



Performance and Finance Select Committee

24th January 2007

Report from the Director of Policy and Regeneration

For Information

Wards Affected:
ALL

Report Title: CPA – Where are we and where are we going

1.0 Summary

Brent's headline interim BVPI general survey satisfaction scores are out and their impact on our CPA score both this year and the following is predicted below. We only have until March 31st 2007 to affect our score in relation to the 2007 December Refresh CPA star rating (the make up of which is yet to be finally confirmed by the Audit Commission). At present we are unlikely to be able to maintain our corporate score of three stars in 2007 despite improvements in most areas of service provision. The area impacting on our score most is the culture block but further challenges to continued service provision resulting from our financial context in the year ahead are also predicted to affect progress in other blocks.

To have any chance of reaching four stars before the CPA is superseded by a new framework in 2009, we have to continue to raise performance of low scoring performance indicators before March 2008. To reach four stars we have to be able to maintain present performance in all the blocks and improve our score for the culture, housing and environment blocks to a three.

2.0 Recommendations

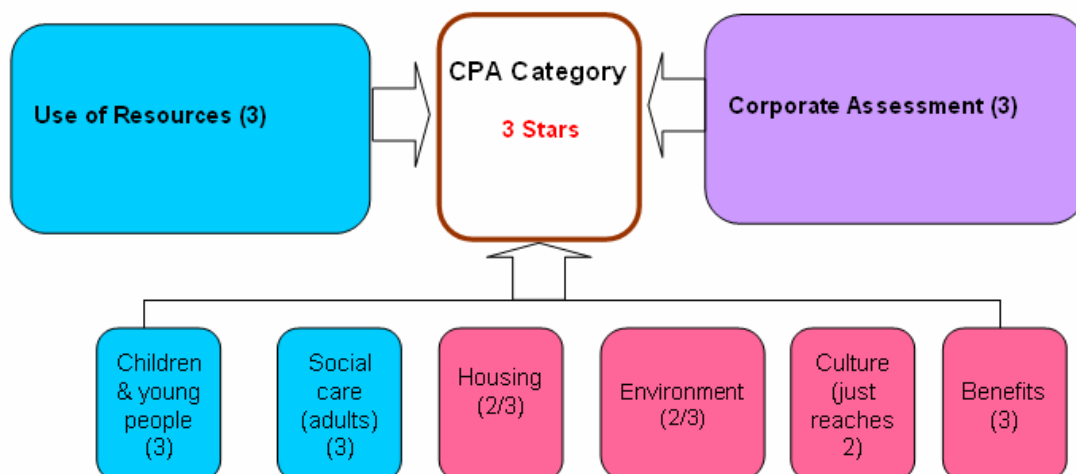
2.1 To note the report

3.0 Satisfaction Survey

3.1 The 2006/07 BVPI General Survey is currently being finalised by the independent research company Ipsos MORI, however, initial, unconfirmed results indicate a general increase in public satisfaction levels for Brent Council.

- 3.2 Brent achieved a total of 1,539 completed surveys, 1510 which were valid, from a random sample of 5,000 households. This equates to a response rate of 30.2% which is an increase of 6% from Brent's 2003/04 BVPI survey which only achieved 1,194 completed surveys (a 24% response rate). This is a significant improvement and sets Brent against a London and national trend of decreasing response rates. Brent is one of only two authorities to increase their response rates from 2003 (MORI administered surveys only). Brent's response rate is also 6% above the inner London average response rate of 24.31%, an average which is down by 4% from 2003/04 rates.
- 3.3 This successful result is attributed to Brent's selection of an alternative methodology to the majority of London councils. Brent was one of only two London authorities to send out a pre survey letter in order to raise awareness of the importance of completing the survey. Brent was also the only London council (administered by MORI) who conducted hand collections. Hand collections were particularly crucial in contributing to Brent's successful response rate with this final stage equalling 8% of total responses. This is double the national average of 3-4% for this final collection stage and the highest response rate in the country out of all 112 MORI administered General Surveys. This combined initiative enabled as many residents as possible to participate in the general survey thereby ensuring results are an accurate reflection of the views of residents in Brent.
- 3.4 Interim Results
Initial results from the 2006/07 BVPI General Survey indicate that satisfaction levels with the majority of Brent council services have positively increased since the last general survey in 2003/04. These results, however, are interim, unconfirmed results from MORI based on 1,400 processed surveys. Final headline results and comparative data from across the country will be issued in January or early February 2007 due to delays in the Audit Commission weightings being applied and data being validated.
- 3.5 General satisfaction with the overall service provided by the authority positively increased in interim results; something also reflected in satisfaction levels across the following services: complaints handling, transport, housing, personal social services and planning.
- 4.0 2006 Position**
- 4.1 In February 2007 Brent will receive its 2006 refreshed CPA score and is likely to have just managed to retain an overall three star rating by one performance indicator. Risks to this predicted score include unconfirmed weightings and confidence intervals for satisfaction scores, changes made to data in validation by the Audit Commission, and any changes to the rules made closer to announcement of final scores in February as a result of performance across London in surveys, or against new performance indicators introduced in the 2006 model. Culture block scores across London are the main reason why councils are only just maintaining their overall CPA rating and in some cases losing a star this year. Each service block must maintain a score of two to keep an overall council three star rating.

