

Corporate Assessment Report

December 2007



Corporate Assessment

The City of London

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Introduction

- 1 Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) is the means by which the Audit Commission fulfils its statutory duty under section 99 of the Local Government Act 2003 to make an assessment, and report on the performance, of local authorities. Corporate assessment is one element in the overall assessment that leads to a CPA score and category.
- 2 The purpose of the corporate assessment is to assess how well the Council engages with and leads its communities, delivers community priorities in partnership with others, and ensures continuous improvement across the range of Council activities. It seeks to answer three headline questions which are underpinned by five specific themes.

What is the Council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?

- Ambition
- Prioritisation

What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?

- Capacity
- Performance management

What has been achieved?

- Achievement

Considered against the shared priorities of:

- sustainable communities and transport;
- safer and stronger communities;
- healthier communities;
- older people; and
- children and young people.

- 3 Corporate assessments are normally aligned with a joint area review of services for children and young people (JAR). In practice this means that the Council's achievements in relation to children and young people are assessed using the evidence provided from the JAR. In addition, examples of outcomes and activity, which are relevant to the other themes and which are identified through the JAR, are considered within the corporate assessment.

- 4 The JAR covers specific services for children and young people that are directly managed or commissioned by the Council, as well as relevant health and youth justice services provided by other bodies. It focuses on the contributions made by services to improving outcomes especially concerning safeguarding, services for looked after children, and services for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The separate JAR report also covers the leadership and management of services for children and young people and, in particular, the way that such services work together to improve outcomes. The description and judgement in respect of children and young people in this report is summarised from the JAR report and the most recently published Annual Performance Assessment from Ofsted which covers all of the Council's children services.

Executive summary

- 5 The City of London is performing strongly. Ambitions are set well beyond the geographical area for which it has responsibility and are pan-London, national and international in their scope. It is ambitious for its residents and for the regeneration of areas of neighbouring boroughs which are close to the City. It is a partner in the success of the City as the world's leading international financial and business centre and is achieving well in its ambitions and priorities in this area. As a consequence, ambitions are very challenging but they are realistic given the City of London's track record of achievement. An excellent approach to prioritisation ensures ambitions are delivered and this is supported by good performance management which ensures under performance is tackled and targets met.
- 6 The community leadership provided by the City of London is excellent. It recognises a responsibility to work with its neighbouring boroughs - all seven bordering the City are in the 20 per cent most deprived in England - to help combat deprivation and improve local skills, which benefits the City as well as the boroughs. To facilitate this, the City of London works in seven cross-border regeneration partnerships. It runs the Business Traineeship scheme, facilitating 88 paid, six to 13 week placements in City companies for 'A level' leavers from the neighbouring boroughs in 2007. Through the Spitalfields Employment project 90 unemployed local people have gained work since January 2007.
- 7 The City of London plays an impressive leadership role in promoting and facilitating corporate social responsibility amongst the 6,000 companies based in the City. The Heart of the City and the City Action projects, and the Lord Mayor's annual Dragon Awards are successful initiatives which enhance and reward corporate social responsibility. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are actively supported through the promotion of local procurement and by making nearly 53,000 square feet of accommodation available to them. Community leadership is actively underpinning the commitment to promote community cohesion.
- 8 Effective community leadership is also provided through the funding and management of the City Bridge Trust, a charity established by the City of London to reduce disadvantage across London. It is spending £15.9 million this year on charitable projects. Through its influential leadership and partnership working, the City of London gained support from its business constituents to levy a supplementary business rate from companies to fund additional police resources in order to strengthen the security and community safety of the City. Capacity in the voluntary and community sector in the City is at an early stage and is not fully developed.

- 9 There is good political and managerial leadership with clear policy direction provided by the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee. He provides leadership at many different levels, from chairing the Portsoken working party in order to better promote the needs of local residents to membership of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's High Level group on financial services. He is also Vice Chair of London Councils. Members of the Court of Common Council are of a high calibre and the Lord Mayor provides high profile leadership for the promotion of the City's and the nation's interests. The City of London is also, unusually, the Police Authority and provides effective leadership for the force. Senior managers and staff clearly have the capacity to deliver priorities and provide sound leadership across a diverse range of partnerships.
- 10 Effective consultation and engagement and a good understanding of the needs of stakeholders by officers and members results in a good focus on users of services. There is good engagement with those who are harder to reach such as the notable practice in dealing with the needs of rough sleepers. A clear commitment to providing equality of opportunity is evidenced by the achievement of level 3 in the Equality Standard for local government during September 2007.
- 11 A robust approach to business planning ensures effective prioritisation which clearly relates to ambitions. Targets for improvement are challenging with a record of continual improvement and of achieving excellent outcomes.
- 12 There is a good focus on value for money and a shared understanding of the drive for value for money by members and officers, using benchmarking and comparisons where relevant. There are some high cost services but these are matched by good performance. A model to further improve resource allocation and embed the value for money culture is being piloted. Some aspects of the housing repair and maintenance service are not performing as well as some tenants would expect and some aspects of the Considerate Contractor Scheme are not performing as well as some residents would expect.
- 13 Good performance management has driven significant performance improvements. In 2003/04 recycling rates were in the worst quartile improving to the best quartile in 2006/07. Un-audited figures for 2006/07 show that 73 per cent of indicators have improved between 2005/06 and 2006/07 contributing to the achievement of key policy priorities such as providing excellent local authority services. Fifty eight per cent of PIs were in the top quartile in 2006/07 which is almost double the average for all single tier authorities. However, partnership performance management arrangements for the City Together and the LAA are not fully developed.

