



Overview and Scrutiny Committee
24th July 2007

**Report from the Director of Policy and
Regeneration Unit**

For Information

Wards Affected:
ALL

**LAA Annual Review ‘Summary of Progress’ Report for
2006/07**

1.0 Summary

This report demonstrates the progress made by London Borough of Brent and its’ partners on the Local Strategic Partnership in delivering their priorities within the LAA. This report covers the first year of implementation of Brent’s LAA, from April 2006 to March 2007. The report will summarise the steps that have been taken at both the strategic level of the LSP Executive to strengthen the structures and mechanisms that support joint working and, at the detailed operational level, to improve services and achieve enhanced performance targets.

The refreshed LAA, signed off in March 2007 introduces some new priorities to the LAA as a result of gaps identified during the first year of development of the LAA. Further changes to priorities will be agreed and developed during the current financial year to adapt the current LAA to the new LAA2 as set out in the Local Government White Paper and in guidance thereafter.

2.0 Introduction

Brent’s LAA is based on the shared priorities set out in Brent’s Community Strategy 2006-2010. The LAA is also embedded into Brent Council’s Corporate Strategy 2006-2010, which incorporates the priorities and targets contained in the LAA, designed to drive forward local community priorities in partnership with other public service agencies, the business sector and community and voluntary groups.

Brent’s LAA is a single pot LAA, constructed to deliver the ambitions and community priorities within the Sustainable Community Strategy 2006-2010. It is a wide-ranging and comprehensive set of objectives focused on delivering our shared vision for the future quality of life experienced by all people living

and working in Brent. Brent's LAA is constructed around themes as contained in the Sustainable Community Strategy, which was enabled by the single pot status of the LAA.

3.0 Brent's Sustainable Community Strategy 2006-2010

The Sustainable Community Strategy sets out a vision for Brent that the LAA is a part of carrying out. The vision is that Brent will be a prosperous and lively borough, full of opportunity and welcoming to all; a place that will thrive for generations to come whose future will be determined by local people.

The Strategy is streamlined and structured around three simple, unambiguous, but challenging cross cutting ambitions to make Brent:

- A great place
- A borough of opportunity
- An inclusive community.

The LAA is arranged according to these three themes and the priorities set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy, with both projects and stretch targets addressing these areas.

The Strategy provides the local strategic partnership with a clear framework for strategic planning, not just for partnership activity but within the individual public, private, voluntary and community sector agencies.

4.0 Reducing Inequalities

Throughout our LAA there is a strong focus on reducing inequalities- in employment, health, achievement and environment. The projects and stretch targets in the LAA are specially designed to introduce new ways to address old problems, with the preventative work with children, and the emphasis on improving educational outcomes for Looked After Children as just two examples. The headline outcomes are mutually reinforcing, with sport and leisure making a significant contribution to our crime and disorder, public health and quality of life agendas, and the stretch targets reinforce these outcomes. Our value for money measures are designed to release resources to invest in new need. As a partnership we intend to continue to operate in an inclusive, responsive and accountable manner. These ideals will be an important part of our negotiations for our LAA2.

The following sections of this report will cover:

- Progress against our six headline outcomes including the stretch targets which underpin the headline objectives, including performance in the wider outcomes framework;
- Enhancements to our arrangements for performance management of partnerships;
- Expenditure on LAA priorities.

5.0 Performance Management of the Partnership

Brent have continued to develop the framework for performance managing Brent's partnership. Performance within Partners for Brent and the LSP theme groups is reported and discussed quarterly, and improvement actions are undertaken as a result. The LAA performance reports are discussed at the Partners for Brent meetings each quarter as well, which gives Brent partners an opportunity to query performance, and to celebrate good performance where it has been achieved.

6.0 Public Satisfaction

The LAA outcomes framework contains many perceptions measures. The three-yearly Local Government User Satisfaction Survey was carried out during autumn 2006, and the results of those indicators relevant to the LAA are contained in the outcomes framework.

Overall satisfaction levels in the borough increased between 2003/04 and 2006/07, and most relevant to the LAA are the increases in satisfaction levels with parks and open spaces, litter and detritus, libraries, and sports/ leisure facilities and events. 44% of Brent residents also reported that they felt they had influence over local decision-making, up from 23% in the last survey of 2003/04.

The LAA is designed to support these increases in public satisfaction, to help sustain them, and increase public satisfaction with the area further. The survey so soon into the start of the LAA enables Brent to use the information as a focus for the future of the LAA.

