

Appendix 1 – Performance Levels by Service Area and Supporting Commentary & Explanation

1. Human Resources

Total Number of BVPI's = 12					
Improving	5	56%	On or Above Target?	4	40%
Maintained	0	0%	Below Target?	6	60%
Declining	4	44%	Contextual	2	n/a
New Indicators for 2005/6	1	n/a			
Contextual	2	n/a			

The table above shows the overall level of performance achieved in relation to the BVPI's relating to Corporate Health which are 'led' by Human Resources.

Sickness absence has been identified as a priority focus for the Council. A major challenge has been the effective management of absence in an environment of change and business process re-engineering. In September 2006, the Council agreed the implementation of a robust action plan. Whilst the target for sickness absence is well-under target, a consideration of the monthly outturns is beginning to illustrate some improvement.

Sickness absence in Housing is still included in the figure up until the end of April 2006 and this had a major impact on the year end figure. Policies have been introduced and the Human Resources Team is taking the lead in ensuring that those policies are used to manage absenteeism. A range of initiatives have been undertaken within Street Scene and Liveability to improve level of attendance.

However, the specific activities undertaken, in addition to the employment of an 'ageing workforce' has had a detrimental impact on other indicators which is shown in the increase in the number of both 'early' and 'medical retirements'. Both of these indicators should show improvement next year.

The Council has progressed well in relation to Equalities. A significant training and development programme has been delivered which will be evaluated through 2006/2007 focusing on disability and race. As the Council looks to meet the needs of all in its Community, the remit of the programme will be extended to cover age, gender and sexual orientation.

In relation to the Council's legal duty to promote race equality the Council is continuing to improve. The Council has developed a process of impact

assessment, developed a learning set in relation to equality issues to share good practice across the Council and support the programming and implementation of impact assessments across all service areas

The Council has adopted effective flexible and home working arrangements to address recruitment and retention issues. The success of these has been demonstrated by the recruitment of a new management team and an increase in the number of senior female managers. However, the successful promotion of the Chief Executive to a post outside of the Council has impacted on the number of BME employees employed within senior posts within the Council.

2. Street Scene & Liveability

Total Number of BVPI's = 26 Street Scene & Liveability Targets					
Improving	7	88%	On or Above Target?	24	96%
Maintained	1	12%	Below Target?	1	4%
Declining	0	0%	Baseline Target	1	n/a
	1				
New Indicators for 2005/6	8	n/a			
Contextual	1	n/a			
Amended 2005/6	8	n/a			

The table above shows the overall level of performance achieved in relation to the BVPI's managed by Street Scene & Liveability.

The levels of performance achieved by the service continue to show a positive direction of travel with the majority of indicators achieving or exceeding their targets. This demonstrates that the changes made to the way in which these services are delivered is making an impact and resulting in significant improvements for both their customers and the environment.

2.1 Waste & Cleanliness

The successful introduction of two new materials into the 'recycling stream' , including the addition of 10,000 properties onto the garden waste collection scheme, together with the provision of more 'Bring' sites has enabled the service to exceed all of its recycling targets.

Whilst the downward trend in the amount of waste sent to landfill continues, the collection of greater volumes of garden waste is having a 'knock on' effect by increasing the overall amount of waste collected, resulting in this target being slightly below predicted performance. This target will get increasingly harder to reach as garden waste is collected from even more properties.

The newly introduced street cleansing service improvement plans, together with the Neighbourhood Environmental Action teams have enabled each of the targets for cleanliness, fly tipping and graffiti to be exceeded and also greatly improved the service's ability to respond to customer complaints.

2.2 Environmental & Environmental Health

The delivery of the action plan developed by the service to improve their performance against the 'Environmental Health Best Practice Checklist' has resulted in a substantial increase in performance over the past year from 36% to almost 89% compliance with the standard and is only slightly below top quartile levels of performance.