- 14 The City of London is performing strongly in the achievement of its priorities. The many successful outcomes demonstrate the strength of its capacity to turn its ambitions into achievement through the focused delivery of priorities. Achievements in reducing levels of crime, delivering services for children and young people, tackling deprivation in neighbouring localities and promoting the economic development of the Square Mile are excellent. It also delivers centres of excellence such as the Barbican, the Guildhall School of Music & Drama and the London Metropolitan Archives. Business and the government recognise the City of London's contribution to making the Square Mile the world's leading financial and business centre.

Areas for improvement

- 15 Partnership performance management arrangements for the City Together and the LAA are not fully developed. The improvement of performance management of partnership working is part of the agenda for the refresh of the community strategy. The City of London, together with its partners, should undertake this work as part of its refresh of the community strategy and the work to implement the local area agreement.
- 16 Some aspects of procurement and commissioning of services are not consistently leading to service provision at the standard expected by service users. Some aspects of the housing repair and maintenance service are not delivering the quality of response and service some tenants expect. The City of London should consult with tenants as part of a review of the service. Some aspects of the Considerate Contractor Scheme are not performing as well as some residents would expect. The City of London should liaise with contractors, monitor their performance and take into account feedback from all stakeholders.
- 17 Capacity in the voluntary and community sector in the City is at an early stage and is not fully developed. The sector is not yet an effective partner in service delivery. The City of London, with all its partners, should develop the way in which it engages with the sector and builds its capacity, taking into account the very different requirements of service provision in the City and the sector's current infrastructure. This should include consideration of how communications and engagement between the City of London and the sector can be made more inclusive and accessible.

Summary of assessment scores

Headline questions	Theme	Score*
What is the Council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?	Ambition	4
	Prioritisation	4
What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?	Capacity	3
	Performance management	3
What has been achieved?	Achievement	4
Overall corporate assessment score**		4
*Key to scores		
1 – below minimum requirements – inadequate performance		
2 – at only minimum requirements – adequate performance		
3 – consistently above minimum requirements – performing well		
4 – well above minimum requirements – performing strongly		

**Rules for determining the overall corporate assessment score

Scores on five themes	Overall corporate assessment score
Two or more themes with a score of 4 None less than score of 3	4
Three or more themes with a score of 3 or more None less than score of 2	3
Three or more themes with a score of 2 or more	2
Any other combination	1

Context

The locality

- 18 The area covered by the City of London is distinctive in many ways. It has an unusual constituent base, having a residential population of just 9,000 people and a working population serving the City numbering over 320,000, which is predicted to rise to 400,000 within the next ten years. There is therefore a highly unusual imbalance between the daytime working and residential populations. Two terms which are similar are used in this report and each needs a very brief explanation: the 'City of London' is the title of the incorporated administrative body for the City which includes the Court of Common Council in its capacity as a local authority, the object of this report; the 'City', or Square Mile, is the description of the geographical area it serves and often refers to the business community within it.
- 19 The small but growing residential community has a lower proportion of older and younger people than the England average which is indicative of a largely working population. Life expectancy is relatively high at 80 years for males and 87.6 years for females. The population is predominantly white but with a Bangladeshi community accounting for between 3 and 4 per cent of the total, mainly living in the east of the City. There are other minority ethnic populations but these are very small in terms of percentages and numbers and are thinly dispersed across the City. Much of the resident population in the east was added to the City of London relatively recently as a result of boundary changes. Previously, the Mansell Street Estate and adjacent roads were part of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
- 20 Average weekly household income is £970, some £294 higher than the London average and £480 higher than the average for England. Over half the population is educated to degree level. The City has twice the national average of single occupancy households and the third highest proportion of properties as 'second homes', reflecting a large 'working week' residential population. There are large disparities of wealth within the Square Mile: some of the wards are amongst the top 15 per cent least deprived in the country but Portsoken ward, in the east, is in the 25 per cent most deprived. The main residential areas are located mostly around the fringes of the City. The location of housing is unlikely to change significantly in the next decade as new housing will be encouraged to locate next to existing residential areas.
- 21 The City is highly accessible by public transport and 89 per cent of the City workforce commutes by public transport; 1 per cent by cycle; 3 per cent walk and only 7 per cent travel by car.

- 22** Home to around 6,000 businesses, the City is the world's leading international financial and business centre. Offices form the predominant land use in the City, around 70 per cent of all land used. Developments underway will add 800,000 square feet of retail and leisure space to the existing 5.4 million square feet, in response to the expectations of a growing working population. The City's vast financial services industry which includes banking, insurance and securities, contributes over £19 billion to the UK's export earnings each year, representing over 2 per cent of the UK's total gross domestic product (GDP) and 12 per cent of London's GDP.

