



Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister

Creating sustainable communities

*Feedback on the consultation exercise
for the Best Value Performance
Indicators for 2005/2006*

May 2005



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May 2005

Product code 05LRGG03079

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Introduction

1. In July 2004, ODPM issued a consultation paper setting out proposals for changes to the Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) which would apply to best value authorities in 2005–06.
2. The consultation paper was distributed to all best value authorities and other interested organisations. Consultation took place between 6 July and 31 August 2004.
3. Over 500 responses were received from best value authorities, representative bodies and members of the public. This document summarises those responses and explains why it has been decided whether or not to introduce each of the proposed measures.
4. In addition to the formal consultation process, ODPM set up a Sounding Board which included representatives from sixteen local authorities, the Local Government Association and the Audit Commission. The purpose of the Sounding Board was to provide feedback on the proposed changes and to foster a two-way exchange of ideas between local authorities and the ODPM.
5. The consultation document set out proposals for 35 new BVPIs, amendments to 30 BVPIs and 12 deletions. Following extensive consultation, it was decided to include 10 of the proposed new indicators in the general BVPI set for 05–06, amend 26 existing indicators and delete 14 from the set.
6. Chapter 1 of this document focuses on those new BVPIs which have been taken forward. Chapter 2 describes the proposed new indicators which are not being taken forward in the light of consultation. Chapter 3 and 4 cover proposed deletions and amendments respectively.
7. For each proposal, we have set out the number of responses received, how many were in support and how many undecided, and a summary of comments received.

CHAPTER 1

New BVPIs which are being introduced following consultation

Corporate Health

1. **BV(X1): The Percentage of the top 5% of earners that are disabled**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
141	103	11	Introduce

Comment

Respondents felt this proposal would provide consistency in reporting terms across the suite of equalities-related performance indicators. Some concern was expressed regarding the possible risk of being able to identify individual members of staff who may be disabled in smaller authorities.

This indicator was piloted among 14 authorities prior to its introduction.

Due to the overwhelming support received, the ODPM has decided to take this forward as a new indicator and it now forms part of the Corporate Health suite.

NB: This BVPI now forms part of BV11, therefore it does not count as a separate indicator.

2. **BV(X2) The percentage of female fire-fighters**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
18	7	5	Introduce

Comment

Opinions on this measure were divided. Some felt that the use of the term 'fire-fighters' would be misleading as it is just as important to show the percentage of women in more senior operational roles. Other respondents welcomed the indicator and felt that, together with the national targets set, it would be beneficial.

This indicator was piloted by 1 authority.

The ODPM has taken this forward as a new indicator.

NB: This BVPI now forms part of the set of fire specific indicators. Therefore, it is not counted as part of the general BVPI suite

Housing

3. **BV(X11) (a) proportion of responsive to planned maintenance**
(b) proportion of emergency and urgent repairs to non-urgent.

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
106	39	7	Introduce

Comment

Some respondents felt that the definition was not sufficient because what one authority considered urgent, others would consider non-urgent even though the response time was the same. It was also felt that counting the number of planned maintenance repairs to responsive repairs would be misleading as planned maintenance repairs cover more work in one 'job' than responsive repairs.

Suggestions put forward to make the indicator more meaningful included:

- make the definitions clearer;
- BVPI should measure the average time to do work, plus the balance of responsive and planned maintenance expressed financially, not numerically;
- BVPI should measure the balance of responsive and planned work over the total work carried out, rather than only for revenue expenditure.

In the light of these comments, the proposed indicator was substantially amended. The revised version is now:

- (a) proportion of planned repairs and maintenance expenditure on HRA dwellings compared to responsive maintenance expenditure on HRA dwellings;**
- (b) proportion of expenditure on emergency and urgent repairs to HRA dwellings compared to non-urgent repairs expenditure to HRA dwellings**

This indicator was piloted by 10 authorities.

The ODPM has taken this measure forward as a new indicator

4. **BV(X12) Average time taken to re-let council dwellings**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
97	44	7	Introduce

Comment

Approximately half of the respondents were in support of the BVPI's introduction whilst the other half was opposed. Some felt that this would not be a fair measure because it might take longer to turn properties around where the council is planning to bring void properties up to the decent homes standard. There was a negative response toward the use of the word 'vacant' as it was felt that as defined in the consultation document, it could be interpreted to mean either from the time a tenant left the property (sometimes difficult to measure) or from the time that the notice period, served by the council, reached an end.

Some suggestions put forward to make the indicator more meaningful were:

- to use the term ‘void’ instead of ‘vacant’;
- a trigger point for starting and ending the vacancy period should be made clear to avoid ambiguity and ensure consistency between authorities;
- use the tenancy termination to tenancy start dates rather than the date the property is empty to the date it is reoccupied.

This indicator was piloted by 2 local authorities.

These suggestions have been taken on board and the revised indicator has been introduced.

Homelessness

5. **BV(X16): Households who considered themselves as homeless, who approached the local housing authority’s housing advice service(s), and for whom housing advice casework intervention resolved their situation.**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
135	46	10	Introduce

Comment

Opinions on this indicator were very mixed. Some of the reservations expressed were that if an authority had measures in place to prevent homelessness, resulting in a low number of households needing to approach the housing advice service, this would lead to a ‘low’ score and penalise those councils. The issue of possible double counting between the council and funded agencies was also a concern.

