



**Executive**  
16<sup>th</sup> January 2006

**Report from the Director of  
Housing & Community Care and  
Director of Children & Families**

For Action

Wards Affected:  
ALL

**Social Services Star Ratings and Annual Performance  
Reports 2004/05**

Forward Plan Ref: A&SC-04/05-31

**1.0 Summary**

1.1 This report provides detail on the star ratings judgements for Social Services for 2004/05, and also the separate Annual Performance Assessments for Children's education and social care services and Adult social care which contribute to the star ratings judgements.

**2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 Note the annual performance assessments for adults social care and children's education and social care services produced by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and Ofsted.

2.2 Note the significant number of improvements observed in the performance assessment reports

2.3 Note the areas for further improvement as identified in the performance assessment reports

**3.0 Detail**

3.1 The performance of Social Services as provided by all local authorities in the country is assessed and reviewed annually by the Commission for Social

Care Inspection (CSCI) and, as from 2004/05, by Ofsted with regard to social services for children and families. There is an annual performance review cycle, a significant element of which is the production of the Annual Performance Assessment report in autumn. The performance assessment reports inform the star ratings judgements which, along with the annual performance reports and details of performance against national performance indicators, became public on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2005.

- 3.2 During 2004/05, changes were made to the performance assessment regime to reflect requirements of the Children Act, specifically the separation of adults and children's social care provision. As a result, separate annual performance reports have been introduced for adults and children's services for the first time. As in previous years, an overall star rating relating to social care provision has been awarded which is made up of separate judgements relating to adults and children's services.
- 3.3 With regard to the Annual Performance Assessment of Brent Council's education and children's social care services, an assessment scale of 1-4 was introduced which graded the performance of the full range of the council's services for children in terms of social care, education and other support. This is the first year in which all children's services have been assessed in this way. Table 1 below sets out the grades awarded to Brent, table 2 explains how these scores are interpreted in terms of social care star ratings.

Table 1

Areas for judgement	Final judgements <sup>1</sup>
The contribution of <i>the local authority's social care services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people	3
The contribution of <i>local authority's education services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	3
The contribution of <i>the local authority's children's services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	3
The council's overall capacity to improve its services for children and young people	3

<sup>1</sup> Social Care judgements use CSCI's descriptors as follows:

Table 2

<i>LSIF Ratings</i>	<i>Local Services Inspectorate Forum (LSIF) Descriptors</i>	<b>CSCI Ratings Serving People Well</b>	<b>CAPACITY TO IMPROVE DESCRIPTOR</b>
4	A service that delivers well above minimum requirements for users	Overall serving people well	Very good
3	A service that consistently delivers above minimum requirements for users	Serving most people well	Good/promising
2	A service that delivers only minimum requirements for users	Serving some people well	Adequate
1	A service that does not deliver minimum requirements for users	Not serving people well	Inadequate

3.4 Copies of the Annual Performance Assessment of Brent Council's education and children's social care services, and the record of performance for adult social care are attached at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. These detail strengths and achievements during 2004/05 and also identify areas for improvement in future years.

### 3.5 **Achievements and strengths identified in 2004/05**

A significant number of achievements and strengths have been identified by CSCI and Ofsted in the annual performance assessments. These include:

#### **Children's services strengths:**

- Strong corporate and elected member support with a Corporate Policy Team and Scrutiny Committee
- Last year the former Social Services Department delivered a balanced budget.
- The new IT Client Workflow system – Frameworki - has now been effectively implemented
- Good investment in staff training - with a greater percentage of annual budget spent on training than comparator councils.
- Sickness absence has reduced over the past year.
- Collaboration with relevant partners in analysing needs and setting targets for improvement