The Council

- 23** The City of London is very distinctive in terms of its age, size, constitution, roles and responsibilities. It is older than Parliament, having existed for more than 800 years and was first granted its own local government by the Crown in the 12th century. This and the nature of the population, mean that service provision and partnership structures are significantly different compared with most other councils. The City of London provides its residents with the same local government services that other single tier councils do but whereas spending on children and young people and adult social services usually represents the largest component of most councils' budgets, in the City of London it represents less than 7 per cent of the 'local authority' spend. The City of London also has a wide range of additional responsibilities extending far beyond the scope of normal local services and involving both a national and global role.
- 24** The City of London's governance is very different to all other local authorities. The City Council has 25 wards which elect 100 Common Councilmen and 25 Aldermen, and all are non-party political. The Court of Common Council, presided over by the Lord Mayor, is the City of London's primary decision-making assembly. There are aspects of legislation on local government to which the City of London is not subject, for example, members continue to work through a committee structure and not through an executive and scrutiny function. The members are elected by the residential population and, exceptionally, a business franchise. The business franchise was reformed by the City of London (Ward Elections) Act 2002. Any incorporated or unincorporated body which occupies premises in the City is entitled to nominate voters on a weighted basis to reflect the number of people employed. The business voters form over 70 per cent of the electorate. The duties and priorities of the City of London reflect the nature of this unusual constituency.

- 25 Strategic leadership of the City of London is provided by the Chairman of the Policy and Resources committee. It is at this committee where the key policy decisions are taken which drive the organisation forward. The Chairman of Policy and Resources is accountable to the Court of Common Council. Both the Lord Mayor and the Chairman of Policy and Resources committee have a number of major appointments outside the City. For example, the Lord Mayor is: a member of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's High Level Task Force on City Competitiveness, Chief Magistrate of the City of London and Admiral of the Port of London. The Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee is also a member of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's High Level Task Force on City Competitiveness, Vice Chair of London Councils and a Board member of Thames Gateway London Partnership.
- 26 The Town Clerk and Chief Executive provides the managerial leadership of the City of London. He is also Chairman of the Central London Resilience Forum and member and lead on transport and business continuity for the Chief Executives' London Committee. There are 19 departments which are coordinated through regular meetings of the Chief Officers' group, chaired by the Town Clerk.
- 27 The City of London is the local planning authority and its planning decisions influence the London skyline for generations. It is a major property owner with interests in over 20 per cent of the area of the Square Mile and just under 20 per cent of the accommodation built in the City. It works in close partnership with private investors and developers to produce property suitable for a highly competitive international market.
- 28 The City of London provides a wide range of services within and beyond the Square Mile, many of which are outside the scope of local authorities.
- 29 The City of London is the Police Authority for the City. This is a distinctive arrangement with accountability for policing at the local level. The City Police have a key role in London in specialist crime such as anti-fraud work for which they have a national and international reputation and in handling security and counterterrorism. The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 named the City Police as the lead agency in the fight against fraud and economic crime across the UK. The City of London is also the Port Health Authority for the tidal river Thames and provides the animal reception centre at Heathrow to benefit the whole country. The authority provides the building and funds the services to run the Central Criminal Court, known as the Old Bailey. Cases are heard at the Old Bailey from across the country.
- 30 The authority manages and protects over 10,000 acres of open spaces across London and beyond. This includes Epping Forest, Burnham Beeches, Highgate Wood and Hampstead Heath. The latter has an estimated ten million visitors a year. The City of London also runs three wholesale markets - Smithfield, Billingsgate and New Spitalfields - which are some of the most historic in the country. They provide meat, fresh fish and fruit and vegetables for London and the south east but have a wider impact by the influence their prices have across the UK market.

- 31 In 2006/07 expenditure on arts and culture was approximately £80 million, making the City of London one of the largest contributors to the arts in the country. The Barbican has received 27 million visitors since it opened and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, the Museum of London and the London Metropolitan Archive all have world class reputations and international as well as national audiences.
- 32 The finances of the City of London are similarly unusual. It administers three funds: the City Fund, which finances the 'local authority' services, the City Police and Port Health functions; City's Cash, which is a private fund; and the Bridge House Estates. The 2007/08 total gross revenue budget for all three funds is £546 million and gross revenue income is £363 million. The net expenditure for the City Fund is £160 million, only £104 million of which is met from government grant and council tax. Of the balance, £5 million is met from the supplementary business rate with the remainder having to be met from the City of London's own resources. Band D council tax at £782 in 2006/07 is the fourth lowest in London.
- 33 A particularly notable feature of the City of London is its charitable trust, the Bridge House Estates. The trust has over £700 million of assets and maintains five important London bridges at no expense to the nation. The estate funds the City Bridge Trust which has given grant funding to over 4,600 charities, in every London borough and in the City, to reduce disadvantage.
- 34 It can be seen from this overview that the City of London's roles and responsibilities stretch well beyond the Square Mile and are not confined to the conventional local authority functions. The 'City's Cash' and the Bridge House Estates funds provide significant funding to deliver many services and activities beyond those usually provided by councils. In addition to its local authority role, the City of London has a pan-London and a national impact as well as an international profile which contributes to making the City the world's leading financial and business centre with a thriving cultural life.

What is the Council, together with its partners, trying to achieve?