However, the purpose of this indicator is to encourage local authorities not just to react to homelessness but to be more proactive in dealing with homelessness cases before they become statutory as only about 1/3 of cases are actually registered as homeless.

In addition, the Audit Commission identified this indicator as a key measure of performance which they were considering including in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Housing service block from 2005.

This indicator was piloted by 15 authorities and will form part of the Homelessness suite.

6. **BV(X17) Proportion of households accepted as statutorily homeless who were accepted as statutorily homeless by the same or another authority within the last two years**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
111	44	12	Introduce

Comment

Opinions on this proposal were divided. Some expressed concerns that authorities which might have a good record on re-housing should not be penalised where people had lost

their tenancy in a different local authority area and therefore the definition should be changed to only include repeat homelessness within the recording authority.

Some of the suggestions put forward were taken on board by the ODPM and a revised version of this indicator will form part of the Homelessness suite. The indicator will no longer include households previously housed by another local authority

Again, this indicator was identified by the Audit Commission as a key measure of performance which they were considering including in the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) Housing service block from 2005.

This indicator was piloted by 14 authorities and will form part of the Homelessness suite.

Transport

7. **BV(X19) The average time for rectification of a street lighting failure**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
83	33	12	Introduce

Comment

Some concerns were expressed that the performance of contractors and electricity companies are outside the control of the local authority. Additionally, clarity was requested regarding group faults, the start time for the calculation period, dim and flickering lights etc.

Overall, it was agreed that this is a key area of concern among local residents and is therefore a very important indicator, particularly in respect of community safety.

In the light of these comments, the indicator has been revised. It now reads:

- (a) the average number of days taken to repair a street lighting fault, which is under the control of the local authority;**
- (b) the average time taken to repair a street lighting fault, where response time is under the control of a distribution network operator.**

This indicator was piloted by 9 authorities.

The revised indicator now forms part of the Transport suite.

Environment and Environmental Health

8. **BV(X20) Percentage of pollution control improvements completed during the year as a % of all improvements which should have been carried out in the year**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
95	25	8	Introduce

Comment

The majority of the responses opposed the introduction of this as a performance indicator; however, it was clear from the responses that not all respondents understood what was intended. The main concern raised was that more careful wording was needed to ensure consistency of interpretation.

The BVPI has now been revised in the light of these comments. It now reads:

- (a) number of sites of potential concern, within the local authority area, with respect to land contamination;**
- (b) number of sites for which sufficient detailed information is available to decide whether remediation of the land is necessary, as a percentage of all sites of potential concern.**

This indicator was piloted among nine local authorities.

In addition, this PI was identified by the Audit Commission as a key measure which they were considering including in the CPA environment block from 2005.

The revised performance indicator now forms part of the Environment and Environmental Health suite.

9. **BV(X21) Percentage of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours of relevant expiry notice period**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
117	46	12	Introduce

Comment

Concerns were raised about the lack of clarity regarding the type of notices that can be served. Some respondents suggested that the term ‘abandoned vehicle’ needed to be defined.

In the light of these comments, the indicator has been revised. The new version is:

- (a) % of new reports of abandoned vehicles investigated within 24 hours of notification;**
- (b) % of abandoned vehicles removed within 24 hours from the point at which the authority is legally entitled to remove the vehicle.**

This indicator was piloted by 12 authorities.

In addition, this PI was identified by the Audit Commission as a key measure which they were considering including in the CPA environment block from 2005.

It now forms part of the Environment and Environmental Health suite.

10. **BV(X22) Percentage of local authority area inspected for contaminated land during the year**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
128	40	12	Introduce

Comment

The majority of respondents were opposed to this measure. As a result, fundamental conceptual changes were made to the PI and it was subsequently piloted by 9 authorities.

The outcome of the pilot showed that there was a need for greater clarity and less ambiguity. As a result, the indicator was again revised.

The new version is:

‘Percentage of pollution control improvements to existing installations completed on time’.

In addition, this PI was identified by the Audit Commission as a key measure which they were considering including in the CPA environment block from 2005.

The revised BVPI now forms part of the Environment and Environmental Health suite.

Culture and Related Services

11. **BV(X24) Percentage of conservation areas which have been subject to a character appraisal, or its review, within the last 5 years, as a proportion of the total number of conservation areas in the local authority area.**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
124	65	8	Introduce

Comment

More than half of respondents supported the introduction of this performance indicator.

Respondents noted that character appraisals are a useful tool in helping to manage change in historic areas, especially important for conservation areas where there are development pressures or area regeneration proposals.

Following further refining of the indicator in the light of comments from respondents, this indicator has been taken forward and now forms part of the Culture suite.

12. **BV(X26) Percentage compliance against the accessibility public library service standards**

BV(X27) Percentage compliance against ICT provision public library service standards

BV(X28) Compliance against the performance, usage and satisfaction service standards

BV(X29) Percentage compliance against the stock public library service standards

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
212	97	58	Introduce

Comment

Whilst many respondents agreed that there was a need for a new libraries indicator, it was generally felt that too many were being proposed. Based on the feedback, it was decided to amalgamate BV(26) – BV(X29) into one single composite indicator which was then piloted among 8 authorities.

