by the Council, 61 per cent of whom are placed outside the Haringey's borders and 23 per cent of whom are in placements that are more than 20 miles away. An integrated children's service was established in 2005.
- 23 High population mobility and housing shortages pose key challenges in developing cohesive and sustainable communities. There are currently around 5,000 households in temporary accommodation and demand for housing continues to grow. The proportion of Council housing is above the national average at 20 per cent. A substantial proportion of the stock (54 per cent) is in medium and high rise flats. There is a low level of owner-occupation and a high level of renting in social housing compared with the London average. The decision to establish an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) was taken in 2005, and it began operation on 1 April 2006, taking control of the Council's housing stock.

- 24** The borough is situated within the growth corridor connecting London with Stansted, Cambridge and Peterborough. While the borough is generally well served with public transport, campaigning is ongoing to obtain an extension to the Victoria Line and to secure stopping services on the West Anglia line. Worklessness continues to be a challenge for the borough with unemployment higher in the east where only 45.5 per cent of residents were employed in 2003/04. There are six town centres - Wood Green, Tottenham High Road, Seven Sisters, Green Lanes, Crouch End, Muswell Hill and a thriving small business community. Haringey faces challenging levels of need and inequity in the health of the population. In recognition of these challenges, Haringey TPCT has been designated as a 'Spearhead PCT', bringing additional resources and focus into areas of inequality.
- 25** The borough is divided into two parliamentary constituencies: Hornsey and Wood Green (Liberal Democrat) and Tottenham (Labour). Haringey and Enfield form one of the 14 constituencies of the Greater London Assembly (GLA). This seat is held by Labour.

The Council

- 26** At a local level, the Council has 57 members (30 Labour; 27 Liberal Democrat) covering 19 wards. A new Leader was elected in May 2006. An executive/scrutiny split is in place. There are nine cabinet members including the Leader and the Council has task and finish scrutiny panels, which are overseen by an overview and scrutiny committee. Seven area assemblies have also been established to bring the Council closer to its communities. An audit and standards committee are in operation, along with a range of other committees such as Licensing.
- 27** The current chief executive came into post in March 2006 with a clear focus on driving forward further improvements. The corporate board consists of the chief executive, three assistant chief executives (one post currently vacant) and directors for children's services, environment, social services and finance, chief executive of the ALMO and the head of legal. There are 27 business units in place with areas such as procurement, property, corporate finance and benefits and local taxation within the remit of the Director of Finance. The Council employs approximately 8,500 people, making it the largest employer in the borough. Most employees live locally and overall the Council's black and ethnic minority workforce is generally representative of the diverse communities Haringey serves. The Council has developed SMART Working, a major internal change and improvement programme that has been rolled out across the Council. The Council has been awarded Investors in People status.
- 28** The agreed revenue expenditure requirement for 2006/07 is £782.694 million. The Council element of the overall council tax level for the borough rose by 2.5 per cent per cent between 2005/06 and 2006/07. The overall level for Band D is now £1,383.59, with the council element of this set at £1,084.98.

- 29 The Council is a member of the Haringey Strategic Partnership (HSP) and North London Strategic Alliance (NLSA). The HSP was formally established in 2002 to bring together many of the agencies and organisations in Haringey that deliver services, or represent particular local interests, including the police, health and social services agencies, voluntary and community groups and business leaders. The HSP agreed the boroughs Community Strategy in 2003. This is now being refocused with a strategy to 2016 in development by a multi-agency project team. The Community Strategy is supported by a robust corporate plan that provides an 'umbrella' for the Council's strategic and business planning.

What is the Council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?

Ambition for the community

- 30 The Council is performing well in this area. The Council has come a long way over the past five years and this positive track record has benefited from a well-founded ambition. Haringey is an ambitious Council and has a well communicated desire to improve the area for all residents. This is based on a sound understanding of the underlying needs of the area and its communities.
- 31 There is an in-depth understanding by the Council and its partners, of the opportunities and challenges that Haringey faces that is translated into a clear set of challenging ambitions. These balance effectively the needs of all sections of the community, for example, regenerating priority neighbourhoods such as Tottenham whilst striving for excellent services for all residents irrespective of where they live through initiatives such as the Better Haringey programme. Members, partners and staff are realistic that it will take time to deliver many of the improvements that the community want.
- 32 The Council's ambition is to:
- 'Measurably improve the quality of life for the people of Haringey by tackling some of our biggest problems and making it a borough we can all be proud of.'*
- 33 To achieve this vision the Council has set five key priorities that are given equal importance.
- Improve Services - providing modern, better quality accessible service for everyone who needs them, particularly in health and social care.
 - Narrow the Gap - improving the most deprived neighbourhoods.
 - Safer Communities - creating safer and confident communities with less fear of crime and the ability to prevent crime and resist committing crimes.
 - A Better Environment - creating a cleaner, greener environment with better transport and leisure opportunities.
 - Education - raising achievement in education and creating opportunities for life long success.
- 34 Both health and housing are addressed in a cross-cutting way within these five priorities. For example, health is a key element of narrowing the gap and feeds into the safer communities' priority through the work the Council is doing in relation to drugs and alcohol.

- 35 The Council's ambition is stretching and challenging and aims to make a real and measurable difference by focusing on areas that matter to local people. There is a strong focus on priority neighbourhoods, community cohesion, user focus, diversity and the delivery of high quality services. Realistic but challenging targets have been set to aid this delivery, for example a 20.5 per cent reduction in crime by 2008. There is a good understanding of the ambition amongst partner organisations, staff and the local community and there is a clear view by all stakeholders that the Council is ambitious.
- 36 It is recognised by the Council and partners that the time is now right to refocus this ambition. The current ambition has delivered what it set out to achieve in terms of improved services. An appropriate shift is now being developed towards a more preventative and proactive approach. A multi-agency project team has been set up to take forward this work. The proposed future focus includes four key strands - becoming a leading and influential Council, achieving excellent services across the board, to increase people involvement in shaping services and to be regarded as a successful borough by key stakeholders. The proposed new challenging ambitions have been shared with key partners, members and staff and there is a clear plan in place that outlines next steps. By involving key players at this early stage, the Council has successfully secured buy-in to its approach.
- 37 The current ambition is underpinned by a range of strategies and plans which provide realism to the ambition overall. This is particularly the case through the three-year financial strategy. It allocates resources, identifies areas for investment and plans efficiency savings, setting a Council budget within the context of the Community Strategy and performance ambitions. This is further supported by strong prioritisation and performance management. The plans support wider ambitions to improve the quality of life for local people through for example, low levels of crime, improving life chances for children and community cohesion. Key examples include the safer communities' strategy. However, the Council's ambition could be further enhanced by a clear strategy for health.
- 38 There is a shared ownership of partnership ambitions which is facilitated by the Community Strategy and HSP action plan. Working relationships are good based on trust, openness and constructive challenge. This has helped ensure partners and the Council share a common purpose in tackling issues such as crime and the older people's agenda. An LAA is to be established in 2007 and the Council is working with partners to ensure the agreement is fit for purpose and that it addresses the locality's most pressing needs as well as providing a clearer focus for the HSP.
- 39 Strong leadership has helped ensure that the Council's ambition stays on track. The leader chairs the HSP and the chief executive plays a pivotal role in bringing key partners together to move the Council and locality forward. The Council whilst encouraging others to take the lead is often the main driver in projects, for example in relation to the launch of the Hearthstone project. The Council is respected by partners for tackling the challenging agendas such as community cohesion and crime. It is recognised as a listening organisation, keen to engage with residents and partners.