Ambition

- 35 The City of London is performing strongly in this area. Its ambitions are exceptionally challenging in both their scope and aspiration and its track record for achievement shows that they are realistic. Community leadership of its residents and the business community is excellent. Its vision that 'The City of London will build on its success as the world's leading international financial and business centre and will maintain high quality, accessible and responsive services benefiting its communities, its neighbours, London and the nation' captures some of the breadth and challenge of the ambition. Ambition is long term such as making a financial contribution for Crossrail and outcome focused such as supporting the City to maintain its position as the world's leading international financial centre by attracting more businesses to the Square Mile through innovative use of space and accommodation. It continues to reduce the fear of crime and reduce the impact on residents of the night time economy. Ambition is based on thorough needs analysis, is communicated clearly and is well understood by all stakeholders.
- 36 The community strategy for 2004-2014 has a challenging vision and its themes respond well to the needs and aspirations of the City., 'The City Together: A Vision for a World Class City' is delivered through eight themes: (1) a World Class City; (2) Good Transport for a Thriving City; (3) a Clean, Pleasant and Attractive City; (4) a Healthy City; (5) a Safer City; (6) a Vibrant and Culturally Rich City; (7) an Inclusive and Outward Looking City; and (8) a Skilled and Learning City. The strategy and its themes provide a clear direction for the City of London internally and externally. Ambitions have clearly defined outcomes which identify the difference their achievement will make. For example, increased levels of satisfaction by residents and workers through improvements in the frequency of street cleaning and enjoyment of a vibrant and culturally rich City provided by the Barbican, a world class centre, whose audience numbers total 27 million since it opened and increase year on year.
- 37 The strategy provides a comprehensive response to the needs of the residents, workers and businesses in the City. Resident satisfaction rates of 79 per cent with the way services are run are the highest in the country and 87 per cent of businesses are satisfied with the City as a place to run a business. Notably, the community strategy also responds to needs in the city fringe boroughs and in this way the strategy demonstrates the commitment of the City of London and its partners to the revitalisation of the communities surrounding the City.

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- 38** A good understanding exists between partners, staff and the local community about the ambitions for the area and beyond. This can be credited to effective communications with residents and close working with business facilitated in a number of ways, including the annual business ratepayer meetings chaired by the Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee and regular meetings with senior business and Government leaders, both in the UK and from overseas including the EU and the new emerging markets. City.comm provides a focal point for the voluntary and community sector.
- 39** The City of London is effective at identifying the needs of its different communities. Robust data collection and analysis is brought together in part two of the Community Strategy: 'Facts and Figures about the City'. User feedback and analysis helped inform this and effective systems are in place for sharing information with partner organisations. Partnership working is excellent including initiatives with Transport for London to improve cycling and walking and access to Tube stations and improving security through leadership of the Central London Resilience Forum. It is a champion of and a significant financial contributor to the Government proposals for Crossrail in order to ensure that improved transport links underpin the continued growth of the finance and business sector.
- 40** Effective consultation and engagement is in place to ensure that the needs of diverse communities and those most at risk of disadvantage are understood. For example, a Bengali speaking community worker focuses on one estate to address the particular needs of the Bengali population and the disabled community has been involved in the development of the Disability Equality Scheme. Consultation has also led to a review of how the London Living Wage can be incorporated into contracts. This aims to improve the earnings of women and ethnic minorities who are over-represented amongst those earning the minimum wage whilst also assisting contractors with the recruitment and retention issues found in this particular labour market.
- 41** Feedback is well managed through regular publication of a number of publications for residents, businesses and those living in the authority's social housing within and outside the Square Mile. Improvements have been delivered as a result, such as the consultation with residents and businesses by the street management and cleansing service, which has led to street cleaning now taking place up to six times each day in some areas. Health equity audits have provided a rich source of knowledge for targeted prevention and support work with good outcomes, particularly in diabetes and mental health.

- 42 A strong community leadership role is played in the most deprived areas of the City's neighbouring boroughs. It is a partner in seven regeneration partnerships, a provider of social housing in a number of London boroughs and is funding new academies in three neighbouring boroughs. The City Bridge Trust's ambition is to reduce disadvantage across London and make London a more sustainable city. This is demonstrated by its investment so far of £185 million in 4,600 charities such as the 'Fear and Fashion' project which works to reduce knife violence by young people. The City Bridge Trust also helps fund capacity building in the voluntary and community sector across London through its grants programme. Through its championing of corporate social responsibility the City of London has mobilised many of the 6,000 companies in the Square Mile to combat deprivation and provide education and employment opportunities to young people. The overall rationale for this work is to achieve the ambition of improving community cohesion and to provide career opportunities in the City.

Prioritisation

- 43 The City of London is performing strongly in this area. There is a good correlation between the assessment of residents' and businesses' needs and the City of London's priorities. The diverse needs of its communities are well understood and these needs can, where appropriate, be dealt with on an individual basis because of the size of the resident population. There are clear priorities based on consultation with residents and businesses. Priorities are delivered as a result of good leadership in driving improvement and a sustained focus on business planning.
- 44 There are clear and robust priorities for improvement linking the community strategy with corporate action and capacity. Five medium term key policy priorities are set out in the corporate plan and these aim to: (1) support the business City, London and the nation in the role as an advocate of the financial services industry; (2) ensure that the City remains a good place to do business; (3) provide excellent local authority services; (4) promote culture and recreation; and (5) support regeneration in the City, City fringes and beyond. Priorities and clear, outcome focused targets until 2014 ensure the delivery of local and national requirements but they also pursue an international agenda. This is to promote the wealth of London as a whole and the nation by ensuring the City remains the world's leading financial and business centre.
- 45 The needs of both the diverse resident communities and local business are well understood and addressed. A range of consultation strategies is used to engage with a wide range of communities. Six monthly meetings are held for all residents both centrally and locally in five areas of the City, including the four main housing estates. Issues raised are integrated into departmental business planning where appropriate. Consultation groups, such as a Youth Forum, an Older Persons' forum and an Access group are used to help improve services. The Access group has been given a small budget with which it is able address some of the disability needs of its members.