Five new indicators have been introduced to evaluate how the Council is progressing in identifying sites of potential concern due to pollution and contamination within the Borough. Working with Rossendale Civic Trust, the initial phase of the appraisal process has been largely completed and a Conservation Character Scoping Report and Good Practice Guide prepared. A full review of the database and GIS records will be undertaken during 2006/7 to further validate the data.

Both the targets associated with the removal of abandoned vehicles have been exceeded, with almost 99% of investigations and 100% of removals taking place within 24 hours.

2.3 Community Safety & Well-Being

The Council continues to work in partnership with the police and other agencies to implement various schemes designed to reduce the levels of crime within the Borough. This has included initiatives such as the targeting of prolific offenders; improving the security of properties for people who have been victims of burglary; and initiatives in relation to licensed premises, such as the 'Pub Watch' scheme. This has contributed towards some significant reductions within the Borough in the number of domestic burglaries, robberies, vehicle crime and other 'violent crimes', with the service exceeding the targets it had set in these areas.

There were two 'Racial Incidences' reported to the Police by the Council for further investigation and action by them using the reporting procedures established.

The 'Actions Against Domestic Violence' indicator was amended this year and now includes a checklist to assess the overall provision and effectiveness of

local authority services designed to help victims of domestic violence and prevent further domestic violence. The service has assessed itself as scoring 27% against this list with a target of increasing this to 45% next year.

3. Customer Services & E Government

Total Number of BVPI's = 13					
Improving	7	70%	On or Above Target?	6	46%
Maintained	0	0%	Below Target?	7	54%
Declining	3	30%	Baseline Target	0	n/a
New of amended Indicators for 2005/6	3	n/a			

The table above shows the overall level of performance achieved in relation to the BVPI's 'managed' by Customer Services & E Government

3.1 Customer Satisfaction

The 'Customer Satisfaction' indicator measures the community's satisfaction with the Council as a whole and is managed by Customer Services who commissioned a telephone survey of 800 people chosen at random from across the Borough during November 2005.

The findings of this survey showed that and has increased from 28% in 2003 to 60.8% in November 2005. This represents a marked improvement in satisfaction levels and exceeded the target set for this period by 10%.

3.2 Electronic Enablement of Services

The most dramatic improvement has been in BVPI 157, the electronic enablement of services, where the performance over the last 12 months has improved from 47% to 100%. This is as a result of the substantial improvements made to the Council's web-site and the increase in the number of transactions that customers are now able to make on-line.

3.3 Council Tax & Business Rates

The collection of 96.4% of Council Tax for 2005/06 is under the target of 97.5%, although the increase of 0.3% represents a higher rate of improvement than is being achieved by most Councils and when adjusted for deprivation is equivalent to top quartile performance.

The collection of 98.3% for Non Domestic Rates whilst being slightly under target has nevertheless achieved a significant increase of 0.8% in collection over the previous year. The introduction of Small Business Rate Relief on 01 April 2005 has assisted in collection as many businesses within the Borough are eligible for this relief. The section the section has ensured that all those eligible to apply for relief have been informed of the scheme and as a result of this over £400k has been reduced from ratepayers' liability.

3.4 Housing Benefit and Council Tax

The speed of processing a new claim for housing and council tax benefit although narrowly missing the target of 39 days by ½ a day, still represents a considerable improvement on the 88 days taken in previous years. Good performances in February and March 2006 were not good enough to overcome a disappointing performance in January 2006.

The speed of processing changes of circumstances to Housing and Council Tax Benefit appears to be worse than it is as in previous years the figure was not reported accurately due to a software errors. These have since been corrected and additional staff time and effort is now being directed towards these areas and as a result of this performance is now improving.

3.5 Recovery of Overpayments

The BVPI associated with the recovery of overpayments of benefits was amended in April 2005 by adding 3 more indicators to the existing measure of recovery. Performance against each of these targets has been poor although steadily improving since December 2005 due to a number of actions being taken to improve performance.