- 40 Whilst data collection and analysis takes place and is used to shape some services, this is not systematic. There is no overall strategic approach to knowledge management within the Council. This has been recognised by the Council and plans are in place to resolve the issue, but these are at an early stage.
- 41 Consultation overall is good. It effectively recognises the range and complexity of service user needs and makes provision for choice, where appropriate, such as the budget consultation. The Council has achieved beacon status for 'getting closer to its communities' and integrates diversity successfully in its everyday business. Consultation ranges from door knocking exercises to major projects such as the 'Getting It Right' campaign regarding options for obtaining additional council housing investment to deliver decent homes. The 2006 resident survey showed that 63 per cent feel that the Council keeps them informed, an increase from the previous year and favourable compared to other London boroughs. There exist however further opportunities to bring together consultation activity in a more systematic way and develop further links with the consultation activities of partners.
- 42 The Council demonstrates strong community leadership through members, officers and in its partnership working. The Council is an active member of the NLSA using it as a means of regional lobbying. Members are very active in their communities, championing resident concerns and acting as local ambassadors, for example in Green Lanes, where crime was an issue. The roll-out of area assemblies (with allocated budgets) has further strengthened community leadership and reinforced partnership working. This has enabled the Council to connect with 'hard-to-reach' groups in areas such as St Ann's and Harringay where area assemblies are translated into community languages with the aim of engaging with residents who do not normally come to area assembly meetings.
- 43 Partnership working is strong overall, with an evident commitment across partnerships to improve the locality and evident improved outcomes as a result in areas such as children and young people. However, there is scope to further enhance the role of the HSP, particularly in relation to knowledge management and links with the thematic groups, thereby helping to increase its impact. The Council encourages the voluntary and business sectors to give their views and acts upon the information they receive. This is especially the case in locality based projects such as Trade Local and the Green Lanes project.

Prioritisation

- 44 This is an area where the Council is performing well. The Council is successfully focused on what matters to local people and has not been distracted. Priorities are shared and owned by the Council and partners and have helped ensure a focused and proportionate approach to improving services, often from a low base and in a complex local environment.

- 45 The council has clear priorities which reflect the need of local people. Within the five key priorities, the Council has focussed on the areas of crime, litter, children and young people and educational attainment. Specific priorities such as tackling gun crime and improving recycling have been agreed and shared with key stakeholders, including residents. These priorities have been identified using feedback such as resident's surveys and engagement through the area assemblies to ascertain what matters most to local people. They are expressed clearly in documentation ranging from the community strategy to the resident update booklet. Without effective prioritisation the progress made by the Council in areas such as children and young people from a low base would not have been possible.
- 46 The priorities reflect the needs of the community, and have regard for local and national frameworks. The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) is based on a comprehensive needs analysis. Consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, including children and young people was used to shape the priorities and the CYPP clearly sets out the 20 priorities for action for the next three years. The housing needs' survey was commissioned on a sub regional level in early 2006 and is being used to determine the nature and content of the revisions to the housing strategy this year. This effective prioritisation has been further borne out by increased resident satisfaction with the Council overall.
- 47 The Council's priorities and subsequent action planning address the needs of black and minority ethnic groups and other groups who are at risk of disadvantage within the community. The Council uses a range of approaches to engage with of different groups in the community, and the diversity of the community makes this particularly complex. This information is used to shape priorities. The Council has made good use of equality impact assessment to ensure that the needs of all groups in the community are addressed. The independent Race Equality Joint Consultative Committee (REJCC) scrutinises and evaluates the performance of the Council's services, and in the last year has considered issues including the educational attainment of different ethnic groups.
- 48 There is wide understanding about the key priorities amongst members, staff, residents and partners. This has been particularly important where difficult decisions have been made and balances struck in order to address areas in need of improvement. This includes closure of residential care homes that offered below standard facilities, the decision to go for ALMO status, given the local context and the creation of a sixth form centre. In the 2005 staff survey, 87 per cent of staff said they understood how their work helped the Council to achieve its aims. Understanding between partners about duties, frameworks and respective priorities is good. The CYPP demonstrates understanding by reflecting both the health and local government priorities relating to young people and children.

18 Corporate Assessment | What is the Council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?

- 49** The Council and its partners are making good progress in ensuring there is a robust strategy to deliver priorities in partnership. The HSP action plan for 2005/06 is comprehensive and links effectively to the Council's priorities. The three year MTFS recognises the key priorities, ensuring that investment into priorities is achieved and enabled through a range of efficiency gains. There is evidence that the Council has invested in priority areas, such as £15 million invested in the 'Better Haringey' programme of streetscene improvements since 2003. Additional investments have been made in social care. There is an evident shift of resources from back office services. For example, more efficient procurement of insurance services and cutting the length of time recruitment takes have both produced efficiency savings that have been directed to frontline services.
- 50** A coherent business planning framework is in place that effectively translates the Council's vision into short and medium term priorities, identifying the contribution of each services area to the broader aims. This ensures that the Council's contribution to more cross-cutting themes such as health and community safety can be effectively mapped. Business plans, which include targets, are directly linked to the MTFS through the identification of potential efficiency savings and capital investments. Full account is taken of comparative and benchmarking information and it is incorporated into business planning. Targets are realistic and in most cases are challenging. However, some of the business plans are not sufficiently focused on outcomes, with targets being used more for monitoring progress rather than directing activity. Action plans overall are fit for purpose and used effectively to monitor progress. Local people are involved in action planning in some services, for example in customer services where extended hours were introduced.
- 51** Focus has been maintained on priorities and difficult decisions taken where necessary. Whilst the priorities have remained constant, the emphasis within them has shifted to respond to Council, resident and partner concerns. This is illustrated by the change in focus from improving core services such as libraries in 2003/04 to Better Haringey in 2004/06. As a result shifts have been made away from non-priority areas such as leisure, which is being maintained at the current level with no proposals for growth.
- 52** Where resources have been shared in partnership to support the delivery of priorities it works well. For example, the 'heavy enforcement team' where operations with the Council's own housing benefit investigation team, the immigration service, neighbourhood police teams, and the Department of Work and Pensions have successfully targeted more serious crimes such as gun and drug crime, illegal immigration and copyright infringements. Decisions about the areas to be targeted are made in discussion between the agencies pooling intelligence and identifying key areas for action.