The indicator was further amended following piloting and now forms part of the Culture suite.

CHAPTER 2

Proposed new BVPIs which are not being introduced

Corporate Health

13. **BV(X3) Cost of borrowing**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
160	23	19	Drop

Comment

An overwhelming majority of respondents were opposed to the introduction of this indicator. The key points were:

- local authorities had little control over borrowing decisions
- interest rates were higher than they are now;
- The indicator would give more benefit to those authorities that have only had to borrow in the latter years with low borrowing rates to the detriment of those with long-term borrowing at higher rates;
- this is a statistic rather than a measure of performance;
- would be irrelevant to debt-free authorities.

In the light of this response, ODPM has decided not to take this indicator forward.

14. **BV(X4) Percentage of e-enabled interactions with the public that are resolved at first point of contact via 24/7 access channels**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
162	26	16	Drop

Comment

The feedback received suggested that this indicator would be difficult to measure objectively as there would be a large number of interactions that could count towards the target and it would be too costly to put in place systems to measure performance effectively. It was also felt that some transactions might fail for reasons outside of the council's control e.g. customer hardware failure, and it would be unfair to penalise the council in those instances.

Other opinions expressed were that the definition of 'resolved' would leave the PI open to interpretation; a higher level of e-enabled transactions could lead to a lower percentage being handled at first point of contact; and as the list includes web sites, it would be impossible to differentiate between instances where the customer leaves satisfied or merely gives up without completing the transaction.

The ODPM took on board the comments received and have not introduced this indicator to the suite.

15. **BV(X5) Percentage of eligible local population on electoral register**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
146	20	11	Drop

Comment

It was felt that this measure was inappropriate as an indicator because the census data on which it relied did not distinguish between residents eligible to vote and those who were not. The indicator would not promote social inclusion as it would exclude young people below the voting age and transient communities.

Due to the overwhelming number of opposing responses, the ODPM have not included this in the suite of indicators.

16. **BV(X6) Representation of councillors compared to the community served by the council by (a) age (b) gender (c) ethnic background (d) disability**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
185	22	24	Drop

Comment

Many respondents stated that this would be inappropriate as an indicator as candidates for election are put forward by political parties and not the council. Other comments were that officers are required to be politically impartial and so would not be in a position to influence make-up of democratically elected councillors. There are no age restrictions at present other than that councillors must be over 21, so it would be contradictory to introduce a BVPI relating to age. The proposal would only measure the party candidates who were successful. There would be no measurement of those candidates who were not elected.

Based on the volume of opposition to this indicator, the ODPM have not included it in the BVPI suite.

17. **BV(X7) Percentage difference between original budget and final outturn**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
142	42	9	Drop

Comment

Many respondents felt that a council's success in controlling expenditure during the year would not be demonstrated by this indicator. Other comments were: as the indicator would identify both under-spend and overspend, if under-spend is judged in the same way as overspend, there will be no purpose in making savings and this may actually encourage waste. The PI could produce distorted figures as authorities may come close to their original budget by e.g. over-spending by £1 million on Bed and Breakfast but under-spending by £1 million on its repairs. Many services are demand led where successful forecasting is limited.

In the light of this response, the ODPM have not included this proposal in the suite of indicators.

18. **BV(X8) Proportion of budgeted reserves as a % of local authority's budget**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
121	31	11	Drop

Comment

It was felt that as this information is already available in local authorities' statement of accounts, it does not need to be duplicated as a BVPI. The proposal took no account of the financial value of reserves which is relevant where the potential cost of an incident is the same regardless of the size of the local authority. Some respondents also expressed the view that an annual performance measure could result in authorities being reluctant to build reserves up for specific purposes because they want to limit the degree of fluctuation in the indicator calculation that takes place between years.

The ODPM have not included this indicator in the final set.

19. **BV(X9) Total cost of early retirements**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
149	39	10	Drop

Comment

It was felt by some respondents that the information provided by the indicator could be contentious in the public domain without any background information on the staffing budgets and needs of an authority's services. Some respondents also said that decisions on early retirements are based on firm business cases and should only be turned down if the business case is not up to scratch not because the cost of previous retirements has reached a certain limit.

This indicator was piloted by 3 authorities.

Based on the feedback received, the ODPM has not introduced this measure as a performance Indicator.

20. **BV(X10) Percentage of legal claims by members of the public successfully defended as a proportion of all legal claims.**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
184	17	23	Drop

Comment

Some points put forward regarding this proposal were:

- the implication of the PI is that the authority is doing better if it wins more cases but if in doing so an authority is preventing its residents from getting just compensation for something the council did wrong, that should not be considered an improvement;
- If an authority has insurance, it is often the insurer who decides whether or not to settle or defend.

- Authorities that still have housing responsibilities will have more claims against them than councils that have transferred their housing stock;
- this was a perverse indicator as it could encourage councils to spend time and money mounting elaborate defences in order to improve their win rate when it would have been more cost effective to settle out of court.