These actions have included: ensuring that the software used to measure and reflect over-payment and debt information provides accurate figures; writing off debt that there is no chance of recovering to give a more accurate assessment of outstanding debt, with a target of not writing off more than 10% per year; and, concentrating efforts on those cases that represent the greatest potential for recovery.

These targets are now being reviewed with the intention of setting challenging yet realistic targets, given the more accurate information the service now has in relation to existing debt .

3.6 Housing Benefit - Investigations, Prosecutions & Sanctions

Each of the targets associated with the Council's performance on Housing and Council Tax benefit fraud detection has been met or exceeded and the number of investigations per 1000 case load.

The Benefit Investigations Unit maintained a consistent number of investigations whilst exceeding the targets for the number of prosecutions & sanctions undertaken due to improved internal procedures.

3.7 Standard Searches

The indicator measuring standard searches completed within 10 working days continues to perform very well and has achieved the maximum score of 100% for the 3rd subsequent year. This achievement is even more worthy of note as during the last quarter of 2005/06 the number of searches increased from an average of approximately 2000 to 5,800 as a result of housing stock transfer.

4. Housing Performance

Total Number of BVPI's = 15					
Improving	5	56%	On or Above Target ?	7	54%
Maintained	1	11%	Below Target?	6	46%
Declining	3	33%	Baseline Target	2	n/a
New & amended Indicators for 2005/6	6				

The table above shows the overall level of performance achieved in relation to the BVPI's managed by the Housing Service

The service has exceeded all of its targets in relation to rent collection and the recovery of rent arrears which includes taking action to discourage tenants from falling into arrears and thus reducing the number of evictions for non-payment of rent. As a result of this success rent arrears have reduced by £27,005 and evictions have dropped from 26 to 22 when compared to the same period last year.

The service did not achieve their target in relation to the adoption & implementation of The Commission for Racial Equality's Code of Practice in Rented Accommodation. The achievement of this standard is reliant upon having adequate systems and procedures to capture the information and data required to monitor achievement and progress against towards this standard which were not in place post transfer to Green Vale Homes. Therefore, the decision was taken to defer this target until the successful completion of transfer as this would enable the service to access the systems, procedures and expertise of the new company and develop a robust action plan to ensure compliance with this standard by 2007.

4.1 Homelessness

The length of stay in temporary accommodation (hostel) has achieved target and improved from last year as a result of the prevention work being done to decrease the use of hostels and the alternatives that have been offered such as rent bonds.

The length of stay in Bed & Breakfast accommodation did not achieve its target and was higher than the previous year. This was due to the service placing one family in temporary B&B accommodation for a period of 5 weeks whilst awaiting the necessary repair works to the Housing Association property secured for them. A delay also occurred in moving one family over the Christmas period as a result of closures caused by Bank Holidays. It is useful to note that the number of homeless families that require temporary accommodation is very low and as a result even one family can have a significant impact in meeting the targets.

The decline in the number of homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard was to be expected given the levels of investment available to the Council. Transferring the stock was the Council's strategic response to improving this indicator.

5. Economic Regeneration & Spatial Development Service.

Total Number of BVPI's = 13 Planning Targets					
Improving	3	43%	On or Above Target?	8	67%
Maintained	1	14%	Below Target?	4	33%
Declining	3	43%		1	n/a
New Indicators for 2005/6	3	n/a			
Amended 2005/6	3	n/a			

5.1 Planning

The table above shows the overall level of performance achieved in relation to the BVPI's managed by Economic Regeneration & Spatial Development Service.

The percentage of new homes built on previously developed land has substantially exceeded its target, mainly due to 'Brownfield' completions including large developments such as the Ilex Mill and a relatively high frequency of conversions throughout the borough.

Whilst the target for Major Application is below target it has improved slightly on previous years and work is on-going with Urban Vision to improve the Council's performance against this target.

The targets set in relation to 'minor' and 'other' applications, both of which were achieving 'top quartile performance' were set at a lower outturn than had been achieved in previous years, as it was felt that this would release capacity to concentrate upon areas within the Planning Service which were lagging behind.