7.0 Headline Outcomes

Brent's LAA is structured around six headline outcome areas each with a cluster of projects and indicators designed to operate as the LAA's delivery programmes. Their objective is to turn our Community Strategy ambitions into reality, capturing the key aspirations of our strategic service partnership's individual agendas, and drawing them together. The six headline outcome areas are:

1. Welcoming Streets and Parks: To tackle the public anxiety and fear of crime that currently undermines confidence in using public spaces and engaging in the life of the borough.
2. Access to Leisure: To increase participation in sporting and cultural activities, not only to improve the health of those in the borough but to maximise the broader social outcomes such as lifelong learning and community cohesion.
3. Local Employment: To support those who are further away from the labour market to move into work and towards independence. Key beneficiaries will include those on incapacity benefits, ex-offenders, with physical disabilities, a mental handicap or in temporary accommodation.
4. Longer, Healthier Lives: To address health inequalities, particularly in deprived neighbourhoods, and to promote the choosing health agenda through actions to promote healthy eating and physical activity, to improve sexual and mental wellbeing and to reduce injuries and substance misuse.

5. Settled Homes: To tackle Brent's high levels of dependency on temporary accommodation.
6. Early Success: To establish a new project designed to support children with additional needs. The project will involve carrying out a comprehensive assessment and provide a tailored package of support services.

The following section outlines the progress made between April 2006 and March 2007 in taking forward the aims within our headline outcomes.

8.0 Welcoming Streets and Parks

Our Welcoming Streets and Parks projects are focused upon tackling the public anxiety and fear of crime that currently undermines confidence in using public spaces and engaging in the life of the borough. They take an integrated approach addressing a number of complimentary strands covering:-

- Provision of high visibility public reassurance services such as the council warden services, the police Safer Neighbourhood Teams and CCTV operation.
- Reducing violent crime in the borough particularly gun enabled crime and domestic violence.
- Measures to address anti-social behaviour.
- Reducing the number of accidental fires in dwellings.
- Actions to tackle enviro-crime and create high quality public spaces and streets.
- Improving the level of street cleanliness.
- Better operational integration of the council's environmental management functions and local Police services.

9.0 Up-date on activities related to the project

- a) Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNTs) are now operational in each ward, and were up to full strength by the end of the calendar year. Brent's request for flexible deployment of these resources was denied and the MPS are required to stick to the 3-2-1 format in each ward. The Council has utilised Neighbourhood Renewal funding in the Harlesden and Stonebridge area to purchase two additional police officers for these wards. The New Deal for Communities in South Kilburn has utilised NDC funding to purchase two additional police constables for the area. Towards the end of the year, the Council entered negotiations with the MPS to purchase 16 additional PSCOs, replacing the former Town Centre Wardens. These officers will be in place in the new financial year and will be deployed to priority/ high crime wards.
- b) Brent is now using the CDRP Operational Delivery Group and Police Tasking Group to direct joint services. The Police management of SNTs is now under a single chief inspector. There have been examples of good joint work and operations; for example the Notting Hill Carnival, Diwali, and the Kilburn Operation Tanker. The Council, Police, and DAAT have also worked jointly to implement a Controlled Drinking Zone around the Kilburn High Road. This has included the DAAT funding additional outreach workers to target street drinkers and try and direct them towards treatment and support services. Further joint operations will be planned for the whole year.

- c) The PCSO contract specifies that the additional officers part funded by the Council will report envirocrime to the Council, and this will be monitored. The Police and SNT sergeants have been supplied the contact details of each Council StreetCare Officer and encouraged to make them a member of the ward panel.
- d) The new Council administration took the decision to disband the street/ town centre warden service and replace the wardens with additional PCSOs. The Brent Housing Partnership wardens, and the park wardens remain in place, but they have not been integrated as planned into ward based teams.
- e) A Brent Council Control Room has been established. This is the operational centre for the Council's control systems, and is a link to the police station has been established. There is a MPS officer deployed to the room, and the link is working well.
- f) The LAA and the CDRP performance management framework have been linked at the strategic level. The SNTs and the StreetCare officers share the strategic targets of the partnership to reduce crime and fear of crime. Each operational unit maintains their own targets that contribute to those overall outcomes. The Council's crime analyst relays data on envirocrime to the SNTs.
- g) The Ward Working scheme was on hold for 2006/07 due to changes to the Borough administration. The scheme, now called Neighbourhood Working will be rolled out across Brent from October 2007 onwards.

10.0 Performance

During 2007/08 there have been some positive improvements in performance against some of the targets in the Welcoming Streets and Parks section of the LAA.

- a) The number of abandoned vehicles processed in Brent has reduced significantly during 2006/07, from 4,000 in 2005/06 to 1,747 in 2006/07. Further improvements in performance on abandoned vehicles have included the investigations of abandoned vehicles within 24 hours of being reported, from 84% to 97.51%, and the proportion of abandoned vehicles moved within 24 hours has increased from 71% in 2005/06 to 98.31% in 2006/07.
- b) The single aggregated figure for the BCS basket of 10 crime indicators saw performance improve by 1,904 crimes in 2006/07 against 2005/06. This was a decrease of an additional 4% on the target. The 2006/07 figure of 18,419 crimes for Brent is the 7th best in London, and a real achievement for Brent.
- c) Gun crime in Brent fell during 2006/07, with 175 gun enabled offences occurring in Brent during the year, compared to 200 in 2005/06. This is also better than the target of 203.
- d) The number of first time entrants to the youth justice system also decreased in 2006/07 from 224 in 2005/06 to 175.
- e) Performance against the London Fire Brigade targets in the LAA has been good, with less primary and vehicle fires than in 2005/06.