The ODPM have not added this measure to the suite of indicators.

Housing

21. **BV(X13) Percentage difference between basket of dwelling prices in local authority area compared to national average**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
156	11	13	Drop

Comment

It was noted that a range of factors affected house prices including deprivation, location and demographic factors. Additionally, the point was put forward that the number of new houses to be built is determined through Regional Planning Guidance, Structure Plans and Regional Spatial Strategies over which the local authority has little control. There are other circumstances that are more likely to impact on prices such as global, national and regional boom than measures taken by the local authority.

Due to the feedback received, the ODPM have not taken this indicator forward for 2005/06.

22. **BV(X14) Number of homes built for outright sale at market price as a % of (a) all new housing and (b) cumulative development plan target**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
134	30	6	Drop

Comment

It was felt that the BVPI would not sufficiently address issues of quality or give due consideration to the impact of such developments on the local infrastructure. Other feedback received suggested that the indicator was too dependent on external factors such as the availability and securing of funding for affordable housing through the Housing Corporation. Additionally, it was felt that local authorities only influence this area of housing rather than control the outcome.

Based on the feedback received, the ODPM have not included this indicator in the suite for 2005/06.

23. **BV(X15) Average density of new housing major developments**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
123	37	11	Drop

Comment

It was noted that densities in new developments are influenced by a number of factors such as high land values, desirability of area and housing need, making comparisons between local authorities difficult. The indicator penalises areas that are 'old town' and do not have much capacity for new build. Other comments received were that if the push to build high density housing is reflective of housing shortages in certain areas, it does not follow that this should be a key objective everywhere and could impact on sustainability targets. Additionally it was felt that the indicator could create a perverse incentive to supply only smaller units which are not built to lifetime Home standards.

This proposal has not been included in the final suite.

Waste

24. **BV(X18) Proportion of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been sent for re-use**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
171	40	13	Drop

Comment

The feedback received suggested that although authorities may be enabling re-use, much of this work is carried out by the voluntary sector and it would be unreasonable to require the voluntary sector to weigh all items that they collect for re-use. Many local authorities were also concerned that the complexities of reporting against this indicator would outweigh the benefits of urging better performance in relation to what is in reality a very small element of the waste stream.

The ODPM have not introduced this measure as a performance indicator.

Culture and Related Services

25. **BV(X23) Percentage of local authority heritage assets which have been reviewed within the last 5 years as a proportion of all local authority heritage assets**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
139	52	7	Drop

Comment

Some of the views put forward were that where councils have a very low number of local authority heritage assets, the percentages could vary dramatically and randomly which will not provide a good basis for comparisons with other authorities. Additionally it was felt that the indicators were simplistic as the crucial measure of performance is the action planned and carried out after the review rather than the review itself.

Based on the feedback received, the ODPM have not taken this indicator forward.

26. **BV(X25) Percentage increase since the previous financial year of the number of historic environment records benchmark measures in place**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
125	44	13	Drop

Comment

Some respondents felt that the indicator focused on the number of measures rather than what the measures may highlight or how they could be used to drive improvement. Others felt that an authority which does well one year would find it extremely difficult to improve the next year, therefore councils who start from the lowest base would be rewarded. Additionally it was felt that measuring percentage increase could encourage authorities to favour quantity over quality.

This indicator was piloted among 6 authorities. The results of the pilot showed that many of the benchmarks were not easy to understand, were open to wide interpretation and often vague.

Based on the feedback received from the consultation and the outcome of the piloting, the ODPM have not included this measure in the suite of indicators.

27. **BV(X30) Extent to which book stock meets performance standard**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
23	6	4	Drop

Comment

A majority of respondents were opposed to this measure. A key defect was felt to be that it only focused on adult fiction and poetry. It was also seen as focusing too much on inputs. In addition, the methodology on which this indicator would be based was regarded as needing further development.

In the light of these comments, ODPM will not be introducing this indicator.

Cross-Cutting

28. **BV(X31) Percentage of referrals to joint local authority fairer charging/pension service visiting teams which resulted in (a) successful claim(s) for additional benefit and (b) average value of additional benefit per referral**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
81	16	8	Drop

Comment

A large number of respondents pointed out that there will be many local authorities who simply could not meet the requirements of the proposed indicator unless they set up separate fairer charging teams with specific responsibilities to carry out financial assessments. One of the unintended consequences of the proposed indicator would be to penalise authorities who could not set up fairer charging teams or those who have decided

not to set up joint teams but still comply with Department of Health fairer charging guidance.

It was also felt that a measurement of benefit take-up is complicated, as the monetary gain is recorded in different ways with little or no uniformity. It is likely that this indicator would have been measured in different ways by different authorities. There was also the major issue of defining a joint team.

A number of other problems regarding this proposal were highlighted and based on the feedback received this has not been introduced as a new indicator.