What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?

Capacity

- 53 The Council has adequate capacity to achieve its ambitions and priorities. Members and officers work well together to achieve common goals. Access to services has improved overall and the Council's strategic approach in areas such as procurement is developing. However, the Council's approach to VFM is not yet embedded and some high cost services remain. Recruitment and retention challenges are evident in key services and the full potential of partnerships and ICT resources are not being exploited.
- 54 The Council benefits from a motivated and committed workforce and this has helped the Council move forward in a number of areas. The Council has put in place a number of schemes to tackle recruitment and retention issues, for example the graduate trainee scheme, however, recruitment and retention remains a challenge for the Council with pressures in the youth service, planning and children's social care. There are some initiatives in place to combat these, for example, the specialist graduate training programme for planners and traffic engineers. However, the benefit of these has not yet been fully realised. The Council recognises that the current structure may not be fit for purpose given the emergence of a new community strategy and the challenges this brings. The Council has plans in place to review the structure.
- 55 Member and officer relations are good and work effectively within the ethical framework. There is clarity about the different roles and responsibilities held, and relationships are positive. Members are expanding their role with a greater external focus. Decision-making is clear and transparent and the executive process encourages open debate, for example, in relation to the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). Scrutiny members are able to challenge constructively at the Executive. This open approach allows contentious issues to be appropriately discussed and allows clear public insight into the way the Council carries out its duties.
- 56 The capacity of members is good. There is a comprehensive programme of training and support for all members, and attendance at training is high at 80 per cent. Training has included risk management, the role of internal and external audit, the role of scrutiny, finance and performance management. The equalities team hold events in the community to raise awareness about being a member with under-represented groups.

20 Corporate Assessment | What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?

- 57** Scrutiny works well overall. The use of task and finish groups, rather than standing panels, has brought more focus to the scrutiny function. Plans to integrate consideration of VFM more routinely into its work are in place and there is scope to further increase the added value that scrutiny brings through for example learning from others. Scrutiny recommendations have been used to improve some services, for example the reconfiguration of the anti-social behaviour action team.
- 58** User focus, diversity and equalities are integral to decision-making. Led by a corporate equalities group supported by directorate equalities groups, the Council is able to demonstrate good use of equality impact assessments and uses a lively newsletter 'Equalities Matters' to inform staff of key issues.
- 59** Risk management is integrated into the planning, delivery and review of services. Risks are considered as part of the business planning process. The MTFS includes consideration of key risks and the project management framework requires risk logs to be reported through the project theme board directly to members. However, the Council's approach to risk management does not adequately consider disaster recovery, as shown by recent service disruption following the Buncefield fire.
- 60** The full potential of partnerships is not being exploited, although partnership relationships are strong. Workforce planning and procurement in partnership is limited and there is little use of pooled budgets. This lessens the economies of scale that could be achieved through shared processes. Budgets have not as yet been aligned across the Council and the PCT but plans are in place to achieve this.
- 61** Financial management is sound and good progress has been made in this area over the past four years. The Council has been successful in leveraging in additional resources to support its priorities. The Council has obtained £255 million external funding for a variety of projects between 2006 and 2020. This is backed up by handover strategies. This sound financial basis has enabled the Council to focus on service improvement.
- 62** The approach to VFM is developing, but is not yet embedded. Some high cost services remain such as social services. Cost, performance and perception assessments have been introduced systematically during 2005, and have led to detailed efficiency reviews in home care and parking. However, the full impact of these reviews is not yet evident, and the approach to other high spending services is less clear. The approach is not yet fully integrated into the business planning process, but there are plans to do this in 2006.

- 63 The Council's approach to staff development is clearly linked to priorities and is effective. There is a planned, integrated and sustained approach to organisational development within the Council. In the 2005 staff survey, 88 per cent of staff said that they had the skills and knowledge to do their job. The Council's approach is designed to ensure current and future needs are met as well as helping ensure the workforce reflects the community. Initiatives include diversity training (as part of induction), a leadership programme, the 'Aiming High' development programme and the Springboard and Pathfinder courses which are used effectively. User focus competencies form a key part of the appraisal process with a core requirement for skills in this area. Human rights considerations are less well mainstreamed, with monitoring of potential and actual cases being undertaken by the legal section. These programmes have helped Haringey become very representative of its community, with 26 per cent of the top 5 per cent of earners being from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups, making it the top performer in London, and half of the top 5 per cent of earners being women. The proportion of workforce from BME groups is over 40 per cent; which compares well to the community, although members of the new ethnic communities are less well represented. Staff are able to be innovative and explore new ways of working.
- 64 A project management framework is in place, and improvements to it are being implemented. Difficulties in project management were noted through the implementation of Tech Refresh - (a council-wide IT project) during 2005, which exposed serious weaknesses in the processes used. The Council has responded to these weaknesses and has strengthened the project management framework by improved reporting to members and greater involvement of senior finance department representatives. An increasingly strategic approach is being taken to procurement issues, but this is still at an early stage.
- 65 Access to services is good overall, but performance in customer services has deteriorated recently. Access is facilitated through neighbourhood management, area assemblies, customer service one stop shops and the award winning Council website with a wide range of translated material being directly available. There is a well regarded translation and interpretation section based in communications, which provided over 13,000 translations and interpretation sessions in 2005/06. However, the performance of the customer services unit has deteriorated recently, in part because of the impact of the Buncefield fire on services. While there is a recovery plan in place, it is not sufficiently robust. The Council are not yet fully realising the benefits of the investment in customer services.
- 66 In some areas such as e-democracy the use of ICT has enhanced the delivery of services with for example the web casting of Scrutiny and Executive meetings. However, ICT resources are not fully exploited, with issues about consistency of use remaining. The Council makes use of a variety of systems, including Geographic Information Systems and the Customer Services IT system, but this information is not brought together in a coherent way and is not systematically used to shape services. This reduces the added value that this information brings in planning and shaping services for the locality.