- Strong member leadership and support with increased investment in Children's Services.
- The Children & Families Department has a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses
- Sound performance management systems in place which are fit for purpose.
- promotion of healthy lifestyles through schools' participation in the National healthy Schools Standard and good quality of sports provision.
- Good access to support from CAMHS
- The authority has developed a Teenage Pregnancy and Parenthood Strategy with support from the DFES which underpins the provision of services agreed with the Primary Care Trust.
- The authority is working in partnership with the Primary Care Trust to improve access to health checks for looked after children.
- Child Protection Services are well managed with strong partnerships and joint working arrangements resulting in a significant reduction in the number of children on the Child Protection Register and no increase in re-registrations.
- Stability of placements for looked after children remains strong and has further improved since last year.
- Key Stage 1 – are in line with national average and improvement in reading, writing and maths.
- Effective support for pupils of Black African and Caribbean heritage has assisted in good results being achieved in this group.
- Key Stage 2 – standards in maths are above both national average and those achieved in similar councils.
- Key Stage 3 – the rate of improvement is above that nationally.
- Key Stage 3 to 4 – progress is very good and the number of pupils gaining five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE is well above the proportion in similar authorities.
- Unauthorised absence from school remains below the national average in secondary schools and in line in primary and the council has developed a broad range of strategies aimed at improving these figures.
- The authority is extending its provision for excluded pupils and half of the pupils excluded in Key Stage 3 are successfully returned to school.
- Effective support to young people in the youth justice system with the number of young offenders in employment, education and training being above national figures.
- Children and young people are encouraged to participate in decision making through well established groups and schools have developed policies to ensure they have the views of disabled children and those with learning disabilities.
- 80% of looked after children communicated their views at Reviews.
- The percentage of looked after children who have received final warnings, reprimands or convictions has decreased since last year.
- A high percentage of care leavers are engaged in education, employment or training at the age of 19.

- Good improvement in planning for young people with disabilities and special educational needs with almost all having transition plans and 72% in education and training.

#### **Adults services achievements:**

- progress in implementing the National Service Framework for older people;
- on target to implement most of the components of the Single Assessment Process and has provided appropriate training to professionals
- Good use of the Learning Disabilities Development Fund,
- Joint Partnership Board and pooled budget established in respect of Integrated Community Equipment Services
- Good progress made in implementing the National Service Framework for people with mental health problems.
- a variety of different groups, users and carers are able to participate in consultation on service development.
- The Council delivered a balanced budget at the end of the last financial year.
- integrated services for people with mental health problems, learning disabilities and for the provision of integrated community equipment services with the Primary Care Trust.
- Unit cost indicators broadly in line with the outer London average for the cost of residential, nursing and home care.
- older people benefit from a range of services, which reflect the rich ethnic diversity of the borough.
- The provision of intensive home care has increased
- a pilot project with the Department of Health and Action on Elder Abuse to develop performance indicators related to the protection of vulnerable adults
- Performance is strong on the percentage of items and adaptations delivered within seven working days
- The proportion of older people from black and ethnic minority groups who receive assessments and care packages is proportionate to the composition of the local population.
- The Council has continued to promote diversity by the publication of a number of reports, enabling staff to attend disability awareness courses and has continued to implement its equalities action plan.
- The charging arrangements are working effectively,
- Fair Access to Care Services eligibility criteria are well embedded into the assessment and care planning arrangements for older people
- The new domiciliary care contract provides enhanced flexibility to meet service users' cultural needs
- The council has a clear human resources strategy which ensures that there is compliance with key areas such as equalities legislation, monitoring diversity and promoting life chances for disabled staff.
- There is a high level of investment in staff training

- The whole of the former Social Services Department has achieved accreditation under Investors In People.
- The Council has continued to implement its “Improving Brent” Agenda
- Managers and staff continue to receive strong leadership and direction from councillors.

### **3.6 Areas for Improvement**

The annual performance assessments identify a number of areas for improvement. These are detailed in Appendices 1 and 2. These issues are incorporated into the Housing and Community Care Service Development Plan in terms of adults social care, and in the Children and Young People’s Plan in relation to children’s services. These include detailed action plans which are regularly monitored to ensure that children and families services, and adult social care services in Brent continue to improve as part of the council’s overall drive for excellence.