29. **BV(X32) Smoke-free buildings**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
114	39	15	Drop

Comment

A number of problems were highlighted with this proposal, some of which were:

- there may be certain buildings used by vulnerable client groups e.g. social service areas, where a no-smoking policy throughout could act as a barrier to some of the most vulnerable users accessing services;
- as there are venues which the council hires out for events such as weddings or to the private sector, income would be curtailed if a no-smoking policy was introduced as hirers would go elsewhere
- There was also the problem of residential homes and council-owned homes being included in this indicator. As these count as someone's living space, councils would then be dictating what individuals could do in the privacy of their own homes.

Due to these and other problems highlighted with this proposal, ODPM is not including this measure in the suite.

30. **BV(X33) Quit smoking schemes**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
113	23	15	Drop

Comment

Some of the reasons put forward as to why this indicator should not be introduced were:

- authorities can only report on the number of council employees referred to stop smoking schemes and have no remit regarding the public at large;
- Quit smoking services are run by the NHS and PCTs and not local authorities and therefore this PI could not measure a local authority's performance;
- people join Stop Smoking Schemes via many sources and not only via the council, again making it impossible to measure the council's performance in this.

ODPM will not be introducing this measure as a performance indicator.

Community Safety

31. **BV(X34) Life threatening crime and gun crime per 1,000 population**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
124	16	3	Drop

Comment

Many respondents were concerned that the reporting of this data could have a very negative impact and lead to an unwarranted increase in the fear of crime among local residents as well as visitors to the area.

Many authorities were concerned that having to rely on the police for this information would make reporting performance difficult.

Based on the feedback received, the ODPM have not introduced this as a performance indicator.

32. **BV(X35) Road traffic collisions resulting in death or serious personal injury per 100 million vehicle kilometres travelled**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
138	19	11	Drop

Comment

A large majority of respondents felt that this proposal was very similar to the existing BV99 and questioned the need for an additional indicator.

ODPM will not be introducing this indicator in 05–06.

CHAPTER 3

Proposals to delete BVPIs

Corporate Health

1. **BV1 Community Strategies**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
68	58	2	Drop

Comment

This BVPI was proposed for deletion because local authorities own targets showed that by 2003/04 all but 12 local authorities would have a community strategy in place. In addition, it does not focus on outcomes.

This indicator has now been deleted from the suite.

2. **BV180 Energy consumption/efficiency**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
99	69	4	Drop

Comment

This BVPI was proposed for deletion because the detailed technical guidance which was needed to report on the indicator remained unavailable more than two years after its introduction. A majority of respondents agreed with the proposed deletion.

This indicator has now been deleted from the suite.

Education

3. **BV34a & b Surplus places in primary/secondary schools**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
44	27	2	Drop

Comment

These BVPIs were proposed for deletion because they do not measure outcomes and do not provide any information on the quality of the education being delivered by the local authority. In addition, the data is already collected separately by DfES/Ofsted

These indicators have now been deleted from the BVPI suite.

4. **BV44 Pupils permanently excluded**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
48	18	1	Drop

Comment

BV44 was proposed for deletion as it does not measure outcomes and the data is already collected by DfES/Ofsted.

In addition BV159, which is being retained, collects information on the percentage of permanently excluded pupils who are being provided with at least 21 hours of alternative tuition a week.

This indicator has now been deleted.

5. **BV48 Percentage of schools maintained by the local education authority – subject to special measures**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
39	23	1	Drop

Comment

This indicator was proposed for deletion because it is out of date and no longer measures outcomes.

The feedback received indicated that although this is an important issue, it is inappropriate to measure it as a performance indicator and it would be better to monitor it by other means.

This indicator has now been deleted.

6. **BV193 How the authority's Schools Budget compares with its Schools Funding Assessment**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
33	31	2	Drop

Comment

This indicator was proposed for deletion because it does not measure outcomes. Additionally, the data is available from other sources and therefore it is no longer required as a performance indicator.

This indicator has now been deleted.

Social Services

7. **BV51 Cost of services for looked after children**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
40	35	0	Drop

Comment

This indicator was proposed for deletion because it does not measure outcomes and the cost of a service does not in itself give any indication of its quality. In addition the data is already collected by DfES.

This indicator has now been deleted.

8. **BV52 Cost of services for intensive social care for adults**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
35	31	0	Drop

Comment

As with BV51, this indicator was proposed for deletion because it does not measure outcomes and the cost of a service does not in itself give any indication of its quality. In addition, the data is already collected by DH.

This indicator has now been deleted.

9. **BV58 Percentage of people receiving statements of their needs and how they will be met**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
33	24	0	Drop

Comment

This indicator was proposed for deletion as it was felt that it does not measure outcomes. The majority of responses received expressed agreement with the proposal and noted that it does not give any indication of the quality of service given. In addition, the data is already collected by DH.

The indicator has now been deleted.

Housing

10. **BV185 Percentage of responsive repairs for which the local authority made and kept an appointment**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
69	32	1	Drop

Comment

This BVPI was proposed for deletion because it does not measure the quality of repairs which have been carried out. In addition, it had the potential to result in perverse outcomes.

Some respondents suggested that they intend to keep this as a local indicator.

This indicator has now been deleted from the BVPI suite.