Performance management

- 67 The Council is performing well in its approach to performance management. Haringey is a performance driven organisation and has a good track record of managing performance effectively. Performance management is embedded within the organisation and this has helped deliver tangible improvements to services, often from a low base. Performance management in partnerships continues to develop.
- 68 The Council has been successful in instilling the right culture and values so that performance management is at the heart of decision-making and this is helping drive achievement of priorities. The Council has developed a strong, inclusive approach to owning, managing and monitoring performance at all levels across the Council over the past five years. Residents recognise the improvements made to services with 64 per cent saying that the Council is doing a good job (up 13 per cent over two years), above the London average.
- 69 The performance framework within which officers and members operate is sophisticated, well-developed and understood. There is a clear golden thread from the Community Strategy to individual targets and appropriate attention given to performance at each stage of the planning process. The Community Strategy guides the MTFS and business planning and is supported by a robust corporate plan with three-year targets. The next layer consists of business plans that effectively link objectives to the Council's priorities and are reviewed mid-year as part of the pre business plan review. People plans accompany each business plan and identify how staff will be managed and developed to fulfil business need. This feeds into the Council's workforce planning. Performance appraisals against business related competencies ensure that staff are clear on what they need to achieve and how their work contributes to the Council's objectives. This robust system ensures that where performance is falling below target, remedial action can be taken in a timely fashion.
- 70 Ongoing support and training is effective in ensuring a consistent approach to implementation of the framework. The 2005 staff survey noted that 82 per cent of staff understand the Council's aims and objectives and 87 per cent understand how their work contributes to achieving these.

- 71** Officers and members work well together and take collective responsibility to improve performance. Members have a record of focused involvement in performance management through the Executive, scrutiny and one to one meetings between officers and lead members. Members' role in improving VFM in services is developing. The approach is one of open debate and constructive challenging with clear accountabilities. This ensures that members are aware of potential areas of non-delivery in a timely fashion as well as areas for celebration. This approach has led to the redirection of resources when necessary, for example in highways, and to improvements in operational performance in areas like recycling. Lead members engage directly with front-line staff to understand the operational requirements of the work they do, and gather feedback formally and informally from residents which they use to shape services. This focus by members is appreciated by staff and residents alike and engenders a performance culture.
- 72** Reporting of performance is timely, open and transparent and is welcomed by staff, members, partners and the community. This approach promotes a good understanding within the locality of how the Council is performing. The Council makes good use of a range of media to report its performance. The information makes comparison possible against local targets, past performance and the performance of others. Performance management reports are good and widely used at different levels in the Council and with partners. Performance reports have been refined to ensure early warning of variances so that remedial action can be taken, for example in relation to housing repairs.
- 73** The Council's approach to performance management has driven noticeable improvements in performance in key areas. This is acknowledged by residents with increased satisfaction in services such as parks, street cleaning and libraries. Un-audited figures show that 70 per cent of performance indicators have improved between 2004/05 and 2005/06 in key priority areas including, recycling, older people being helped to live at home and direct payments. These figures will be finalised in December 2006. This clear focus on driving up service performance is helping the Council meet its priority of achieving service excellence. Cross-departmental working is good overall and is facilitated through the performance management system with shared targets across key services such as environment and community safety. This has helped ensure that joint activity delivers what it set out to achieve in areas such as the 'eyesore programme'.

24 Corporate Assessment | What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?

- 74** Performance management in partnerships continues to develop. There is good use of performance data on a ward and borough basis in some areas such as community safety. Trends and comparisons with the regional and national picture are also considered to analyse issues, agree action and monitor progress including outcomes. Partners and the Council know how well they and each other are performing against planned outcomes. The HSP is supported by a comprehensive action plan, however, better comparison and evaluation of shared processes, costs and outcomes could be made. This does happen in some areas such as community safety but it is not systematic or risk based. The links between the HSP and thematic groups could be further enhanced, to facilitate constructive debate about performance. Relationships between the Council and partners are good and this helps to ensure that partners feel able to raise any difficulties with carrying out action plans at an early stage.
- 75** The Council reflects the levels of risk and performance in setting the frequency of service reviews. For example, poor performance in the recycling service was monitored on a weekly basis at a corporate level and social care has been kept under close review. Improvements in both of these services have been achieved. Budget monitoring is comprehensive and any overspends are addressed in an effective way such as social care, for example. The finance and performance monthly report covers the financial and performance position for each service and includes action (high level) that is being taken to address variance. The recent introduction of a balanced scorecard approach aims to ensure that these links are enhanced yet further in the future. This is important to ensure resources follow priorities and VFM can be assessed.
- 76** Target setting is based on a good balance between national and local indicators. Targets are in line with the Council's stated priorities, shared with partners and based on a good understanding of performance and satisfaction levels. However, targets in a minority of business plans are expressed in general terms making it difficult to assess whether outcomes have been achieved.
- 77** The Council makes good use of opportunities to learn from its own successes and failures. In addition, the Council seeks to learn from good practice externally and uses inspection findings effectively in improving services. To date this has been used to initiate improvements in housing benefits and adaptations and tackle underperformance in areas such as the environment and libraries. The Council has refocused its approach to VFM following the use of resources judgements made last year with the introduction of the cost, performance and perception matrix.
- 78** Views of the community, staff and partners are important to the Council and are considered as key indicators of its performance. Services are targeted on a geographical basis as a result, for example health provision in Northumberland Park. Consultation, user satisfaction and complaints data is used to shape and refocus services where appropriate. For example, results from consultation have been used to influence service delivery such as the launch of the Better Haringey programme following dissatisfaction with street cleaning. This has been welcomed by users who overall feel informed, empowered and able to shape the services they receive.

- 79** There is a clear, accessible user-friendly and well publicised system in place that enables complaints, grievances or representations about service performance to be made. This is further enhanced by the community work undertaken by the Council and its partners. The Council has exceeded the Local Government Ombudsman target in responding to complaints, although stage 2 complaints are under target. The Council is working with partners to develop an integrated approach to complaints handling and progress has been made with the Mental Health Trust.

What has been achieved?

- 80 The Council is performing well. Progress has been rapid in key priority areas and the Council has not been deterred from tackling difficult issues such as the performance of the children and young people service. This progress has been made against a backdrop of a complex and challenging environment, where competing demands have not distracted the Council. Progress has been made in core services as well as cross-cutting themes such as diversity. The Council continues in its drive for improvement and where gaps are still evident, the Council has plans in place to tackle these, for example, regeneration and community transport. Achievement is most evident in key priority areas, community safety, environment, children and young people and older people. Local priorities are in line with national priorities with an ambition to improve the quality of life for all residents. The Council has a clear focus on the most deprived areas and is addressing inequality through for example, the regeneration of areas such as Wood Green, Tottenham High Road, Campsbourne Estate and Heartlands. It manages to balance its attention on priority neighbourhoods with a drive to deliver high quality services to all residents irrespective of where they live. The Council has rightly focused on diversity and user focus in delivering its services and these two areas are strengths for the Council.
- 81 This is supported by the positive trend in improvement with 70 per cent improvement (un-audited) in performance indicators between 2004/05 and 2005/06 in key areas that are important in the locality. These improvements have focused on areas that matter to local people and the achievements have been recognised with 64 per cent saying that the Council is doing a good job (up 6 per cent from the previous year and above the London average). Most noteworthy include the achievement of a two-star social services rating serving most people well, improvements in children's services, a balanced budget and financial stability, a pioneering Hearthstone centre helping domestic violence sufferers and investment in making Haringey cleaner and greener with 94 per cent of residents recognising that this initiative has improved the environment of Haringey. These improvements have led to a shift from a low base to in some cases national recognition in areas such as the domestic violence Hearthstone project. In areas where further work is needed such as regeneration, housing and community transport, the Council recognises the need to improve and has plans in place to tackle the issues. Strong performance management has enabled improvement and the delivery of outcomes that matter to local people, with a well developed framework that is used by officers and members effectively. Capacity, however, is adequate with evident recruitment and retention pressures in key services. The Council's approach to VFM continues to develop.