11.0 Stretch Targets

There are three stretch targets related to the Welcoming Streets and Parks theme. These are:-

1. Reducing the number of accidental fires in residential properties
2. a) Increasing the percentage of domestic violence incidents where a suspect is present and an arrest is made.
b) Increasing the percentage of domestic violence incidents which result in sanctioned detection.
c) Reducing the proportion of domestic violence cases that reach court and the case is dropped.
3. The proportion of land assessed as having unacceptable levels of litter and detritus (BV199a)

11.1 Residential Fires

There were 236 accidental fires in residential properties in Brent in 2006/07. This was 40 fires less than the target, and is a good achievement. The main strategy to reduce accidental fires in residential properties is to ensure that all homes in Brent have a functional fire alarm. The fire service provides free home checks and fire alarms for all residents who request one.

11.2 Domestic Violence

There is now a “virtual team” of Domestic Violence specialists across Brent. These include a Civilian Statement Taker, a part time Specialist Domestic Violence Court worker, and Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy posts. Some staff will work with the voluntary and community sector to include local knowledge in the project.

The Specialist Domestic Violence Court was launched in February 2007, and the court is now in operation. Magistrates have received specialist training for the court. Members of the Domestic Violence Forum are often in attendance in the court to monitor feedback of services.

The SDVC works in conjunction with other projects that offer support and advice in Brent including: The Domestic Violence Advocacy Project; The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Panel; The Asian Women’s Resource Centre; Women’s Aid; and Families Without Fear. These groups act as advisors to the overarching co ordination of delivering a better service to residents experiencing Domestic Violence.

There are three parts to the LAA target on domestic violence.

- a) The proportion of domestic violence incidents where a suspect is present and an arrest is made for an incident recorded as DV related- the target for 2006/07 was 37.9%, and early indications are that it was met and exceeded.
- b) The proportion of domestic violence incidents which result in sanctioned detection- performance in 2006/07 was 35.5%, which was above the target of 30%.
- c) The proportion of cases that reach court where the case was dropped at court due to no evidence being offered, the judge directing or ordering an acquittal or a decision to discontinue- 2006/07 is the baseline year for this performance indicator.

11.3 *Street Cleanliness*

During 2006/07 the proportion of streets showing an unacceptable level of litter and detritus as measured by ENCAMS was 32%, which is two percentage points worse than 2005/06. Satisfaction surveys in the borough during 2006/07 showed an increase in satisfaction with street cleanliness in the borough of 14% since the last survey. The StreetCare wardens' own surveys show an average of 22% of streets showing an unacceptable level of litter and detritus.

Staff from the Council have undergone training from ENCAMS to help determine the levels of acceptable litter and detritus, and their scores continue to be lower than the Capital Standards survey results. The score of 32% suggests that street cleanliness in Brent is on a par with three years ago when complaint levels were much higher than now, public perception was much poorer than now, and general Member and Officer satisfaction was much lower than now. Brent is working with other authorities to understand why the Capital Standards scores are out of line with our own inspection scores and the increased resident satisfaction recorded by MORI.

Areas of concern have been specified to a higher cleaning standard in the new waste and cleansing contract which has come into effect in 2007/08. It is anticipated that the new contract will deliver a marked improvement in our scores, particularly as industrial areas and low density housing- traditionally poor performing land uses- will enjoy a much greater frequency of cleansing.

11.4 **Access to Leisure**

The aim of this project is to increase participation in sports activities contributing to a range of positive local benefits including better health and well-being, community cohesion and engagement of young and older people. The programme is specifically aimed at a number of groups who currently have lower levels of participation in sport or physical activity. These cover:-

- Encouraging more young people to use council owned leisure facilities.
- Increasing the number of adults taking part in sport or physical activity at least three times a week.
- Increasing participation of under represented groups such as children with disabilities and looked after children.

Over the past year, LAA funding has been used to promote free swimming for children during school holidays at Vale Farm sports centre and Willesden sports centre.

During the school holidays, the sports service have provided an extensive and varied programme of activity at many sites across the borough. Activities offered include; climbing, bollywood dance, archery, fencing, tag rugby, netball, street dance, and multi sports in parks. We have significantly increased the awareness of these programmes by implementing wider and varied marketing initiatives as well as direct mailing the borough's looked after children and working with the Community Safety and pupil referral units.

To increase participation by adults we have developed, promoted and expanded a programme of leader led walks, training up local people to become walk leaders. We have promoted the B.Active scheme to encourage concessionary groups to take advantage of the 40% discount they can receive on sports centres prices. We have also organised classes in Kingsbury using Fitness First's facilities but providing classes for the local community and day centre clients. We have also worked with the PCT to train an individual to be able to deliver Phase 4 cardiac rehabilitation sessions in the borough, and offered activities to Council employees to encourage them to become more active.