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- 46 The City of London's consultation with business and its performance as a business council for a business district is excellent. There are many means by which consultation takes place with business, including representation on the Court of Common Council and the Lord Mayor's monthly meetings with senior City business leaders. Regular surveys of companies demonstrate high satisfaction rates with the City of London's performance. This ensures that businesses stay in the City, strengthening the economy and job creation.
- 47 There is good work to identify the priorities of residents in the east of the City, where most of the small Bangladeshi community live, particularly in Portsoken ward. The Portsoken Working Party is chaired by the Chairman of the Policy and Resources committee, demonstrating high level political commitment. Residents in the area are consulted about issues and priorities through six-monthly residents' meetings which the Bengali community attends and through other channels such as meetings of the Bengali Women's group. In response, for example, a new City Health and Community centre was opened on the Mansell Street Estate in September 2007, to promote healthy living, provide social care services and provide learning opportunities.
- 48 Effective and focused support for business planning throughout the organisation is provided by the corporate performance and development team. The Deputy Town Clerk's challenge meetings with chief officers and their business planners, has raised the profile and importance of the planning process, both short and long term, and resulted in a good track record of targets being met. These include increases in the number of disadvantaged residents supported into sustained employment by the worklessness programme and the tonnage of commercial waste recycled. The innovative annual planning support and challenge activity is notable practice. The challenge is evaluated, good practice shared and future areas for development considered. This results in compelling ownership by staff of the targets and their commitment to deliver good services.
- 49 Action planning is very effective and has been strengthened further by the embedding of 'corporate issues' in planning. These include: learning and development, equalities, risk and sustainability. The corporate plan and the medium term financial strategy are integral to business and financial planning which determine the prioritisation of resources and activities.
- 50 The financial strategy, capital strategy and asset management plan are robust and ensure resources are deployed to realise corporate ambitions and priorities. The focus on priorities is sustained by the long-term effective use of the reserves which provides for the operation of a 'succeeding year' principle whereby key resource decisions are taken over a year in advance. This provides certainty of the availability of resources for service spend for 18 months ahead. The authority has a track record of investing its resources, both capital and revenue, into policy priorities and achieving positive results. Additional funding targeted at the homeless and ethnic minorities, for example, has delivered outreach services for substance misuse and rehabilitation and domestic violence support.

What is the capacity of the Council, including its work with partners, to deliver what it is trying to achieve?

Capacity

- 51 The City of London is performing well in this area. Effective leadership by senior officers and members is supported by clear decision making processes. The City of London works dynamically in a wide range of regeneration, business and strategic partnerships to improve capacity. Financial capacity is strong and supports the achievement of ambitions and priorities. Human resource management and workforce planning is good, there is innovative use of ICT and a clear focus on value for money. However, capacity in the voluntary and community sector in the City is at an early stage and is not fully developed. Some aspects of the housing repair and maintenance service are not performing as well as some tenants would expect and some aspects of the Considerate Contractor Scheme are not performing as well as some residents would expect.
- 52 The capacity of officers and members is good and the Town Clerk and Chief Executive provides effective managerial leadership which enhances performance in the delivery of priorities. Officers and members have extensive expertise and their influence often extends beyond the organisation. Staff are well informed and enthusiastic about their work. Members and officers are clear about and have a good understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities in the context of the City of London's distinctive political arrangements. Members take overall responsibility for strategy and policy primarily through the Policy and Resources Committee. Service committees deal with specific service policy and strategy. There is a culture of mutual respect, consent, and working together for the City as a whole.
- 53 The City of London uses clear and effective community leadership to enhance capacity. An illustration of which is the agreement of a supplementary business rate with the local business community to support the Police, security activity and contingency planning. In place since 2003/04 the supplementary rate has achieved, amongst other things, an increase in the uniformed police presence in the City by 48 officers helping to ensure that community safety and security priorities are delivered.
- 54 Member challenge is effective and the committee structure provides for robust scrutiny arrangements although there is not an explicitly named scrutiny function. Challenge and scrutiny take place at committee: even though the authority has a vested interest in a scheme for a development at Milton Court which will improve the facilities for the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, the planning committee referred the application back to the developer for redesign.