Sustainable communities and transport

- 82 The Council can demonstrate some significant achievements in relation to the environment, but performance has been more mixed in relation to regeneration, housing and transport. The Better Haringey programme has produced considerable improvement to environmental services which are local priorities. However, the Council's work on regeneration and housing projects while considerable, is not yet demonstrating significant impact on job creation or local housing supply. Sub-regional lobbying is increasingly bringing transport benefits to the borough, although issues do remain regarding the full exploitation of transport for local people. The Council has received substantial Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF) totalling £8.2 million in 2006/07. Managed through the HSP theme boards, projects have been targeted at the priority neighbourhoods and have focused on key issues, such as environmental and community safety projects.
- 83 The Council is contributing positively to the local economy. The regeneration of Wood Green during the last five years has improved the area with increased leisure facilities for local people. The Tottenham High Road regeneration project has already brought benefits through the redevelopment of residential accommodation over shops and the improvement of shop fronts which has been delivered by the Council in partnership with Registered Social Landlords. £35 million investment has been secured for key sites mixed use development in Haringey Heartlands, Tottenham Hale, the Upper Lee Valley and further work on Tottenham High Road. The development of master plans for these areas has been co-ordinated by the Council, working with a range of partners to successfully address complex issues of site assembly. Work has begun on the £14 million Bernie Grant Centre with the aim of revitalising South Tottenham. By securing external funding the Council is able to make the infrastructure improvements enabling development of both housing and business.
- 84 Regeneration activity is not yet brought together in a coherent way. Work takes place in a number of different parts of the Council, and whilst activity is co-ordinated through the HSP, its impact is limited without an overarching approach to economic regeneration. This is of particular importance because of the complex nature of the borough.

- 85 Business support has had limited success. With over 90 per cent of local businesses being micro or small, the borough's business profile presents a challenging context for the Council: The borough's largest private sector employer has less than 250 employees. The Council's approach to business support is through the business led 'City Growth Strategy'. This has achieved new incubator space, the development of 'clusters' for business support around the key areas of ICT, food and drink, clothing and the creative industries, and a business award scheme the 'City Growth Awards' to reward excellence and promote local businesses. The Council delivered the 'Trade Local' programme to build capacity in local businesses to help them secure public sector contracts. It has supported 1,500 businesses with a third securing additional contracts as a result. However, the overall impact of these initiatives is unclear and making contact with the Council remains difficult for many businesses.
- 86 Worklessness is being addressed with partners but the Council recognises that there is more to do in this area given the stark differences that remain within the borough. The employment rate has increased from 57 per cent in 2004 to 60 per cent in 2005; but this contrasts with an employment rate of 74 per cent in the west and 48 per cent in the east of the borough. Four-thousand new jobs have been secured in the borough through Employment Zone initiatives. The Council has recognised the need for further action, recognising effort to date has been unco-ordinated and lacking in impact, and is developing a new approach to worklessness. This work is necessary to promote and develop a sustainable economy and encourage community cohesion.
- 87 Housing shortages remain challenging within the borough. There are currently around 5,000 households in temporary accommodation and demand for housing continues to grow. The Council has a housing strategy in place that is being revised and there has been success in starting to improve housing supply with a marked acceleration in housing activity over the past three years. Nine-hundred new social housing units have been built and £90 million of Housing Corporation funding has been secured for a further 1,200 units. Six-hundred empty properties have been brought back into use in the last three years, many of which have been used for homeless households. Internal decent homes targets have been met, and the ALMO is seen as the route to secure funding to deliver the 2010 decent homes standard. The Council has succeeded in reducing the transience by ensuring tenants are offered longer leases while in temporary accommodation, with 3,500 households now having leases longer than three years. Restrictive covenants are starting to be used with private developers to minimise the impact of 'buy to let' schemes to increase the stability of new communities. Developments such as the New River Village have been recognised for their high urban renewal and sustainable design standards.

- 88 While these activities are helping to improve the housing supply in the borough, activity is not brought together in a coherent way and impact has not yet filtered through to areas such as homelessness which is significant in the borough, and the length of stay in hostels exceeding the Council's own target by 14 weeks in 2005/06. Much attention has been focused on the establishment of the ALMO during 2005/06. By exerting influence over the housing market, the Council is starting to achieve better housing supply which more closely meets the needs of local people, but it needs to refocus on the strategic importance of housing to maximise the benefits of the initiatives.
- 89 The Better Haringey programme has successfully implemented a comprehensive programme of environment improvements. A clear corporate focus on what matters to the community has been supported with £15 million investment over the last three years. Activity has been across the Council, involving children's services, environmental services, housing and community safety. Recycling performance has increased substantially, with performance in 2005/06 exceeding the statutory target, and access to recycling facilities is improving. By using enforcement activity effectively, the Council has successfully delivered an 'eyesores' programme, working with Network Rail, by improving small areas of land across the borough that had become unsightly due to dumping of rubbish. Environmental Sustainability is being promoted both internally and externally. Plans to reduce the Council's own consumption are starting to be implemented with increased recycling and sustainable procurement practices. Improvements have been made to parks with four Green Flag awards received in 2005.
- 90 The Council is working to influence transport in the borough, but community transport is not being used effectively. The Council has succeeded in gaining improvements to the North Circular orbital route and the Tottenham Gyration. However, community transport is not used effectively in the borough to reduce social exclusion. Despite the recent establishment of a Mobility forum to address these issues, impact is as yet unclear. The ability to influence transport strategically is crucial if the Council is to achieve its ambitions relating to the regeneration of the borough, and it is vital to exploit opportunities that transport presents to reduce social exclusion in a borough as complex as Haringey.