The sports service have recruited three sports development officers to enable them to continue to develop activities and increase activities and opportunities for Brent residents.

11.5 Performance

The Sports Service have increased the number of schemes and sporting opportunities available for both Looked After Children and children and young people with disabilities. In 2006/07, 8 children looked after attended 43 sessions in 9 different sports/ activities, up from just one child taking part in these sessions the year before. There were 40 visits by disabled young people to sports facilities, although there were no dedicated activities for them. A new Sports Development Officer began in April 2007 who will organise dedicated activities.

There were 49,760 visits by young people taking part in sport and physical activity at council facilities during 2006/07, which exceeded the annual target of 33,800, and stands us in good stead to achieve the stretch target at the end of three years.

The baseline for the stretch target the percentage of adults taking part in sport and physical exercise for 30 minutes on three occasions a week was established in November 2006 through the Sport England Active People Survey. The baseline is 18% (unadjusted for deprivation), the end target for the LAA is 22% (unadjusted for deprivation). The Sports Service have developed and are delivering a programme in collaboration with the PCT to increase the opportunities for physical exercise in Brent, especially for harder to reach groups. It has been agreed that the Sport England survey will be repeated each year, which will help to gauge progress.

11.6 Local Employment

Our priorities around increasing local employment are focused on supporting those residents who experience the most difficulty in accessing the labour market helping them to move into work and towards independence. The LAA employment stretch targets are delivered through the normal activities of Brent in2 Work (Brent Council's local labour agency).

The critical focus of our work in the first year of the LAA has been developing our outreach programmes to ensure that we are reaching those people who

want to work and require most support to do so. A client tracking data base is used to monitor the activities undertaken and outcomes achieved by clients during their interactions with Brent in2 Work. The data base can be interrogated to produce reports detailing the clients who can be included in the stretch target figures.

Brent in2 Work provides the following services which can be accessed by clients:

- a) Employment Opportunities- provides a job matching service for people who are, or are close to being job ready. This supports clients with CV writing, application forms, and motivation workshops.
- b) Recruitment and Training- provides bespoke training courses agreed with local employers to meet their needs. Clients taking part are guaranteed a job interview at the end of the course.
- c) Park Royal Partnership- provides a job matching service for clients wishing to work on the Park Royal industrial estate.
- d) Language to Work- provides an intensive six week course for clients whose first language is not English. In addition, job search and motivation workshops are also provided.
- e) Outreach- provides a dedicated team to identify and work with clients from Brent's priority areas. The case worker manages the client's interaction with Brent in2 Work's provision, and provides post employment support to ensure sustainability.
- f) Building One Stop Shop (BOSS)- provides access to training and employment within the construction industry.

11.7 Performance

The employment rate in Brent remained stable for much of 2006/07 before dropping slightly from 68% to 67%, with a stable unemployment claimant count of 4.2%. Unemployment claimant rates dropped in the priority areas to an average of 7.6%, which is above the borough target, but is good progress against the targets in these areas. The proportion of long term unemployment claimants increased from 20.9% in 2005/06 to 24.60% in 2006/07. This is in line with the current national trend of higher levels of long term unemployed residents than other groups of unemployed residents. This also highlights the way in which it is harder to increase employment among long term unemployed residents. The Brent Regeneration Strategy commits us to reducing the borough average unemployment count to 3.3% by March 2009. The Brent LAA is central to achieving this ambition by placing an additional 1,575 people into employment by March 2009.

1,391 people in Brent completed learning opportunities to remove barriers to work, including ESOL courses.

11.8 Performance against the stretch targets

There is one stretch target associated to this headline outcome in two parts:

1. The number of people from BME groups helped into work for a sustained period of at least 16 hours a week for 13 consecutive weeks or more.

2. The number of people from a disadvantaged group (excluding BME) helped into work for a sustained period of at least 16 hours a week for 13 consecutive weeks or more.

774 people from a BME group were helped into work during 2006/07, far more than the target of 487, and achieving next year's cumulative target as well.

Only 47 people from a disadvantaged group excluding BME were helped into work during 2006/07. Brent in2 Work worked with a total of 262 non-BME clients during 2006/07, which is less than the annual target for this indicator. With the ethnic make up in Brent this is likely to remain the case unless significant activity was undertaken focussing on these groups, which would have an adverse effect on the complementary target. It can also be argued that some of the people who achieved outputs as part of the BME group have other more significant barriers to work, ethnicity is not their prime barrier.

11.9 Future plans

The disadvantaged groups element of the stretch target is the most pressing part of the employment project of the LAA.

Brent in2 Work plan to improve links into other service areas to improve referrals of the stock of available clients. This will also help promote more collaborative working with Supporting People, Homelessness Unit and Adult Social Care services.

Brent in2 Work will monitor the impact of their refocused outreach work to try and increase the stock of available clients within this category.