Within the overall performance assessment framework relating to both children’s and adults social care, there are a number of ‘Key Threshold’ performance indicators which are significantly weighted in terms of influencing star ratings judgements. These include:

#### *Children*

- Stability of placements of Looked After Children
- Education qualifications of Looked After Children
- Adoptions of Looked After Children
- Reviews of child protection cases

#### *Adults*

- Provision of intensive home care
- Take-up of Direct Payments
- Delivery of equipment and adaptations
- Admissions of people aged 65 or over to residential/nursing care
- Waiting times for assessments
- Waiting times for care packages

Maintaining and where possible improving performance against these indicators is critical in retaining the current star rating for social care services and may have resource implications.

### **3.5 Star Ratings**

The annual performance assessments directly inform the star ratings judgements awarded to social care services. Two separate judgements are made: one relating to services for adults, one relating to services for children. These judgements lead to an overall rating for the council’s social services. The judgements identify how well people are served, and the capacity for improvement.

The judgements for Brent were:

***Social Care Services for children***

Serving people well?

**Most**

Capacity for improvement?

**Promising**

***Social Care Services for adults***

Serving people well?

**Most**

Capacity for improvement?

**Promising**

**Overall star rating: 2 stars.**

Whilst the overall star rating remains the same as in 2003/04, there has been improvement in that social care services for children were previously judged to be serving 'some' people well rather than 'most' people as judged in 2004/05.

This maintains the general trend of continuous improvement within social care services in Brent recognised by external inspectorates which has shown improved performance ratings since the introduction of star ratings in 2002.

Nationally, 58% of local authorities received a two star rating. 36 councils improved their rating compared to 2004, while 15 deteriorated. For outer London councils, the star ratings average just below two meaning Brent is above average for our type of council.

## **4.0 Financial Implications**

4.1 The report indicates that there may be resource implications arising from maintaining or improving the CSCI's rating of the departments. The report states that action plans have been prepared to ensure that the areas for improvement identified by CSCI are delivered by the departments. Experience shows that many of these improvements can be made within existing resources. Others may require additional resources but the task of identifying these and how they can be funded from existing budgets is not complete. It is likely that some additional resources can be made available to fund improvement through more efficient procurement.

These issues are being considered as part of the 2006/07 budget process which will be finally agreed by Full Council on 6<sup>th</sup> March. For example, the department has prepared a growth bid of £720,000 to meet the increased demand for homecare. This will improve the performance against the indicator for intensive homecare and it may have the effect of reducing waiting times for care packages.

## **5.0 Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report

## **6.0 Diversity Implications**

6.1 This report and the annual reviews of performance recognise good progress and practice in respect of equality and diversity issues in the delivery of social care services which contribute to the improvement of life chances for our diverse community.

## **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications**

7.1 There are no staffing or accommodation implications

### **Background Papers**

Annual performance assessment of London borough of Brent council's education and children's social care services 2005

Record of performance assessment for adult social care

### **Contact Officers**

Martin Cheeseman – Director Housing and Community Care  
[martin.cheeseman@brent.gov.uk](mailto:martin.cheeseman@brent.gov.uk) tel 0208 937 2341

John Christie - Director and Children and Families [john.christie@brent.gov.uk](mailto:john.christie@brent.gov.uk)  
tel 0208 937 3130

Mike Bibby –Strategy, Planning & Performance Manager, Housing and Community Care [mike.bibby@brent.gov.uk](mailto:mike.bibby@brent.gov.uk) tel 0208 937 4164

Anna Janes – Head of systems & Performance Management, Social Care, Children & Families [anna.janes@brent.gov.uk](mailto:anna.janes@brent.gov.uk) tel 0208 937 4735

MARTIN CHEESEMAN  
Director of Housing and Community Care

JOHN CHRISTIE  
Director of Children and Families