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- 55** Decision making is effective and transparent at both officer and member level. At senior officer level the Summit group, the regular meeting of chief officers, chaired by the Town Clerk, considers a range of strategic issues with clear and focused decision making. It also monitors performance. In addition to the community leadership provided by the City of London at a strategic level, at member level there is also sound community leadership such as the ward member support for a tenants association in its negotiations with the estate owners for a community centre.
- 56** Members and officers work effectively within the ethical framework. A Standards Committee operates with independent members comprising 50 per cent of the membership. The chair of the Committee is not currently an independent member however a process is in place to appoint an independent chair in November 2007. The Committee oversees the conduct of members in all areas of the City of London's remit and monitors the operation of the Member Code of Conduct.
- 57** There is a clear and sustained focus on achieving value for money. Unit costs are high in some areas but are matched by consistently good performance. There is a long standing culture of maximising returns from investments and the budget policy is used to encourage chief officers to improve efficiency and find better ways of working. In the annual use of resources score, the City of London has scored 3 out of 4 for value for money. A model to better evidence value for money is being piloted in three departments with findings to be reviewed in December. This will be used to improve resource allocation and embed the value for money culture. Robust risk management arrangements are in place, including a corporate strategic risk register, departmental risk registers and risk champions who form the Strategic Risk Management Group. The review of risk is an integral part of the business planning process.
- 58** Human resource management and workforce planning are good. Corporate HR focuses on providing a flexible and responsive service to all departments and there is capacity to deliver organisational change such as the new pay and grading system for all City of London staff. Training and development for staff is good. A Learning and Development Strategy is in place with investment of around £1.8 million per annum. A centralised course programme is linked to work based competencies. Innovative approaches to staff development include the Town Clerk's Master class which is a forum at which eminent external speakers address staff on a wide programme of topical issues, such as how the City can increase its impact on tackling climate change. All activities are evaluated to assess their impact and Investors in People accreditation was gained in 2005. Workforce planning is well developed internally and there are good examples of joint planning with partners, such as the joint training of a Bangladeshi community worker with the McMillan Trust for cancer care.

- 59 Member training and development takes into account the experience and knowledge of members, but is not sufficiently meeting the needs of some individuals. A flexible approach is taken to member training with induction, general and service based training available to all members. Some training is mandatory: it is a requirement that all members are trained before participating on recruitment panels. However, the needs of some individuals are not fully addressed by the current development and training opportunities. Neither is there a systematic review of the development opportunities to allow members to identify how they could better meet their needs.
- 60 A rigorous approach to project management provides for clear roles for officers and members. Projects are successfully managed by individual departments but are subject to corporate monitoring. The City of London Academy in Southwark which opened in 2005, at a total cost of £33.6 million, was project managed by the City of London on behalf of the Government.
- 61 Aspects of procurement and commissioning of services are not consistently leading to service provision at the standard expected by service users. In the view of some residents, the Considerate Contractor Scheme is not sufficiently protective of the quality of life of residents. Some tenants also have an unsatisfactory experience of the responsiveness of the housing repairs and maintenance service. However, a more strategic approach to procurement is being developed. A Procurement Strategy is in place supported by the formation of a Procurement Board and a Procurement Practitioners' Forum. Procurement is used well to support local small and medium sized enterprises and the learning from this is being used to encourage businesses in the City to engage in local procurement.
- 62 The City of London works effectively in a wide range of partnerships to improve capacity. It is working in partnership with City businesses and neighbouring local authorities to support enterprise and tackle unemployment in deprived areas of these boroughs. Through its own programme of directly commissioned projects and through the City Fringe Partnership and the Pool of London Partnership the City of London has assisted 1,097 City fringe residents into permanent employment in 2006/07.
- 63 Good partnership working enables the diverse needs of the Bengali population to be met and a full time Bengali speaking Community Development Officer is employed to deliver services to these residents. The Camomile Street Library provides services specifically aimed at the Bengali community, such as a lending library of around 150 adult and children's books in Bengali, provision of Bengali newspapers and a homework club. The City of London secured level 3 of the Equality Standard for local government during September 2007.

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- 64 Capacity in the voluntary and community sector in the City is at an early stage and is not fully developed. The LSP identified the need to build and bolster the voluntary sector. As a result, a voluntary sector forum City.comm, has been established which allows the voluntary sector to come together to share ideas and good practice. A voluntary sector compact is planned for 2008 with the intention of opening up opportunities for more substantial engagement with the voluntary and community sector, including commissioning. City.comm is well led and has made a good start but the sector is not a fully effective partner in service delivery. Engagement with the sector is not sufficiently inclusive and channels through which the sector can communicate with the City of London are not sufficiently clear.
- 65 Financial capacity at the City of London is strong and supports the achievement of ambitions and priorities. There is a robust financial strategy, capital strategy and asset management plan which ensure resources are deployed to realise corporate ambitions and priorities. Financial strength is derived from the considerable financial and property assets allowing income from these to be used to provide a more extensive range of services than would be possible through government grant alone. Council tax is comparatively low. The City of London has debt free status and finances capital expenditure from reserves, capital receipts and revenue. Reserves in the 2006/07 accounts totalled £119 million with unallocated reserves of £49 million.
- 66 ICT is used effectively throughout the City's activities. Collage is a project which has digitised the images of the 30,000 items in the City's collection. The whole collection can be viewed on-line and orders for prints are received from around the world. Similarly the archives family history research on-line service allows electronic access to records. This increases access for service users. More recently, in partnership with Europe's largest wireless network (Wi-Fi) operator, it has installed a Wi-Fi network covering the whole of the City, allowing City workers, residents and visitors to access the internet on the streets and in open spaces. This reinforces the reputation of the City as a technologically advanced financial and business centre.
- 67 ICT is used well to provide innovative solutions to social exclusion issues. Working in partnership with Government the City of London is project managing an initiative to raise the opportunities for digital inclusion and access in the east of the City by the provision of ICT equipment and assistance in developing skills. Intended outcomes include: improved access to services, employment opportunities and social and health outcomes.