Estimate of Brent's 2006 position based on interim figures



5.0 2007 Position

5.1 The 2007 CPA model has not been confirmed: this includes the performance indicators which we will be measured against, thresholds and any rules relating to the performance indicators. We cannot calculate the likely scores for most blocks as a result. Thresholds to measure our performance against will not be set until January or February 2007. However there is more information about the culture block compared to other blocks. Based upon the latest guidance our overall council star rating will **still** be subject to performance in the culture block and on present performance in this block alone we are unlikely to maintain three stars.

5.2 We do know that the harder test rules will begin to have more of an effect on all blocks, with inspection scores no longer boosting block scores to the same extent, if at all. This could be compounded by the financial situation and the cost shunting we are expecting to experience in both adult and children's social care. The scores we receive for satisfaction, once confirmed by the audit commission, will also remain with us for the next three years limiting movement of block performance upwards.

5.3 The following comments on the service blocks are made in relation to 2006 performance indicators which will remain in the service blocks in 2007 and an indication given about other aspects where we are awaiting information.

6.0 Culture in 2007

6.1 In 2007 the culture block is rated entirely on performance indicators because the inspection score no longer counts. The culture block is problematic because of the weighting given to satisfaction performance indicators, the use of new performance indicators where likely performance has been unclear and the fact that it is very biased towards measuring libraries and sports performance. The present CPA model is undermining the value CPA has offered us in driving up performance and next year Brent may well see the full impact of this. Initial calculations show that Brent is very unlikely to be able to even scrape a 2 for this block in 2007 and as such the overall score for the council will drop to 2 stars.

6.2 A mixed result can be seen within the 2006 culture block in relation to **interim** satisfaction results which, once validated, will count for the next three years. Increases were realised for the libraries and parks and open spaces indicators resulting in libraries shifting above the CPA lower threshold. Satisfaction with museums / galleries and theatres / concert halls went down resulting in a score that remain below the CPA lower thresholds.

6.3 A number of performance indicators are unlikely to score above the lower threshold in 2007 December refresh, when 2006 performance is considered. Because the make up of the block is still unclear the number of performance indicators allowed to score below the lower threshold differs with each possible model, the most likely figures are given here.

Rules for achieving culture block score

	Limit to number of performance indicators which can be at or below lower threshold	Number of performance indicators which must be at or above upper threshold
2 Stars	5 or 6	
3 Stars	2 or 3	5 or 6

Further to the likely satisfaction scores at least five performance indicators appear likely to score below the lower threshold in 2007.

7.0 Environment in 2007

7.1 In 2007 the environment block is expected to have three performance indicators deleted from it and fifteen added resulting in a score based upon our performance against forty-two performance indicators. Our performance in 2006 is likely to result in a strong two or possibly a three for the block. Interim results point to large increases in satisfaction likely to be achieved across in some CPA indicators in the environment block: satisfaction with household waste collection and cleanliness with public space. Of the performance indicators in the environment block for 2006, three are likely to perform below the lower threshold. For the additional 15 indicators in the 2007 assessment; of the indicators that we do have information on, three are performing below our targets. We cannot make further assessment of the impact of new indicators and harder test rules until we have further guidance on the 2007 model but we expect the harder test and higher thresholds to be a challenge to the block.