11. **BV62 Proportion of unfit private sector dwellings made fit or demolished as a direct result of action by the local authority**

Comment

Although this BVPI was not proposed for deletion, it became clear during the consultation round that it would shortly be redundant because the fitness standard to which it refers will be repealed sometime later this year (possibly as early as October 2005) and the focus in future will be on decent homes, which is a much wider concept.

This indicator has now been deleted from the BVPI suite.

Culture and Related Services

12. **BV117 Visits to libraries**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
30	12	0	Drop

Comment

This BVPI was proposed for deletion as it was felt that the number of visits provides no real measurement of the quality and effectiveness of the library service.

This indicator has been deleted and replaced with a new BVPI which measures compliance with the Public Library Service Standards.

Transport

13. **BV186 Roads not needing repair**

Comment

Although this BVPI was not proposed for deletion, it became clear during the consultation round that it duplicated the information provided by BV223 and BV224.

This indicator has now been deleted from the BVPI suite.

CHAPTER 4

Proposals to amend BVPIs – amendments which have been taken forward

Corporate Health

1. **BV11b The percentage of top 5% earners from black and minority ethnic communities**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
93	55	14	Partially take forward

Comment

The proposed amendment, in line with advice from the CRE, was to replace the term ‘black and minority ethnic’ with ‘ethnic minority’. It was further proposed that the definition of ‘ethnic minority’ should also include ‘White Irish’ and ‘White Other’.

Although the majority of respondents agreed with the proposed amendments, they also expressed significant concern that inclusion of minority white groups in the statistics would result in the loss of time-series data and may lead to complacency about the general position of ethnic minority people within the workforce, thereby helping to mask the issues that need to be tackled.

Following further discussion with the CRE and authorities on the Sounding Board, it was agreed that the term ‘ethnic minority’ would be introduced but that ‘White Irish’ and ‘White Other’ would not be included in the definition.

A similar change applies to BV17, 74 and 75.

2. **BV17 The percentage of local authority employees from minority ethnic communities compared with the percentage of the economically active minority ethnic community population in the authority area**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
81	47	15	Partially take forward

Comment

Similar proposal as for BV11b. See feedback summary for BV11b

Education

3. **BV33 Youth Service Expenditure per head of population in the Youth Service target age range**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
48	35	11	Take forward

Comment

The proposed amendment was substantial, changing from measuring youth service expenditure to measuring youth service provision.

This indicator was piloted by 3 authorities.

The suggestions for improvement were taken on board and a revised version of this indicator forms part of the Education suite. Due to the substantial amendments that have been made, this indicator has been re-numbered as BV221.

4. **BV159 The percentage of permanently excluded pupils provided with alternative tuition**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
51	20	11	Take forward

Comment

The proposed amendment to this indicator was:

The percentage of permanently excluded pupils offered provision of alternative tuition of:

- a) 5 hours or less;
- b) 6–12 hours;
- c) 13–20 hours; or
- d) 21 hours or more.

The overwhelming majority of comments questioned the validity of parts a–c of the indicator as all authorities are required to provide at least 21 hours of alternative tuition a week.

These comments were taken into account and the indicator now only measures the percentage of permanently excluded pupils offered full-time educational provision of 21 hours or more.

5. **BV192 Quality of teaching for early years and childcare services**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
54	20	9	Take forward

Comment

This proposal sought to further clarify the indicator in the light of new targets for children's services.

Although more than half of the respondents expressed opposition to the changes, it was clear that their concerns could be met through further refinement of the indicator.

The revised BVPI was piloted amongst 6 authorities, as a result of which it has been further revised.

The revised version now forms part of the Education suite. Due to the substantial amendments that have been made, this indicator has been re-numbered as BV222.

Housing

6. **BV63 Energy Efficiency – the average SAP rating of local authority owned dwellings**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
44	39	5	Take forward

Comment

The purpose of the proposed amendment was to reflect recent changes in the SAP rating scale. SAP had previously rated energy efficiency on a scale of 1 – 100. It is now measured on a scale of 1 – 120.

This amendment has been taken forward.

7. **BV66a Local authority rent collection and arrears: proportion of rent collected**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
84	28	19	Take forward

Comment

The proposed amendment to this indicator was to add the following additional sub-parts:

- (b) percentage of tenants with more than 36 days rent arrears;
- (c) percentage of tenants in arrears who have had Notices seeking Possession served
- (d) percentage of tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears

The purpose of these amendments was to reflect the difficulties arising where there have been delays to housing benefit processing and therefore ensure that the indicator is a truer measure of performance in rent collection by taking account of external factors. In addition, they were intended to minimise the possibility that local authorities may introduce perverse working practices in order to increase performance on this indicator

There were several points within the proposal that respondents disagreed with. More clarity was asked for as well as several adjustments to the proposal. Further amendments to the indicator were made in the light of feedback from respondents and the amended BVPI has been included in the 05–06 suite

8. **BV74 Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with the overall service provided by their landlord**

9. **BV75 Satisfaction of tenants of council housing with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
84	58	18	Partially take forward

For BV74 and BV75 see feedback for BV11b

Housing/Council Tax Benefit

10. **BV79b Accuracy of processing: The percentage of recoverable overpayments (excluding Council Tax Benefit) that were recoverable in the year**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
78	56	3	Take forward

Comment

The need to review this BVPI was prompted by local authority concerns as to its effectiveness, and in particular, to the arbitrary cut off date of 1 April 2000.