Performance management

- 68 The City of London is performing well in this area. A culture of performance management with clear staff accountability for targets is developing well throughout the organisation and is shared and understood by partners, members and officers. Robust and well focused business planning ensures good ownership of and continual improvement in performance management. However, partnership performance management arrangements for The City Together and the LAA are not fully developed, although this is to be further enhanced as part of the refresh of the community strategy and the work to implement the local area agreement.
- 69 There is a systematic and well coordinated approach to performance management. Corporate monitoring and support through the Town Clerk's department provides both appropriate guidance and sufficient challenge. The corporate plan links community themes and key policy priorities. Departments translate priorities into targets for teams and individuals, although the robustness of the focus on these targets is not consistent across the organisation. Performance is monitored regularly both at chief officer level and at the Summit group, reported to committee and routinely monitored by the corporate performance team. Ambitions are clearly linked to priorities and the delivery of targets. The performance management underpinning this is robust, owned and understood throughout the organisation and by partners. This approach helps the City of London to identify areas of under performance where it can take action to keep on track and/or shift resources. One such area is the impact of the night time economy on residents where the police are monitoring the effect of additional noise on the quality of residential life and the fear of crime.
- 70 The approach to performance management has maintained strong performance in many areas and continued to drive significant performance improvements. Un-audited figures for 2006/07 show that 73 per cent of indicators have improved between 2005/06 and 2006/07 contributing to the achievement of key policy priorities such as providing excellent local authority services. When looking at all indicators (Best Value) 58 per cent are in the top quartile in 2006/07 which is almost double the average for all single tier authorities. Performance management has been effective in driving these improvements.
- 71 Action resulting from performance monitoring has been effective in addressing under-performance. In 2003/04 recycling rates were in the worst quartile and these have improved to the best quartile in 2006/07. Improvements in household recycling rates during 2006/07 have resulted from the redirection of resources into the collection of street recyclables. Monitoring has driven improvement in departments. This includes a 5 per cent improvement in invoice payments since 2004 and sickness rates reduced to 7.49 days, placing the organisation in the top quartile for London councils. Response times at the new Contact centre are consistently meeting, or are above, the target of 90 per cent of calls answered in seven seconds or fewer. Rigorous performance management is improving services for residents and workers.

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- 72** Business and service planning is well established, providing a solid foundation for performance management. There are clear links between high level priorities and service unit and individual targets. Business plans are in place for all departments and there is a common framework for business planning supported by corporate guidance. All plans show how performance will be measured in terms of actions, targets and key performance indicators (PIs), how departmental objectives will be resourced and how risk has been assessed. Business planning is evaluated and challenged corporately and Members consider, challenge and approve business plans for their relevant committees. Efficient business planning enables the authority to demonstrate that the integration of resource planning with service planning is developing well and that there are mechanisms in place to monitor performance and achievement.
- 73** Performance management systems are used well to drive improvements in services. 'PB views', the corporate performance management tool, is the system for data collection and analysis which is used across the authority and is being extended to partners. A performance management health check using PB views was undertaken for the Community and Children's Services department during 2006 and identified a number of areas where monitoring could be improved. Performance information is driving adaptations to street crossings to meet the needs of people with disabilities and is used to identify ways to improve the take up of the archive service. User satisfaction data on highways is also driving improvements.
- 74** Partnership performance management arrangements for The City Together and the LAA are not fully developed. The City of London is helping to develop further the performance management of the local strategic partnership. Performance of some partnership work is monitored at the Summit Group meetings of chief officers and via sub groups of the LSP, supported by the Town Clerk's department. Performance management of the CDRP, for example, enables the good use of quantifiable specific and measurable targets for police and drug action teams. The improvement of performance management of partnership working is part of the agenda for the refresh of the community strategy and the further development of PB views planned for 2007/08.
- 75** The City is establishing an integrated approach to service activity, outcomes and financial monitoring to enable resources to follow community priorities. The resource allocation committee meets before the start of the business planning cycle to forward plan and to give services an outline of their spending plan for the succeeding year. Pressures on annual budgets can be adjusted to ensure a break even position. All projects are evaluated and challenged in terms of cost as well as outcomes and timescale and the Chamberlain's office is currently assessing services in terms of value for money. This approach will enable outcomes to be linked to budgeting and financial monitoring and integrate financial planning with service planning for better results.

- 76** A practical approach to learning about performance ensures good practice is shared. This is currently illustrated by the partnering with the Department for Communities and Local Government on the digital inclusion project and good practice has been applied during the development stage of the Contact centre project. External challenge was invited earlier this year, when CIPFA was asked to review the robustness of the risk management function. Customer feedback influences programming at the Barbican and the offer has been broadened to attract larger and more diverse audiences. Learning and sharing is more embedded in some areas than others but overall the City of London is able to demonstrate that it can use learning from within and outside the organisation to improve services.
- 77** Performance information on service users, members of the black and minority ethnic communities (BME) and disadvantaged groups is used by departments to inform their performance management and service planning. There is not, however, a systematic corporate approach to involving these groups in performance management. Data on service use by BME communities has been used to redesign services and to focus on the needs of ethnic minority groups such as the Bengali Women's Group. Consultation on the digital inclusion initiative in response to performance data on take up of benefits is a potentially powerful tool in enabling diverse users to contribute to performance review.

What has been achieved?

