

Bolton Council

Report to: Executive Member Corporate Strategy and Finance

Date: 24 January 2007

Report of: Chief Executive

Report No:

Contact Officer: James Farr, Principal Policy and Improvement Officer

Tele No: 01204 331382

Report Title: Long term performance trends, 2001 - 2006

Non Confidential: This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public

Purpose: This report provides the Executive Member with an overview of available data showing performance trends over the past five financial years.

Recommendations: The Executive Member is asked to:

- Note and comment on the long term performance trends identified in this report
- Consider whether the format and content of this report is informative and helpful
- Consider whether future annual long term performance trend reports would be required
- Support and reinforce the role of Executive Members in working with officers to drive performance improvements across all portfolios

Decision:

Background Doc(s)
– all enclosed:

Signed:

Leader / Executive Member

Monitoring Officer

Date:

Summary:

Members play an important role in driving performance at Bolton Council, via regular quarterly and annual monitoring at Executive Member meetings.

Following a request from the Executive Member, this note has been drafted to show – where possible – trends in performance over a five year timespan.

Changes introduced by central government to the definition and collection of data for Best Value Performance Indicators limit the number of comparable indicators that stretch back to 2001 to 32 – about a quarter of BVPIs currently monitored by Bolton Council.

Performance among these 32 indicators has been positive – over seventy percent have improved since 2001, while the proportion sitting within the bottom metropolitan council performance quartile has halved over the past five years.

1. Background

Bolton Council is committed to effective performance management of the services it provides to the people of the borough. Members have a key role to play in driving this. Existing regular performance reports to Executive Members already provide timely and accurate financial and service performance data, allowing Members to agree clear improvement actions where issues are identified.

This report has been drafted following discussions at a previous Executive Member meeting where more information on long-term performance trends was requested, beyond the year-on-year analysis contained in existing regular dashboard reports.

Historically, monitoring performance over a longer period has proved difficult, owing to the frequent changes in definition and deletion/creation of statutory indicators by central government.

Following discussions with both Members and officers, a total of 32 indicators have been identified for inclusion in this report. All the indicators featured here:

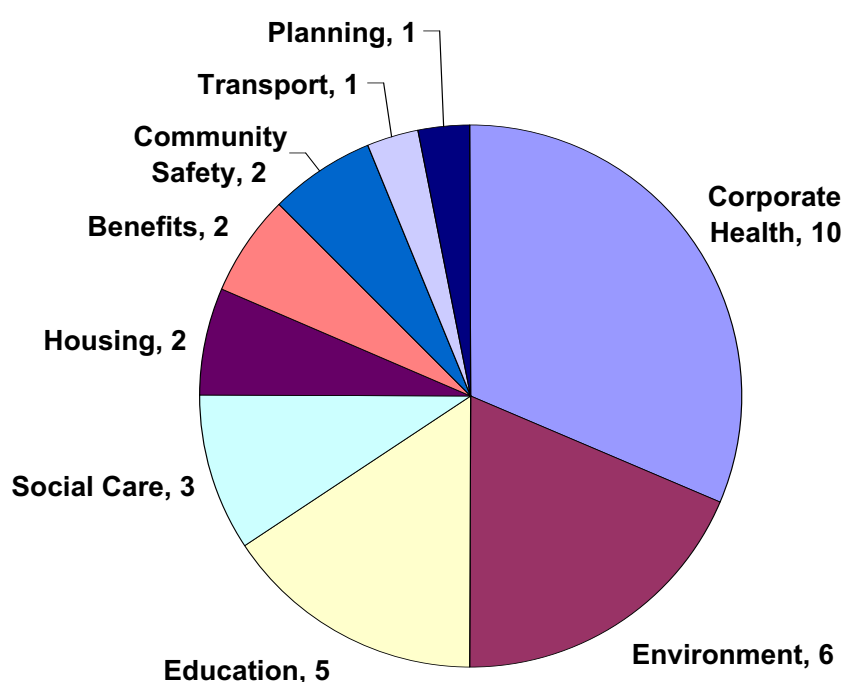
- Have seen no changes in definition since April 2001
- Are Best Value Performance Indicators - a standard set of nationally comparable indicators collected by all local authorities

While the first criteria ensures comparability in data through the past five years, the second criteria allows performance trends in Bolton to be compared with our peer authorities.