The proposed amendment was to simplify the reporting by removing the cut off date of 1 April 2000 and basing the revised indicator on all overpayments identified during the year, including all overpayments deemed recoverable, non-recoverable and those subsequently written off.

This amendment has been taken forward.

Waste

11. **BV82(a) Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been recycled**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
125	46	19	Partially take forward

Comment

There were two key proposals for this indicator: 1) To record the tonnage of materials sent for recycling and 2) To record the percentage of waste sent for recycling broken down by (a) paper (b) glass (c) metal (d) plastics (e) other

Respondents were generally in favour of the proposal to record the tonnage of materials sent for recycling but a clear majority felt that it would be an unfair and unnecessary burden on local authorities to have to break down the different materials sent for recycling into five separate categories. In addition, many were concerned that this level of detail was inconsistent with the purpose of BVPIs (that being to measure headline performance) and questioned the value of duplicating data now being collected through Waste Dataflow.

In the light of these responses, the proposals to record the tonnage of material has been taken forward however the proposed requirement to break that figure down into five separate types of material has been dropped.

12. **BV82(b) Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been sent for composting**
13. **BV82(c) Percentage of the total of tonnage household waste arisings which have been used to recover heat, power and other energy sources**
14. **BV82(d) Percentage of the total tonnage of household waste arisings which have been landfilled**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
160	77	24	Take forward

Comment

The proposed amendment for these indicators was to record the absolute tonnage of waste as well as the percentage for each of these indicators. There were mixed views with a number of respondents taking the view that this was an unnecessary additional piece of data.

However, others welcomed the amendment as it would make it easier to compare their performance with that of other authorities.

These BVPIs have now been amended.

15. **BV84 Number of kilograms of household waste collected per head**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
89	56	18	Take forward

Comment

The proposed amendment was to include percentage change in kilograms of waste per head as compared to previous year.

Consultees agreed that this would give Government and local authorities a more useful assessment not only of local authorities' relative performance on reducing waste, but also of their direction of travel.

This amendment has been taken forward.

16. **BV91 Percentage of population resident in the authority's area served by a kerbside collection of recyclables**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
93	40	21	Partially take forward

Comment

The proposed amendment was to: 1) Change the definition to ‘households’ rather than ‘population’ and 2) Show the number (1, 2, 3 or more) and types (paper/card, glass, metal, plastics, other) of materials for which kerbside recycling is available.

Opinions were divided. Respondents supported the proposal to amend from ‘population’ to ‘household’, although noting that it would prevent direct comparison with data for previous years.

With regard to the number and types of materials, respondents expressed the same reservations about this proposal as they did to the parallel proposal in respect of the recycling indicator. However the majority did agree on the need for measuring, as a minimum, the proportion of households receiving a two-stream kerbside collection (i.e. achieving compliance with the Household Waste Recycling Act).

The amendment taken forward for this indicator is: Percentage of households served by a) a kerbside collection of recyclables and b), a kerbside collection of at least two recyclable materials.

17. **BV199 The proportion of relevant land and highways as defined under EPA 1990 Part IV section 86 that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus across four categories of cleanliness**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
95	45	17	Take forward

Comment

The proposed amendment was to extend this indicator to include further local environmental issues that many people have indicated to be important contributors to quality of life in an area – graffiti, fly posting and fly-tipping.

There were 95 responses to this proposal with slightly under half of the respondents in agreement.

This indicator was piloted among 3 authorities. The obvious problems were teased out and the amendment taken forward.

Transport

18. **BV97a Condition of non-principal roads**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
60	22	16	Take forward

Comment

The proposed amendment to this indicator was to measure the condition of non-principal classified roads by automated road condition surveys using SCANNER (Surface Condition Assessment for the National Network of Roads)

Opinions were divided. The largest concern expressed was the possible lack of availability of survey machines to deal with the expansion of SCANNER on the network.

However, the Department for Transport have confirmed that there is sufficient capacity in the industry to ensure that every roads authority will be able to carry out SCANNER type surveys in 05–06.

This amendment has been taken forward.

Planning

19. **BV200 Plan-making**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
96	43	34	Take forward

Comment

The BVPI needed to be amended to reflect the new requirements set out in The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The proposal was to amend BV200 as follows:

- A) Did the authority have an approved local development scheme within 6 months of commencement of Part 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act?
- B) Does the local development scheme identify that the planning authority will have in place a local development framework by March 2007?
- C) Has the local planning authority published an annual monitoring report? (Required from December 2005).

The main concerns expressed by respondents were regarding the reference to March 2007. Additionally, there were calls for greater clarity and less ambiguity.

The indicator has been re-worded to meet these concerns and the amended BVPI forms part of the 05–06 set.

Culture

20. **BV170 Museum visits**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
52	36	11	Take forward

Comment

Authorities can only include museums for the purpose of this BVPI if they provided the site free or at nominal charge or contribute at least 20% of the running costs. Under the previous definition, the reported number of visits to museums was linked to the amount of the authority's contribution. It was proposed that in future where an authority contributes at least 20% of running costs, then all visitors should be counted.