Safer and stronger communities

- 91 The Council is working well with partners to make a positive contribution to an area characterised by pockets of high crime and is making a clear impact in some areas. Crime is a significant area of concern for local people and the Council in partnership has done well in tackling issues such as domestic violence and anti-social behaviour with clear impacts evident. The Council is an active and respected member of the Haringey Safer Communities partnership and takes a leading role in a number of projects. Partnership working is focusing activity on the right areas through for example, work with the youth offending team. The Council has a good understanding of its community safety role and there are good examples of services actively helping to create safer communities such as environment, planning (design panels) and housing. The business planning process facilitates this by requiring services to set out its contribution to this key priority area.
- 92 The Council and its partners have a clear understanding of the interrelationships between crime, the environment, deprivation and social issues. Crime overall is decreasing, however, there is mixed performance against LPSA targets. In the 12 months to May 2006, there has been a decrease in burglary and gun crime but violence against the person and robbery show increases. There has been a reduction in youth crime in contrast to the trend across London. A range of high profile initiatives is helping to reduce the fear of crime in priority wards such as Tottenham and Green Lanes. These include heavy enforcement teams, safer neighbourhood police teams, outreach work in relation to anti-social behaviour and notably the multi-agency Hearthstone project (helping 140 sufferers of domestic violence a month). Cross-cutting initiatives such as Better Haringey are enabling the Council to address crime issues by improving the street scene including better removal of graffiti and abandoned vehicles and more street lighting.
- 93 The Council contributes effectively to partnership working through the ambitious Haringey Safer Communities strategy. The strategy reflects community concerns, with an explicit focus on reducing crime and the fear of crime as it is a high priority for local people (including children and young people). It builds on the Council's track record of positive community engagement and is underpinned by an effective information sharing protocol that has been agreed by a wide range of partners. The Council has a good understanding of crime trends and has used this information to target resources in areas such as Tottenham and Seven Sisters Road. Outcomes achieved include the closure of 74 crack houses and the subsequent reduction in drug-related crime in the area. The Council is working hard to further develop performance management, data sharing, and accountability across the partnership. Whilst this takes place it could be more systematic.

- 94 The Council has secured £4 million of Government funding to support the strategy in the short to medium term and there is an effective sharing of resources across the partnership. There is a wide range of jointly staffed and funded initiatives such as the Safer Schools initiative that is welcomed by children and young people in an environment where bullying was identified as the top issue at the Youth Conference in 2005. More consistent evaluation of these initiatives will help the Council to judge the effectiveness of its contribution in this important priority.
- 95 The Council is working effectively with partners to identify, target and reduce anti-social behaviour within the borough. Activity is brought effectively together in an overarching strategy. There are a number of positive initiatives in place such as joint working with the Youth Inclusion Panel to tackle issues in the Haringey Ladder area. Progress has been made in many key areas such as needs assessment and bids for additional funding but delays have occurred in establishing a baseline for anti-social behaviour, making it difficult for the Council to accurately measure improvement. The Council takes a preventative approach to avoid the escalation of relatively low level anti-social behaviour. However, where appropriate the Council has successfully undertaken enforcement action. For example, 71 acceptable behaviour contracts have been signed since 2003, with a 91.5 per cent rate of maintaining acceptable behaviour, 14 anti-social behaviour orders have been obtained with only two of the orders being breached. This has helped improve the quality of life for those affected by anti-social behaviour and increased confidence levels with 64 per cent of residents pleased with the way the Council investigates complaints of anti-social behaviour. Achievements have been recognised at a national level and the Council has been asked to be a Trailblazer in relation to the RESPECT agenda.
- 96 Young people at risk of offending have access to a good range of activities to encourage them to re-engage with learning and prevent them from becoming involved in crime. These include safer schools diversionary projects such as 'Boxing Clever' and citizenship days. There has been year on year reductions in the number of offences committed by young people. Youth crime prevention work through the Youth and Inclusion Support panels is good. Only three of 112 referred in 2005/06 have re-offended and none of the 22 at risk of offending had done so.
- 97 Haringey is a highly intensive borough for drug related crime. In 2005/06, 1,240 Haringey residents were in contact with drug treatment agencies, exceeding the annual target of 1,200. Within this challenging environment Haringey is making good progress in the delivery of the National Drug Strategy with the Drug Action Team assessed as amber and improving by the National Treatment Agency. Good progress has been made in areas such as access, numbers in treatment and retention. Areas for improvement include work with carers and a further stretch on treatment and retention targets. Working relationships with the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) are good and there are positive examples of work through the Drug Intervention Programme with 85 per cent of drug using offenders accessing drug treatment. Outreach work includes a local task group to tackle street based prostitution and associated drug markets with the affect of improving the quality of life for residents.

- 98 The Council and its partners have developed a clear and comprehensive alcohol harm reduction strategy and action plan. These are based upon analysis of need and lead officers are identified from a variety of partners. There are clear links to the night-time economy. Cross-cutting work to deal with the challenges of the night-time economy have included the introduction of designated Alcohol-free zones in Wood Green and White Hart Lane that have led to a decrease in alcohol-related crime. However, the alcohol action plan is not yet fully funded, thereby posing a risk that it may not be fully delivered.
- 99 Partnerships with health, Police and the fire authorities to reduce accidental death and injury are well established and effective. There have been reductions in the numbers killed and seriously injured from 195 in 2001 to 94 in 2005. The numbers slightly injured have reduced from 1,163 in 2001 to 712 in 2005. The Council is leading a number of initiatives including Home Zones and Safer Routes to Schools. The Council is working with Age Concern to improve the safety of older people and events such as 'safer sixties' have been well received.
- 100 There are clear emergency and business continuity plans in place. Scenario testing has been carried out and learning used to improve the Council's approach. However, the links made between business continuity and risk management are not always sufficiently robust as evidenced by the impact on frontline services of the Buncefield fire.
- 101 Community cohesion is a clear strength and is incorporated into service delivery. Although there is not a formal community cohesion strategy in place, the Council has a sound understanding of its diverse community and community cohesion is an integral part of decision-making in the Council. A range of community engagement approaches is used to get closer to the community, examples include peace breakfasts and area assemblies. This has led to the Council being respected as a Community Leader and being seen as an enabler in ensuring that communities operate in a cohesive way. Outcomes achieved include the establishment of the Green Lanes Strategy Group in response to Kurdish gang violence which saw an emergence of trust and mutual understanding between previously divided groups and the provision of community football activities at Tottenham Hotspur for disadvantaged groups. Achievements in this area are also recognised externally with the Council achieving beacon status in 2005 for 'Getting closer to communities'.
- 102 The Council has a constructive relationship with the voluntary and community sector and involves them in some aspects of service delivery, for example advice sessions in the customer service centres. The Council has negotiated a Compact and there is a clear commitment by the Council to apply the Compact principles across the organisation. The Council acknowledges that commissioning with the voluntary sector needs further development and work is underway in this area.