Therefore, whilst the targets have been exceeded, performance has declined against the previous year, although performance still remains 'above average' based on 2004/5 comparison data. 'Other Applications', which represents over 60% of determined applications has performed consistently well throughout the year in regards to both national and local targets.

The Council's score against the 'Quality of Planning Checklist' as determined by the score achieved against the 'Pendleton Criteria' has exceeded its target and risen from 27% to 44% over the last 12 months with a target of achieving 70% over the coming year.

The Council's Local Development Scheme was approved by the Cabinet in February 2006 and was subsequently submitted to Government Office Northwest for approval. GONW requested some minor alterations which have been completed and it is confidently expected that the scheme will receive their approval following which the scheme will be published.

In respect of 'Plan Making – Monitoring Report the Council submitted its first annual monitoring report in electronic and paper formats in accordance with all regulatory requirements.

5.2 Conservation Areas

Three new indicators were introduced in April 2005 dealing with the number, character and the Council's management plans for Conservation Areas within the Borough.

The number of Conservation areas has been identified thus hitting this target although the targets for site appraisals and the development of management plans for these areas have not been achieved. However, work is now underway on Conservation Appraisals for Rawtenstall and Bacup to ensure they form part of the preparation process of the relevant Area Action Plans (AAP).

The work has been undertaken in partnership with the Rossendale Civic Trust and will see draft appraisals issued for consultation later in 2006. Upon completion of Character Appraisals for each conservation area identified in BV219b a Management Programme will be prepared as identified in BV219c.

Published management programmes can only be prepared upon completion of each Character Appraisal for each conservation area. Details of this approach are presented in the Scoping Report prepared and that sets out the proposed timetable for preparation of each Character Appraisal

6. Community & Partnerships

Total Number of BVPI's = 6					
Improving	3	100%	On or Above Target ?	3	100%
Maintained	0	0%	Below Target?	0	0%
Declining	0	0%	Baseline Target	3	
New & Amended Indicators for 2005/6	3				

6.1 Visits to Museums

RBC has a management agreement with LCC to manage Rossendale Museum and the Head of Community & Partnerships manages this agreement

The visits to museums has again shown an increase and exceeded each of the 3 targets, moving from bottom quartile of performance to the 3rd quartile of performance, which for a small, provincial museum is a worthy accomplishment.

The opening hours have now been stabilised and publicised and the museum has been particularly successful this year in attracting school visits to participate in a series of various workshop events organised by the museum

6.2 Advice & Guidance Services

This was previously one indicator which measured the percentage of monies spent on advice and guidance services provision that was given to organisations holding the CLS Quality Mark and which RBC previously achieved top quartile performance at 100%.

In April 2005 this was extended to 3 indicators that requires the Council not only to measure the above, but also to measure how much money the Council itself spent on providing guidance to members of the public. This guidance covers a wide range of issues, for example: discrimination, employment, neighbours, housing, money/debt, welfare benefits to name but a few.

Further more, guidance can be classified as anything from the provision of leaflets or web based information to direct help given in one-to-one interviews. Because of this, there have been problems encountered on a national basis in accurately quantifying the amount spent and therefore the Audit Commission have said they will not be collecting this information this year.

However, the Council has made a baseline assessment of how much it estimates it spends in this area and this will be used as a baseline position for next year.

7. Legal & Democratic

This service manages just one BVPI, 156 – Buildings accessible to people with disability. This BVPI has stayed at the same level of performance as last year at 79% and did not achieve its target of 100%.

A contract has just been let to the value of £175,000 to complete priority requirements that will increase accessibility to 93% by July 2006. Following completion of this a further contract of a value of £100,000 will give 100% compliance on completion.

8. Finance

This service manages just one BVPI, 8 – percentage of invoices paid on time, which has shown marginal improvement but has not hit its target. However the new system implemented to improve this process, Civica, has become fully operational in March 2006 and the service is confident this will result in increased levels of performance over the next twelve months.