We would also welcome the opportunity to be able to classify some of the BME clients as disadvantaged based on the most pressing barrier to their ability to gain employment.

11.10 Longer, Healthier Lives

Brent residents must have the best possible chance of a long, fulfilling and healthy life. However as a borough there are wide differences in the health and life expectancy experienced by our residents. The average life expectancy for men in the borough is 77.4 years, while in Harlesden it is 71.8 years and in Northwick Park it is 82.9 years- over 10 years difference. For women the average is 82.8 years, ranging from 78.4 years in Harlesden to 85.9 years in Dudden Hill.

Our challenge is to reduce the gap in life expectancy and improve the opportunities available for all people to make healthy life choices. Working closely with the Primary Care Trust, health care providers, council services and the community we are currently developing a partnership Health Strategy setting out specific targets to reduce health inequalities in the areas of greatest need and improve the overall level of public health for all communities in Brent. Consultation on the health priorities within the borough is currently taking place along side analysis of health trend data and identification of the positive health impacts derived from mainstream service provision.

Our focus is on the preventative agenda with actions to encourage greater physical activity (covered in the Access to Leisure section) and promoting healthy eating and lifestyles at an early age through the expansion of the Healthy Schools programme.

11.11 Performance

There have been improvements in performance against a number of targets in the LAA. More GP practices have registers of people at risk from CHD (84% compared to 40.54% last year), and there have been increases in the proportion of CHD patients whose blood pressure and cholesterol readings are within acceptable levels. More mothers now initiate breastfeeding (68.5% compared to 56% last year). There has been an increase in the proportion of under 2s receiving their immunisations across a whole range of immunisations, although there has been a decrease in the MMR, and none of these reach the target for 2006/07.

There has been a decrease in the number of people killed or seriously injured on Brent's roads, with 124 people KSI compared to 155 the year before.

11.12 Performance against the stretch targets

There are two stretch targets related to this headline outcome.

1. a) To increase the number of people in disadvantaged areas quitting smoking for 4 weeks
b) To increase the number of people across the borough quitting smoking for 13 weeks
2. Achieve 53 schools in Brent accredited to the national standard of Healthy Schools by July 2009.

11.13 Smoking Cessation

The smoking cessation stretch target is run by the PCT. The focus on disadvantaged areas is in order to try and tackle health inequalities across the borough. Performance has been better than the target for 2006/07, with 587 successful quitters to four weeks in disadvantaged areas against a target of 475. Achieving the target has been mainly due to the training and supporting of Level 2 Stop Smoking Advisors in the community. There is a network of over 150 community advisors, many of whom are located in disadvantaged areas. Some of the activities planned to help smoking quitters did not take place due to the PCT's cost saving programme. The cost saving programme will also cut the smoking cessation team by one member, and has delayed the Webstar programme rollout. The Webstar programme will be rolled out during 2007/08 to GP practices rather than to pharmacists as was the original plan.

Progress against the second stretch target has been slower. At the time of writing, 169 people had achieved 13 weeks of non-smoking, but this figure is due to change as more people remain quit after 13 weeks. 13 week quit data is not realised until 3 months after someone has set their quit date; for example, someone who has set a quit date for March 31st 2007 will not be

followed up until at least 30th June 2007, which is in the next quarter. We are expecting the final figures for 2006/07 for this stretch target in the second week of July. The follow up for 13 weeks is carried out by telephone, and one person comes in twice a week to conduct the calls. They are able to gather a range of information including satisfaction with the service, and some people who began smoking again have been re-booked into the service. Performance of 169 is against the target of 225, and we are hopeful to reaching close to the target, if not actually achieving the target.

11.14 Healthy Schools

The stretch target requires that Brent have 10 schools obtain the December 2005 National Healthy Schools Standard by July 2007. 11 schools have obtained the standard to date. 35 schools have obtained Healthy Schools status, and a further 28 schools are participating in the programme. Once they have obtained Healthy Schools status they will work to attain the 2005 standard.

A Healthy Schools Project Officer has been in post since February 2007, focusing on supporting schools through the self-validation process. The project officer's particular focus is on pupil participation within the self validation process.

Schools are working hard on the process of self validation with the outcome that the quality of identifying outcomes has improved. 5 Primary Schools have received their Healthy Schools plaques in a presentation assembly.

A Quality Assurance Group (QUAG) has been formed as part of the Healthy Schools Partnership Board. This group will carry out moderation of 10% of validated schools beginning in September 2007.

A very well attended and successful 2007 Brent Healthy Schools Conference was held in May 2007. The focus for the conference was on how PSHE supports a healthy school. The key note speakers covered the topics of 'The value and purpose of PHSE in the curriculum' and 'Involving infants in strategic planning'. As part of the conference the Healthy Schools Project Officer ran 2 workshops on 'Pupil voice and participation strategies'. The conference was extremely well evaluated by participants and significantly supports the wider Healthy Schools Programme.