Healthier communities

- 103** Haringey faces challenging levels of need and inequity in the health of the population. Although Haringey continues to mirror the national trend of rising life expectancy, large differences exist between the east and west of the borough. A girl growing up in the west of the borough can expect to live three years longer than a girl growing up in the east. For boys, the difference is 5.5 years. The major causes of premature death are cancer, coronary vascular disease, respiratory disease and accidents. Infant mortality remains high compared to national figures, as do teenage conception rates. In recognition of these challenges, Haringey TPCT has been designated as a 'Spearhead PCT', bringing additional resources and focus into areas of inequality.
- 104** The health of the community is addressed in a cross-cutting way within the Council's five key priorities. Partnership working is good, particularly in securing the health of children and young people. The 'Well Being Partnership Board' is one of the theme boards of the HSP with sub groups organised around service groups. However, there is no overarching strategy to improve the health of the community that is agreed with partners. As a result there is no clear structure to evaluate the impact of any initiatives on the health and well being of the community. This has been recognised by the Council and its partners who have agreed that the health and well being agenda will inform the development of the new community strategy. It is also planned to develop a joint health and well being strategy through the Well Being Partnership Board.
- 105** There is evidence of increasing prioritisation of the healthier communities' agenda. The Council and its partners have agreed that 'be healthy' should be one of the three commissioning themes for NRF allocations for 2006/07. As a result the Well Being Partnership Board are inviting projects which combat social exclusion and alienation to embed activities that promote well-being, with targets such as 500 adults participating in at least one 30 minute session of physical activity of moderate intensity for at least three months, and at least 140 older people (over 50) participating in a community based healthier eating programme. Agreement has also been obtained for the appointment of a Joint Director of Public Health with the Haringey TPCT to increase capacity and lead the work on improving health and reducing health inequalities.

- 106 The Council is promoting and implementing initiatives that aim to have a positive impact on the health and well being of the community. Of particular note is the good work being undertaken by the libraries service with their Libraries for Health and Libraries for Life campaigns which include an information campaign related to the six priorities in Choosing Health, dietary advice sessions, exercise taster sessions and walking groups. Other examples include the Eazy Card concession scheme for leisure facilities and good take up of the Healthy Schools Programme by 90 per cent of primary and 75 per cent of secondary schools. The Council is also delivering initiatives to improve the health of its staff through its Healthy Workforce framework which includes a health fair, health for life programme, health MOTs, smoking cessation, absence management/fitness for work and leisure promotion. Four-hundred staff attended the health fair and the health for life programme was taken up by 300 staff of which 100 staff completed and passed. However although this range of initiatives is clearly designed to improve health, there is no systematic monitoring of the impact of these initiatives on the health of the community.
- 107 The Council has contributed to the Haringey TPCT meeting its target for smoking cessation. A no smoking policy was adopted in March 2006, smoking cessation programmes have been offered to staff and also run in libraries and a smoke free award for business has been developed. Partnership working has also improved the access to some services, for example sexual health services. Partnership working is also evident in the 'health and housing' group aimed to foster and improve joint working between the TPCT and Council services around the health impact of housing. Current work includes joint work with the planning department on the long term primary care needs for the borough. Housing policies are contributing to improving access to health services through extending the length of leases available to homeless households when they are provided with temporary accommodation. Support is also offered to teenage parents through the Supporting People programme.
- 108 There is an emerging approach to fuel poverty. The Council is currently developing a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy of which fuel poverty is an integral part. This aims to enable a more strategic approach. The Council with private sector partners have developed a 'Here to help' scheme which is offered residents in all tenures, providing energy efficiency and home security. Supported by the Neighbourhood Renewal funding, this project has secured £100,000 from the private sector and enabled completion of work to over 1,300 properties in the private sector.

Older people

- 109** The Council and its partners have a strategic approach to services for older people that goes beyond health and social care and cuts across a range of mainstream services including housing, libraries and leisure. This is set out in the strategy 'Experience Counts' which clearly articulates an ambitious vision that addresses quality of life issues and has a good balance and emphasis on independence and wellbeing for older people at various stages of their life. The strategy was drawn up in consultation with older people and sets out the aim to tackle age discrimination. There are clear links across to other plans such as the road safety plan and supporting people strategy.
- 110** Partnership working is good and is co-ordinated through the Older Peoples Partnership Board which is a sub group of the Health and Well Being themed board of the Haringey Strategic Partnership (HSP). The action plan for 'Experience Counts' clearly demonstrates that tasks are allocated to a wide range of partners including the Borough Commander London Fire Brigade and the voluntary and community sector. Good progress has been made in implementing the strategy. The updated action plan shows that of 168 tasks in the strategy, 93 are on target or achieved with only ten not meeting the target. An example of this is the 'safer sixties' event, attended by 750 older people and delivered by the Council, Haringey TPCT, Age Concern, London Fire Service, and local housing associations. The event focused on aspects of crime prevention in the home and included the use of a dramatic production. Monitoring of the action plan is now planned to take place through the Older People's Partnership Board and an event is being planned to provide feedback to older people on progress.
- 111** A range of Council service departments are engaged in activities to meet the priorities identified in 'Experience Counts'. Examples include fit for life programmes in libraries, silver surfers, access to leisure services and floating support through the Supporting People programme. The Council has an elected member acting as a champion for older people who has acted energetically to promote a forum and a range of activities and proactively ensures that the Council responds to older people's views. The role has recently been reviewed with older people and expanded. There are also a number of other older people's champions, however they do not meet regularly with the consequence that their impact is not maximised.

- 112 The Council and its partners have a well co-ordinated approach to engagement with older people. The forum for older people is supported by the Council and has a development worker from Age Concern. The forum has agreed terms of reference and regularly has focus meetings and open meetings where issues raised by older people are debated and at which external speakers are invited. There is regular attendance by 100-300 older people and members have a cascade approach to information to their own community groups. In order to engage with hard-to-reach groups, the forum undertakes networking, with the various members of the Executive of the forum also representing different groups such as faith groups. The forum is represented at key partnership meetings and is used by the Police and health for engagement, for example the choice of the range of food provided in supported housing schemes. The forum believes that older people are listened to and are enabled to make informed choices, for example a Mobility forum has been developed by the Council, chaired by an older person, following concerns expressed by older people on the provision of community transport.
- 113 Inter-generational approaches are being employed to increase understanding and respect between older people and younger people. The Council supports the TransAge project by Age Concern, and a drop in centre has had an ongoing relationship with a primary school for several years. In addition the forum for older people has identified this as one of their priorities and older people from the forum are visiting schools and providing input to children as part of their citizenship studies. A range of information is available to older people including an information guide that has been produced collaboratively. The Council and its partners recognise that this is an area for further development and plan to update the guide and put this on the web linking to 'Experience Counts'.
- 114 The Council is developing a comprehensive range of services to older people including 24-hour homecare, a prevention and enabling team, and rapid response team. The closure of one older peoples home and the refurbishment and development of new provision has provided step down beds, intermediate care beds and extra care units. Impact can already be identified in some areas, for example, the new prevention and enabling team has enabled over 300 people to regain their independence after eight weeks, and the Metropolitan Care and Repairs Hospital Homelink service has helped 52 people to be discharged home during last year. Overall there has been improved performance in the number of older people helped to live at home. However, there has been deterioration in some performance indicators such as the level of delayed discharges and the percentage of assessments completed within the target timescales. The Council is aware of this and is taking action to address this.
- 115 The Council has made good progress in delivering services that meet the needs of the diverse community. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken three years ago which showed a slight under representation of the Black Afro Caribbean and Bangladeshi communities in older peoples services. Action was taken to address this and the repeated EIA this year showed that this is no longer the case. The Council is committed to continue to repeat the EIA to ensure services meet the needs of its diverse communities.