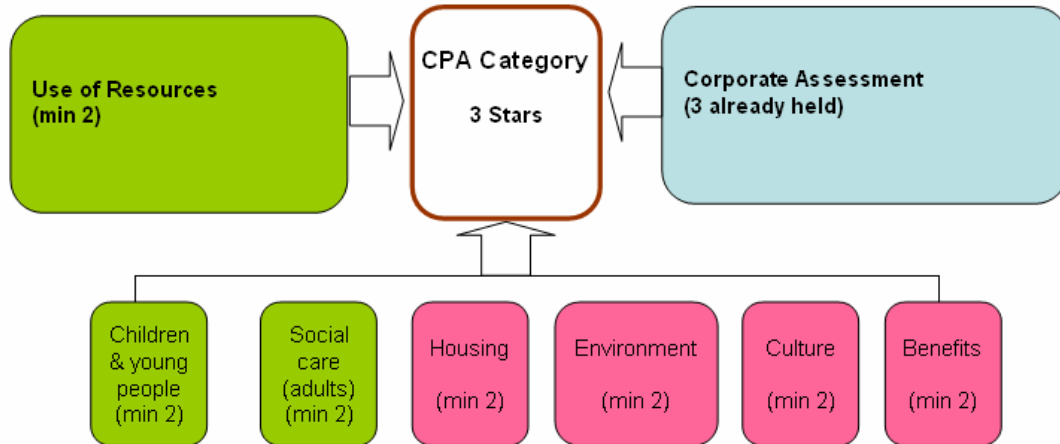
8.0 Housing in 2007

8.1 In 2007 the housing block is expected to have two performance indicators deleted from it and eleven added resulting in a score based upon our performance against thirty indicators. Our performance in 2006 is likely to result in a probable three for the block. Of the performance indicators in the block it is predicted two will perform below the lower threshold. For the additional eleven indicators for the 2007 assessment, three are presently performing below our targets. We cannot make further assessment of the impact of new indicators and harder test rules until we have further guidance on the 2007 model but we expect the harder test and higher thresholds to be a challenge to the block.

9.0 Scores required to achieve three or four stars

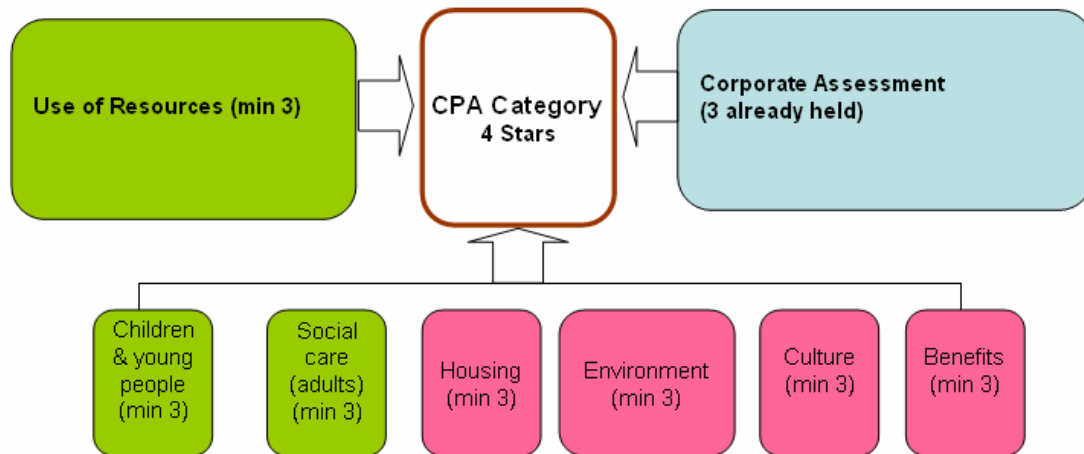
9.1 Three stars

To maintain three stars Brent must have a score of at least two in each of the blocks.



9.2 Four stars

Brent must achieve a score of three or more in each of the blocks in order to gain four stars.



10.0 **Conclusion**

10.1

In February 2007 Brent will receive its 2006 refreshed CPA score and is likely to have just managed to retain an overall three star rating by one performance indicator (in our poorest performing culture block). This is despite the fact that performance across the other service blocks has improved; notably in the Children and Young People's block following the JAR, the Use of Resources block and the Revenues and Benefits block which are all now scoring strong threes.

At present there is limited detailed information on the thresholds to be met to achieve the scores we need in the 2007 CPA refresh, but on our position so far in the culture block Brent is likely to lose a star in 2007. With 2006 performance, the likelihood the thresholds will become more challenging in 2007, the harder test and the financial context, other blocks will find maintaining performance much more challenging. More information is due to be available in January and February and the best move Brent can make is to

attempt improvement in key poor performing performance indicators during financial year 2007 – 2008 to drive for a higher score in 2008. SPG will be discussing a CPA strategy in the new year to bring back to CMT and Performance and Finance Select Committee.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 None, directly arising from the report

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 None, directly arising from the report

Background Papers

CPA – The harder test framework for 2006 (July)

CPA – The harder test 2006, Guide to service assessments for single tier and county councils (July)

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