11.15 Future Plans

The Brent Health and Wellbeing Strategy has been delayed for a year, and will be launched in April 2008. However the Primary Care Trust in Brent is experiencing significant financial pressures due to national savings targets. This will inevitably place severe restriction on their, and consequently our, joint ability to engage in preventative health work. These constraints need to be recognised and acknowledged as a major threat to our ability to deliver the health related targets within our LAA.

11.16 Settled Homes

In our original LAA submission, Brent made an innovative proposal for reducing the dependence of families with children in temporary accommodation and supporting their movement into employment and settled homes. Brent's proposal was for a pilot project designed to divert the current Housing Benefit subsidy to private landlords into public-private partnership acquisition of street properties in order that families with dependant children in temporary accommodation can be moved into permanent settled homes with affordable rents. The partners were to complement the scheme by providing support to the families in order that they can move off benefit and into work.

However Brent's proposals were turned down by the Treasury and the Department for Work and Pensions.

11.17 Performance

The Decent Homes scheme has been completed, and all dwellings in the borough are compliant with the Decent Homes standard.

The number of families in temporary accommodation decreased by 8% from 4,666 families to 4,112, but this did not achieve the target, highlighting the need for a new project in Brent to address the issue. The number of families placed into temporary accommodation showed a 15.86% decrease over the number of families placed in temporary accommodation the previous year. This is the result of a lot of work to prevent homelessness and providing other housing options.

11.18 Early Success

There are three main elements to this section of the LAA.

- The Stonebridge Integrated Support Programme (SISP)
- Implementation of the extended schools offer across primary and secondary schools
- Improving the educational achievement of looked after children

11.19 Stonebridge Integrated Support Programme

The SISP was a pilot project to provide a common assessment framework across agencies and facilitate preventative services better tailored to children and their families' needs.

The SISP is an innovative multi-agency project designed to bring together co-ordinated preventative support for children, young people, and families with additional needs. It has three elements:-

- Development of a cross agency common assessment framework.
- Developing the concept and role of a 'lead professional' within multi-agency packages to co-ordinate the services for individuals.
- Creation of the integrated services group (Integrated Service Coordination Group- ISCG)- a new mechanism for co-ordinating preventative services across agencies.

The project is focussed on the Stonebridge ward in Brent.

11.20 Progress over the past year

The SISP has gained a lot of commitment from the schools in the Stonebridge ward. The programme has ensured that children with additional unmet needs who live and attend school in the Stonebridge ward are quickly identified, assessed and given support in a coordinated manner using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). All children identified with additional unmet needs who were referred to the programme have had packages agreed for them, and each child has an assigned lead professional who co-ordinates their agreed package of support.

The integration of the key activities of the CAF, LP role, information sharing, the ISCG, and the electronic database has enabled better sharing of information across services, which has helped to reduce the duplication of resources.

Services and packages of support that are offered covers access to provision of services in children's health, social care, early years, youth and community learning, raising educational achievement and attainment. The individual packages of support are delivered in conjunction with Brent voluntary and community sector organisations thus building voluntary sector capacity and more importantly ensuring that services are tailored to meet the diverse and cultural needs of children and families referred to the programme.

Children's and their families' views and opinions are incorporated in the decision making process. This has help ensure that the children and families referred to the programme receive the right level of culturally appropriate early intervention support.

The systems and structures currently in place for delivering integrated services has been modified to assist in the identification of children with multiple needs who may otherwise be accommodated under section 20 of the Children Act 1989 to receive intensive support at the right time.

Over the course of the year, 67 pre-CAFs were received, 40 full CAFs were completed, with 17 of them assessed at level 2 with packages in place and a Lead Professional assigned; 13 were assessed as level 1 and signposted to the appropriate services; and 10 were assessed as level 3.

The success of this project to date has led to the expansion of the project into South Kilburn, with the possibility of rolling it out across the borough.

11.21 Extended Schools

The LAA extended schools project involves accelerating the rate at which schools are able to provide the 'core offer' of activities and services through support to access additional funding streams. An additional Funding Officer has been recruited to work with clusters of schools and their voluntary and community partners to put in place suitable projects and funding

arrangements that deliver the extended schools programme. The current bids include;

- Collaborative bid for the Wembley locality focusing on Family Learning for targeted vulnerable families. The application for stage 2 is currently being prepared, and will bring in a budget of £300,000
- A collaborative project among three schools in Wembley for Football coaching
- ICT equipment for local community use within a school's refurbished caretaker house
- Family 'pavilion' to be shared between an infant and junior school
- Swimming coach to enable a swimming pool within a school to be used by the community

Brent met the target for 2006, and is on track to meet the target for 2007. The target for 2007 is to have 24 primary schools and 8 secondary schools extended. Currently 22 schools are extended in Brent. The Teaching and Development Agency which monitors progress against the national targets for extended schools has rated Brent as GREEN, and reported that Brent has above average information about schools and progress on every individual element of the core offer is above average for London and nationally.