Children and young people

- 116** Services provided by the Council and its partners for children and young people in Haringey are good. Children and young people are generally safe and those most at risk are well protected. Outcomes for children and young people are adequate and have improved significantly over the last five years, in most cases in line with national trends, and in many cases faster than nationally and than in similar local authorities. This progress reflects the improving quality of services and the collective will across the Council and its partners to raise standards. Their capacity to build on these achievements and improve services further is good.
- 117** Services for children and young people are managed well. The Children and Young People's Plan 'Changing Lives' sets out an ambitious vision for improving outcomes for children and young people. Needs have been thoroughly analysed and gaps and underperformance in services identified. The Director of the Children's Service and the lead member for children and young people provide good leadership, supported by strong relationships with local partners and many examples of effective management at all levels. The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board is well established and is now working towards Children's Trust arrangements; joint protocols for workforce planning and performance management are in place. Financial management and budget monitoring within the children's service have been strengthened and value for money is adequate. Performance management in the children's service is good overall but the involvement of children in the evaluation of services that concern them is still in development.
- 118** Services are good overall and have had substantial impact on improving outcomes for most children and young people. Service managers generally have a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in service delivery, supported by rigorous monitoring of information and data in education and social care services. Good provision is made for looked after children. The youth service, however, is inadequate, though actions to strengthen management and practice and improve resources have recently been put in place.
- 119** The work of all local services in securing the health of children and young people is good. A number of successful multi-agency initiatives on parenting, sexual health, healthy eating, physical activities and emotional well being are improving outcomes for children and young people although some health indicators remain below national averages. However, local health economy partners have plans in place to address these issues with some interventions already making a positive impact. There is good access to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) for initial assessment and specialist cases, and significant additional resources are being deployed to ensure good and responsive service provision for vulnerable children and young people. However, CAMHS services for young people who offend are unsatisfactory. The health needs of looked after children are prioritised and adequately addressed. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive co-ordinated multidisciplinary health care services, and protocols are in place to ensure the smooth hand over of clinical care to adult health services for children and young people with complex medical needs. However, there is a long delay in accessing occupational therapy services.

- 120** Children and young people are generally safe. Although most children surveyed report that they feel safe at school and in the local area, some children and young people report feeling very unsafe in some areas of the borough, which is in part a perception and in part reflects the reality of the high number of young people who are victims of crime in Haringey. Effective multi-agency working has supported good and sustained improvement in social care practice and management since 2001. However there are delays in addressing some children's needs, including potential child protection concerns. High levels of staff turnover, caused by difficulties in recruiting permanent staff, have led to a lack of continuity in the management of some cases. The local safeguarding children board (LSCB) has established good ownership of the wider safeguarding agenda. There is a good range of support services for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities; plans to develop integrated services are in the early stages. Services for looked after children are generally good and strategies to increase the proportion in local placements are having an impact.
- 121** Strong and focused leadership, together with effective partnership between the Council and local and national agencies and providers, have led to substantial and sustained improvements in the quality of educational and leisure provision for children and young people in Haringey. Support for parents and carers is good and that to early years settings has improved. Effective school improvement strategies are continuing to raise standards of achievement, including for those from Black and minority ethnic groups and looked after children. Achievement overall is adequate, but improvement between 2001 and 2005 has been at a faster rate than nationally at most key stages, and young people make particularly good progress between the ages of 11 and 16. However, progress between the ages of 7 and 11 is slower and too many young people still leave school without any qualification. Performance data is used effectively to target resources and intensive support in those schools where achievement is less secure. Pupil attendance has improved rapidly in the last two years though it is acknowledged that further improvements are necessary. Robust systems are in place to track the whereabouts of the mobile school population and there is good support for the education of looked after children. Children and young people can access an appropriate range of recreational and leisure activities within the borough.
- 122** Children and young people, including those looked after by the Council, are supported well to contribute to society and in managing changes in their lives. There is high commitment across the partnership to the involvement of children and young people in the decisions that affect them, including through the recently established youth council. However, strategic consultation with children and young people is not yet embedded across all aspects of the Council's work. A highly effective partnership between the council, the Metropolitan Police, schools and other agencies has led to a number of well structured and well resourced projects to tackle crime, including the Safer Schools project. A wide variety of prevention activities successfully support children and young people at risk of offending. Although rates of youth crime in Haringey remain high, they are beginning to fall, and rates of re-offending are low.

- 123** Opportunities for children and young people to achieve economic wellbeing and prepare for working life are adequate. There is a good range of daycare to support parents and carers who are working or studying, although in some areas, particularly where there are high rates of worklessness, parents who want to participate in training find it harder to access flexible or subsidised day care. Partnership working between the Council, schools, the College of North East London, Connexions and the Learning and Skills Council is increasingly effective in providing better access to vocational education for 14-19 year olds, although the range of work-based provision is insufficient. Partner organisations collaborate well to reduce the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training and whose whereabouts after leaving school is unknown. Careers advice and guidance for most young people including young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is adequate overall. Support for the transition of looked after children and young people into adult life and learning or employment is good and housing arrangements for care leavers are good. Transition planning for young people with disabilities who are over the age of 14 has improved, but is not yet of a consistently high quality.

Appendix 1 - Framework for Corporate Assessment

- 1 This corporate assessment was carried out under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999, under which the Audit Commission has power to inspect local authorities' arrangements for securing continuous improvement. The results of the corporate assessment contribute to the determination of the overall CPA category for an authority, which the Audit Commission is required to assess and report on under Section 99 of the Local Government Act 2003.
- 2 The Council's self assessment provided a key resource in focusing the assessment activity which included consideration of:
 - key documentation, including the Council's improvement plan;
 - updated performance indicators and performance data; and
 - interviews and meetings attended.
- 3 The assessment for Haringey London Borough Council was undertaken by a team from the Audit Commission and took place over the period from 12-23 June 2006.
- 4 This report has been discussed with the Council, which has been given the opportunity to examine the Audit Commission's assessment. This report will be used as the basis for improvement planning by the Council.