This amendment has now been taken forward.

Community Safety

21. **BV127 Violent crimes per 1,000 population and percentage detected**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
98	69	20	Take forward

Comment

It was proposed to amend BV127 by removing the requirement to break the data down into the following five sub-categories:

- Violent offences committed by a stranger;
- Violent offences committed in a public place;
- Violent offences committed in connection with licensed premises;
- Violent offences committed under the influence
- Robberies per 1,000 population

The majority of respondents supported this change. In future, authorities will only have to report an overall figure – ‘violent crimes per 1,000 population’.

22. **BV176 The number of domestic violence refuge places per 10,000 population, which are provided or supported by the authority**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
134	83	28	Take forward

Comment

Substantial amendments were proposed to BV176. Rather than just measuring the number of domestic violence refuge places per 10,000 population, we proposed introducing a range of measures which would assess the extent to which local authorities provided a comprehensive service for people who are affected by domestic violence.

Based on the feedback received, the ODPM took on board the issue concerning cost implications by amending 2 elements of the indicator thereby making it less onerous for smaller district councils. The element concerning provision of refuge spaces within their own area was also removed and the funding options for specific services such as the sanctuary schemes have also been established.

The indicator was piloted by 9 authorities.

Due to this indicator being substantially amended, it has been re-numbered as BV225 and re-named ‘Actions against domestic violence’. This now forms part of the Community Safety and Well-being suite.

Community Legal Services

23. **BV177 Percentage of authority expenditure on community legal services**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
122	14	10	Take forward with further amendments

Comment

A clear majority of respondents were opposed to the proposed change. While many agreed that the BVPI needed to be amended, they felt that the proposal was unclear, ambiguous and complex.

In the light of this feedback, it was decided to make further detailed changes to the indicator. The revised PI now reads as follows:

- (a) total amount spent by local authority on advice and guidance services provided by external organisations;**
- (b) percentage of money spent on advice and guidance services provision given to organisations holding the Community Legal Service Quality Mark;**
- (c) total amount spent on advice and guidance provided directly by the authority in the areas of housing, welfare benefits and consumer matters.**

The revised indicator was then piloted by 7 local authorities. They had mixed views but all agreed that the revised PI is easily verifiable and unambiguous.

This amendment has been taken forward

Proposals to amend BVPIs – amendments which have not been taken forward

Corporate Health

24. **BV9 Percentage of Council Tax collected**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Number in favour</i>	<i>Number undecided</i>	<i>Decision</i>
117	47	20	Do not amend

Comment

It was proposed to amend this BVPI so that it also recorded the collection of arrears over the financial year which were actually due in previous years.

A number of respondents noted that a poorly performing authority will have a high percentage of arrears carried forward and a well performing authority will have a very small percentage of arrears carried forward. As a result, poor performers on arrears collection would score well on this PI and vice versa. Others felt that the amendment would just complicate the indicator and provide little meaningful information.

In addition, many authorities were concerned that they would have to arrange for expensive computer system changes due to the limitations of their present computerised system.

The proposed amendment has not been taken forward and BV9 will remain unchanged.

25. **BV16 The percentage of local authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 disability definition compared with the percentage of economically active disabled people in the authority area**

<i>Number of responses</i>	<i>Decision</i>
106	Do not amend

Comment

BV16 measures the percentage of local authority employees declaring that they meet the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 compared to the percentage of economically active disabled people in the local authority area. The purpose of the BVPI is to measure the extent to which disabled people are represented in the authority's workforce.

The figures for the number of economically active disabled people are derived from the census. However, the census simply asks respondents whether they have any long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits their daily activities or work they can do. It does not make any reference to the DDA. Data on the number of disabled staff employed by the authority is obtained from staff surveys. Unlike the census, these surveys tend to specifically refer to the DDA. There is a possibility, therefore, that a respondent to the census will record themselves as disabled when they do not actually come within the definition of disabled as set out in the DDA. As a result, we may not be comparing like for like.

ODPM did not propose a specific amendment to BV16 but sought the views of authorities on how it could be amended in a way that avoided the difficulties described above.

We received a large number of suggestions. In particular, a number of respondents proposed that we should use data derived from the Labour Force Survey rather than the census. We carefully considered this possibility, however, it was found that while the data is very reliable at a national level, it becomes less reliable when broken down to local authority level. In some cases, there could be a margin of error of plus or minus 30%.

We have, therefore, decided to leave this BVPI unamended for the time being.

Clarifications

26. **In addition to the amendments described above, we have also made clarifications to 7 existing BVPIs. The clarifications do not change the purpose or meaning of the BVPIs. The indicators which have been clarified are:**

- BV126 Domestic burglaries per 1,000 households;
- BV127 Violent crimes per 1,000 population;
- BV128 Vehicle crimes per 1,000 population;
- BV40 Key Stage 2/Level 4 Maths;
- BV41 Key Stage 2/Level 4 English;
- BV181 Key Stage 3 English, Maths, Science and ICT;
- BV194 Key Stage 2/Level 5 English and Maths.