11.22 Improving the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children

The educational achievement of looked after children is consistently below the average level of achievement across the borough. This limits the opportunities and life chances of looked after children when they leave care. We want to maximise the opportunities available to looked after children, through the provision of individual packages which support their educational attainment.

Over the past year a lot of work has been done with the cohorts who will be sitting their GCSEs over the next three years (July 2007, July 2008 and July 2009). Two new Education Caseworkers (ECW) were appointed and began in September 2006. The main cohort focussed on is the current year 9, the children who will be sitting their GCSEs in the final year of the LAA. This was because the group was currently small, just 25 children, although it is expected to grow to over 35 children by the time they come to sit GCSEs. This group was assessed according to their current trajectories, with all of them expected to achieve 1 or more GCSEs, and the majority of them are expected to achieve 5 or more GCSEs.

The work carried out with them is to identify and deliver appropriate services to children placed out of borough, including those placed more than half a day's journey away. Provision mapping was carried out for each of the children in years 9, 10 and 11, and involved collecting data to highlight risk, record strengths, weaknesses, past and predicted grades, their ECW, and the relevant provision offered. The activities carried out include:

- Regular contact with all relevant children via phone call/ school visits
- Termly school visits to out of borough children; regular phone calls in the interim

- Regular liaison with team managers, social workers, designated teachers etc
- Teaching support in a one-to-one or group situation, both in and out of borough
- Teaching support in a one-to-one or group work at Down2Work Homework Club at DA
- Years 8/9 skills support at the annual Booster Classes at Preston Manor School
- Years 10/11 skills support at the annual Booster Classes held at Copland School
- Organisation of termly Designated Teacher's Forum at the CSD
- Organisation of the bi-annual Aim Higher Foster Carer Training Programme
- A rapid response intervention scheme for LAC whose school placement is at risk
- Regular recording of all contact, support and interventions on Framework-i

The intense monitoring/ tracking of the children proved useful, and in particular we were able to:

- Identify education issues for a Year 10 LAC on remand and persuade school managers to provide work/ maintain the school placement until return to school
- Identify education issues with a Year 11 LAC in distant out-borough placement and provide rapid response intervention, phone contact and visit to school to support the young person to continue with her GCSE exams
- Identify intense ESOL and UK exam skills intervention for a number of recently arrived UASC (asylum seekers) in order to enhance later GCSE outcomes.

The predictions for attainment this year are above the target for the year. The results will be available after July 2007.

11.23 Promoting volunteering within the Borough

Creating more opportunities for civic engagement and formal volunteering is critical to building the capacity of the voluntary sector in Brent. While there is a diverse and thriving voluntary sector within the borough, prior to the LAA there was no formal Volunteer Centre which could match people and skills to the voluntary opportunities across organisations in Brent.

The Brent Volunteer Centre was set up in June 2006, as a part of the wider Brent Association for Voluntary Action (BrAVA). Since then, the need for a local Volunteer Centre has been repeatedly demonstrated by the number of people coming forward looking for local volunteer opportunities, and the number of organisations looking for support for their work with volunteers. In January 2007 a new Supported Volunteering Project Coordinator was recruited, and 5 volunteers have been recruited to assist with the day to day administration of the volunteer centre, and in the longer term it is the intention to create further opportunities for volunteers to get directly involved in the work of the Volunteer Centre.

Key activities during the last year have included:

- Meeting with 4 neighbouring Volunteer Centres to learn from their experiences
- Joining regional volunteering forums, through Greater London Volunteering and the West London Network
- Meeting with other volunteering projects in Brent and discussing the potential for joint work in the future
- 49 organisations have registered with Brent Volunteer Centre since June 2006; 55 volunteer opportunities are currently being promoted via the Volunteer Centre.

A joint bid with the Community Networks Service (Brent Mental Health Team) to Capital Volunteering was successful, giving us funding for a Supported Volunteering Project Coordinator for people from black and asian minority ethnic communities affected by mental health conditions. The project's targets contain a measure of sustained volunteering activity, which will contribute towards the volunteering stretch target within the LAA.

11.24 Performance against the stretch target

There are two elements to the stretch target on volunteering.

- Increase the number of people from non-socially excluded groups engaging in (defined) formal volunteering activity for an average of two hours a week or more over the previous year
- Increase the number of people from socially excluded groups engaging in (defined) formal volunteering activity for an average of two hours a week or more over the previous year

47 volunteers, one of whom is from a socially disadvantaged community, completed 100 hours of volunteering during the year 2006/07. Another 16 volunteers are on course to complete 100 hours of volunteering, most of whom are from socially disadvantaged communities. Most of the recently placed volunteers, have been from BAME and other socially disadvantaged communities, due primarily to the demographics of Brent, which is an 'ethnic majority' borough. It is likely that we will have above target figures of socially excluded groups volunteers, and below target figures of non-socially excluded groups volunteers.

11.25 Future Plans

The Brent Volunteer Centre is looking to gain Volunteering England accreditation.