2. What do the indicators measure?

A total of 32 BVPIs have been identified for inclusion in this report. They are spread unequally across services, as the chart below indicates:

Fig 1: Distribution of long-term BVPIs



Though the total number of indicators collected by Bolton Council is much higher (we collect over 120 BVPIs alone), regular changes in definition mean that the number where accurate comparisons

can be made over the past five years is limited. A full list of the indicators included can be found in appendix A. The Department for Communities and Local Government has made a commitment to reduce the number of changes made to BVPI definitions – this means that in future years, five-year performance analysis of BVPIs should be possible against a greater number of indicators.

By far the largest group of indicators included in this report sit within corporate health, covering a diverse range of services including corporate HR, council tax collection rates and facilities for disabled people. Elsewhere, the indicators reflect only a fraction of the total performance data collected for these services.

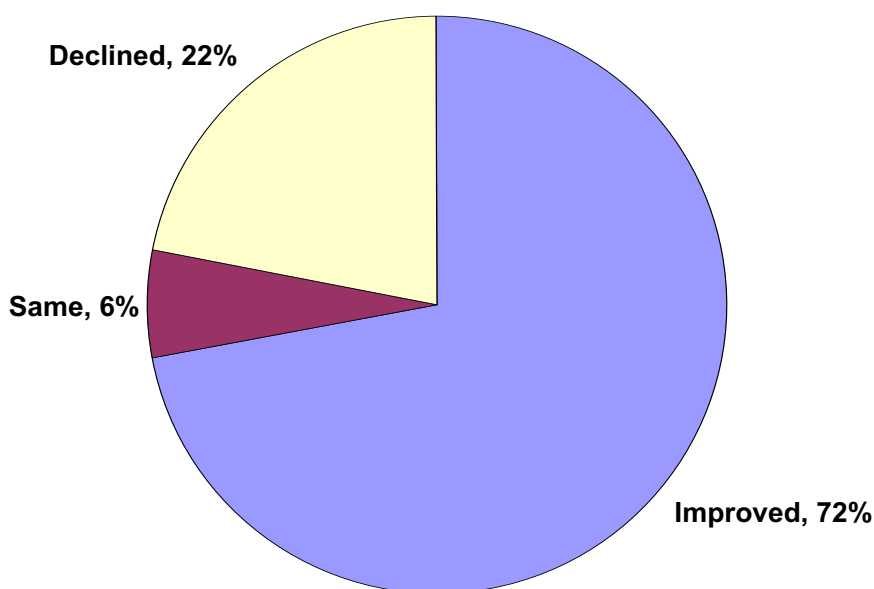
All data included in this report reflects the year end performance of the selected BVPIs in 2001-02 and 2005-06.

3. ____ How are we performing?

3.1 Absolute performance

In absolute terms, 72% of the 32 indicators showed an improvement in performance between 2001-02 and 2005-06. Around a fifth have declined over the past five years. Though these calculations represent a selection of the council's existing BVPIs, this data reflects a generally positive direction of travel in the performance of key services.