11.26 Reducing the time taken to process Benefits applications

The Benefits application processing service impacts upon the lives of Brent's most vulnerable residents. We are continuing to push for an ever more efficient benefits service, and we would like to achieve a target of 24 days by March 2009.

Various improvements to performance management were introduced during 2006/07, including the appointment of a Performance Manager and the

development of improved systems and processes for monitoring workload and output. In addition, temporary resources were used to clear backlogs of work while two intakes of Benefit trainees were recruited to stabilise the workforce, and ultimately reduce the reliance on temporary staff.

A drop in performance was expected through the year when the Verification Framework was introduced in July 2006, but the staffing changes outlined above more than mitigated the impact of the framework. A lot of work was undertaken during the year to clear up the backlog that had built up, and even with that, performance was still within the target.

11.27 Performance

Performance in 2006/07 was 34.80 days over the course of the whole year, which was within the target of 38 days, and was even better than performance during 2005/06 (36 days). The target for 2006/07 reflected the transition to the Verification Framework, which did not have the impact projected. The benefits service revised their internal targets for the three years of the LAA to reflect this improved performance, so that the target for 2006/07 became 36 days, 2007/08 became 30 days, and 2008/09 remained at 24 days.

12.0 Partnership Working

Brent's Public Sector Conference took place in March 2007. The conference was called "Strengthening Brent's Public Partnerships", and was hosted by the Local Public Service Board (LPSB). The purpose of the conference was to discuss the future of partnership working in Brent. The conference discussed the current and future challenges facing public services in Brent, what the new style LAAs will mean for partnership working, and driving service improvements through Partnership working. Partners and Services were encouraged to discuss current and future challenges in Brent, and the main points from these discussions will inform the LPSB work programme over the coming period. The main points of priorities will also inform discussions about the priorities that will be in Brent's LAA2.

13.0 Expenditure on LAA priorities

Following the successful outcome of Brent LSP's Local Public Service Agreement, the performance reward grant was reinvested in the LAA. Combined with the LAA pump-priming grant, Brent set aside approximately £5 million to support the implementation of the headline outcome projects and the stretch targets. A more detailed statement of grant use will be submitted at the end of June.

The main points arising from our expenditure this year are:

- The LAA is on budget for both the LAA grant and our own LAA budget. Financial management of the programme has been good in respect of all partners.
- There is a slight underspend on the LAA grant arising from a slow start to the LAA period and delays in projects starting.
- The LAA grant has not been used as a central pool to redistribute resources, but there are plans to do so in the future years of the LAA

- The delay in confirmation of grant amounts, and the need to source this information from the DCLG led to uncertainty in the first few months of the LAA, and meant delays in some of the work commencing. We would hope in future years to receive a full schedule of grants actually included in the central pool before the start of the year in order to allow for better planning and certainty for services. However this has not been the case for 2007/08 where as yet the central pool has not been finalised. This is more imperative for the new LAA in 2008/09.

14.0 Performance monitoring activity for the LAA

Three main tools have been used over the first year of the LAA to monitor performance.

14.1 Quarterly performance reports

- Performance reports of all indicators that could be measured on a quarterly basis were produced each quarter.
- A full performance report of the whole LAA was produced at the end of 2006/07, and a mid-term six month report was produced in October 2006 to evaluate the first six months of the LAA.
- The purpose of quarterly reports was to enable the Council to keep abreast of developments in performance. Any poor performance can be looked at and activity undertaken to rectify it as soon as possible, rather than waiting a full year.
- Each of these reports were taken to the Council's Corporate Management Team, to the Executive, and to Performance and Finance Select Committee, to give them the opportunity to scrutinise performance and react to any areas of poor performance.
- These performance reports were also sent to the Local Strategic Partnership who have overall responsibility for the LAA.
- These fora are expected to challenge poor performance where they see it, and look for answers and new solutions to ensure that performance improves. This is especially important for the LAA stretch targets which will carry performance reward grant at the end of three years (March 2009.)

14.2 Performance Plus

- During the course of the year Brent Council rolled out performance plus computer system across the services in the council.
- Performance plus aids the production of reports in a timely manner by containing all information which can be accessed by all who need to use it.
- Performance plus helps produce more accurate information by carrying out the calculations for performance indicators, thus helping to eliminate human error.
- Performance plus will continue to be rolled out across the Council and to Partners during 2007/08.

14.3 Qualitative Performance Reports

- We have asked to written qualitative updates for the projects in the LAA on a six month basis. The aim of this was to enable us to follow the progress of

projects in the LAA which would not necessarily show change in performance during the course of the year.

- Many of the projects in the LAA were set up specifically for the LAA, and 2006/07 was used as a baseline year, which means that there were no targets. This made assessing progress through performance indicators more difficult, and led to the necessity for the qualitative updates.
- These progress reports were also important for stretch targets that are only reported on once a year, so that we knew what was happening with them over the course of the year.
- These updates were submitted as part of the self assessment of the LAA submitted to Government Office for London in November 2006 and July 2007.