Fig 2: Actual performance: 2001-02 to 2005-06

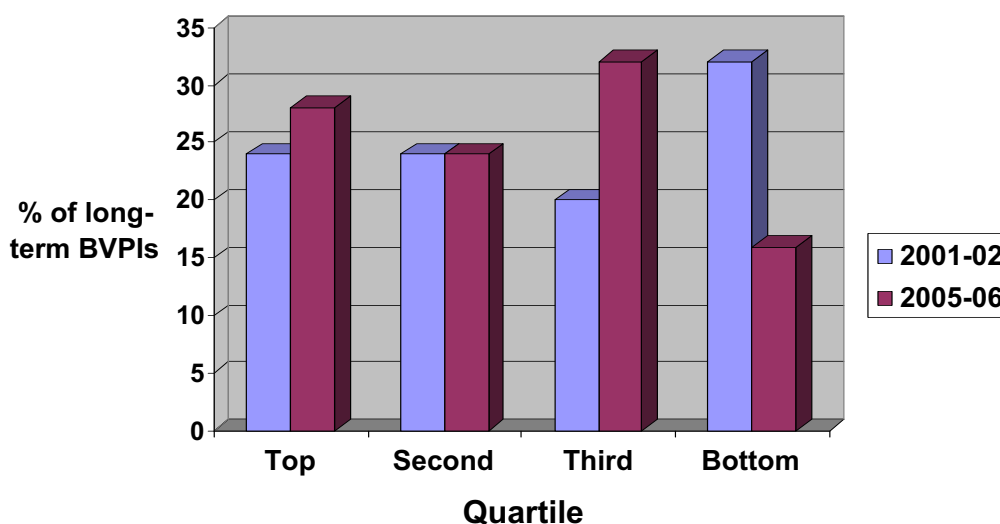


3.2 Performance compared to other metropolitan councils

Bolton Council uses metropolitan council quartiles to compare how well it is performing against similar authorities. The quartiles are published annually each winter, once all BVPI data for the previous financial year has been signed off. Provisional quartiles for 2005-06 were released in December.

Quartiles are available for 25 out of the 32 BVPIs analysed in this report. The chart below shows that performance compared to our peer authorities has improved well since 2001-02 in these indicators. The proportion of indicators within the bottom quartile has halved to 15%, while the proportion within the top two quartiles has risen from 48% in 2001-02 to 52% in 2005-06.

Fig 3: Performance against metropolitan council quartile:



Appendix A contains more information about the quartile position in 2001-02 and 2005-06 for each indicator, along with details of whether performance has improved or declined in absolute terms over the same period.

4. Analysis

4.1 Bottom quartile BVPIs

Of the 32 BVPIs included in analysis for this report, four sit within the bottom metropolitan performance quartile for 2005-06. These are:

- BV 8: Proportion of undisputed invoices paid within 30 days
- BV 14: Level of early retirements
- BV 43b: Statements of special educational need prepared within 18 weeks (with exceptions)
- BV 54: Older people helped to live at home

Through quarterly reports on performance, Executive Members have already asked for remedial action plans for those BVPIs performing within the bottom quartile. In the three central departments, this information is contained in the quarterly service and financial monitoring report, presented to the Executive Member every three months.

4.2 BVPIs where performance has declined

As detailed in section 3.1, performance against 22 percent of the BVPIs analysed for this report has declined over the past five years. All are detailed below:

BV ref	Description	2001-02 performance	2005-06 performance	Difference	2001-02 quartile	2005-06 quartile
8	Invoices paid within 30 days	84%	81.69%	-2.31%	Third	Bottom
10	Non-domestic rates collected	98.5%	98.3%	-0.2%	Top	Second
14	Early retirements	0.13%	1.09%	+0.96%	Top	Bottom
86	Cost of waste collection per	£22.10	£34.32	+£12.22	n/a	Top

	household					
89	Resident satisfaction with cleanliness of public space	48%	44%**	-4%	n/a	n/a
90b	Resident satisfaction with provision of recycling facilities	92%	58%**	-34%	n/a	n/a
174	Racial incidents recorded	76	180	+104	Bottom	n/a

**Triennial survey last completed in 2003-04

4.3 Strongest improvers

Detailed below are the BVPIs that have seen the strongest improvement since 2001:

BV ref	Description	2001-02 performance	2005-06 performance	Improvement	2001-02 quartile	2005-06 quartile
17a	Proportion of staff from black and minority ethnic groups	2.9%	5.94%	+3.04%	n/a	Top
43b	SEN statements prepared within 18 weeks (with exceptions)	89%	100%	+11%	Second	Top
74a	Council tenants' satisfaction with landlord	63%	86%	+23%	Bottom	Top
78a	Speed of processing new housing benefit/council tax benefit claims	53 days	33.7 days	-19.3 days	Third	Second

4.4 Priority services

Of the 32 BVPIs included in this analysis, a number monitor services that are a top priority for the council. Our approach to diversity and fairness is bearing fruit – numbers of staff with disabilities are up compared with 2001 and the proportion of staff from minority communities has doubled. Five years ago no council buildings met the accessibility standard for people with disabilities – now this figure is 36%. However, reported racial incidents have risen, although this is largely due to greatly improved reporting mechanisms.

In education, all five comparable BVPIs have improved since 2001, with continued strong performance at key stage 2 evident. Bolton's volume of waste collection now sits in the top quartile, and while the cost of waste collection has gone up, this figure remains within the top quartile of metropolitan authorities.

5. ____ Conclusions

While the selection of the BVPIs presented here precludes this report from offering a comprehensive assessment of performance over the past five years, this data is indicative of continued improvement

across a wide range of services. Importantly, performance compared with our peer authorities has strengthened (see fig 3), demonstrating that the improvements made at Bolton are outstripping peer authorities.

This report shows good improvements across a number of services and, coupled with strong progress in delivering the borough's LAA, a good LSP performance review and continued excellent CPA scores, reflects a positive direction of travel in performance at Bolton Council over the past five years.

Appendix A: List of BVPIs with no definition changes, 2001-2006

PI ref	Description	DoT 01-06	2001-02 quartile	2005-06 quartile
CORPORATE HEALTH				
8	% of invoices paid within 30 days	Declined	Third	Bottom
9	% Council Tax collected	Improved	Bottom	Third
10	% non-domestic rates collected	Declined	Top	Second
12	Days sick per member of staff	Improved	Second	Third
14	Early retirements / staff	Declined	Top	Bottom
15	Ill health retirements	Improved	Second	Second
16a	Staff with disabilities	Improved	Third	Third
17a	Staff from ethnic minorities	Improved	n/a	Top
156	Buildings w/facilities for people with disabilities	Improved	Bottom	Third
157	E-government interactions	Improved	n/a	Top
EDUCATION				
38	Pupils 5 or more GCSE's, A*-C	Improved	Second	Third
40	Pupils level 4+ KS2 Maths	Improved	Top	Second
41	Pupils level 4+ KS2 English	Improved	Top	Second
43a	SENs in 18 weeks without exceptions	Improved	Second	Top
43b	SENs in 18 weeks with exceptions	Improved	Third	Bottom
SOCIAL CARE				
53	Intensive home care - PAF C28	Improved	Third	n/a
54	Older people helped to live at home- PAF C32	Improved	Bottom	Bottom
56	Equipment - PAF D38	Improved	Bottom	n/a
HOUSING				
74a	Overall satisfaction with housing service	Improved	Bottom	Top
75a	Satisfaction with opportunities to participate	Improved	Bottom	Third
BENEFITS				
78a	Speed of processing new HB/CTB claims	Improved	Third	Second
79a	Case processed correctly	Improved	Top	Second
TRANSPORT				
178	Footpaths and rights of way easy to use	Improved	Bottom	Third
ENVIRONMENT				
84a	Household waste collected	Improved	Second	Top
86	Cost waste collection	Declined	n/a	Top
89	Satisfaction with cleanliness of public space	Declined	n/a	n/a
90a	Satisfaction with waste collection	Improved	n/a	n/a
90b	Satisfaction with recycling	Declined	n/a	n/a
90c	Satisfaction with waste disposal	Same	n/a	n/a
PLANNING				
106	New homes built on brown field sites	Improved	Second	Third
COMMUNITY SAFETY				
174	Racial incidents recorded	Declined	Bottom	n/a
175	Racial incidents resulting in further action	Same	Top	Top