- 78 The City of London is performing strongly in this area. Excellent progress has been made in the delivery of priorities and there is a clear link between the five medium term key priorities (outlined in the prioritisation section) and outcomes.
- 79 The City of London delivers many additional services and has responsibilities that no other council shares. The impact of these go well beyond the boundaries of the City, invariably have a pan-London and national impact and, in some cases, an international one.
- 80 The City of London is a partner in the success of the City as the world's leading international financial and business centre. It is achieving well against its ambitions and priorities in this area, including promoting the City's competitive position, ensuring the supply of business accommodation and maximising employment opportunities. The City of London achieves these through providing the infrastructure and services that enables the global economy to function, 24 hours each day.
- 81 Through its services and functions the City of London impacts directly on the competitiveness of the City. The City is ranked as the world's leading financial centre based on the City of London's Global Financial Centres Index (GFC2), published in September 2007, which evaluates the competitiveness of 50 financial centres worldwide. The GFCI shows that London and New York are the two leading centres, with London ahead by 19 rating points. The City leads in all five areas of competitiveness in the index: people, business environment, market access, infrastructure and general competitiveness. The City of London has negotiated an agreement with a major global corporation which will develop a new one million square feet headquarters within the City at an estimated cost of £500 million and using sustainable construction methods.
- 82 The Lord Mayor has a significant international role and his leadership is widely recognised as contributing to the success of the City. He fulfils this role through promoting the City, London and the nation to global companies and other countries, particularly the emerging economies such as China and India. A recent visit to China helped open up the entire Chinese market for a major UK insurance company.
- 83 The City of London's City Bridge Trust has for ten years been one of the largest providers of charitable grants in the greater London area. Since 1995, more than £185 million has been given to over 4,600 charities, in every London borough and the City, to reduce disadvantage. This year £15.9 million will be given to charitable organisations and the Trust's criteria determine which organisations are fit to receive funding and have the greatest capacity to deliver outcomes. Priorities for funding include building leadership and reconciliation in response to the terrorism incidents in recent years.

- 84 The Economic Development Office (EDO) successfully promotes the financial and business sector. It works in partnership with city businesses, Government departments, EU institutions and neighbouring boroughs to influence the regulatory, fiscal and environmental frameworks that make the City the world's leading financial and business centre. Recognising that financial services is a globalised industry, the City of London has opened offices in Brussels, China and India to promote the industry and the City as an international market place. A notable recent achievement has been the development of Wi-Fi across the City, the first network on such a large scale, through working closely with telecommunications suppliers.
- 85 The City of London delivers excellence in the arts and culture through providing high achieving services. The Barbican, Europe's largest multi-arts and conference complex, hosts as the resident orchestra the world renowned London Symphony (LSO). The Guildhall School of Music & Drama; the Museum of London and the London Metropolitan Archive all have world class reputations and international audiences. The total investment in the arts amounts to approximately £80 million per year. The City of London is a major partner in the City of London Festival and its funding of £330,000 has levered in another £489,106 from the private sector in 2006. The festival reaches audiences in excess of 100,000 in the City and another six million through broadcasts. The size of the City of London's contribution to the arts and culture makes it one of the largest contributors to the arts in the country.
- 86 The City of London works closely with central government. Recent partnership work with UK Trade and Investment led to a publication entitled 'The City' showcasing the global strength of financial services in the UK. The Government often asks the City of London to host events for Heads of State, ministers and business delegations visiting the UK.
- 87 The City of London's successful advocacy of corporate social responsibility helps deliver the ambition to create an inclusive and outward looking city. Through its leadership on corporate social responsibility, it has succeeded in securing significant additional resources and expertise from the City. This has helped to greatly increase its capacity for tackling regeneration. The Lord Mayor's Dragon Awards celebrate and reward excellence in corporate social responsibility. The awards are now in their 20th year and are given to companies which demonstrate an outstanding contribution in the field of corporate community involvement. A winner in 2006 was one of the big four accountancy firms: 35 per cent of its staff volunteered for community involvement, they were active in 248 schools and they made nearly 1,300 charitable donations.

Sustainable communities and transport

- 88 The City of London and its partners have achieved significant improvements in creating sustainable communities. It is active in initiatives at local, pan London, national and international levels to promote employment through the strength of the local finance and business economy and it is successful in using its planning functions to support business needs. The City of London is actively addressing global environmental issues, including a pioneering approach to reduce the impacts of climate change. It has made significant improvements to local public spaces and maintains high quality open spaces across London and neighbouring counties. The City of London has successfully promoted improved access in fringe boroughs and campaigned for improvements in public transport. It has met targets to increase housing supply and is on target to meet the decent homes standard by 2010 in the stock it manages within the City and neighbouring boroughs.
- 89 The promotion of training and employment opportunities in neighbouring boroughs has delivered clear outcomes for their communities. Initiatives to build links between City businesses and City fringe schools have delivered significant outcomes. These include 2,350 City Fringe residents involved in learning opportunities and securing employment for 1,097 residents in 2006/07. The City of London Business Traineeship Scheme supported 88 young people from City 'fringe' schools in placements with City firms, after their 'A' levels in 2007. This broadens their understanding of the range of employment opportunities in the City and encourages them to embark on careers locally.
- 90 Small and medium enterprise (SMEs) business growth is actively facilitated through the promotion of local recruitment and purchasing practices. In 2006/07, the City of London made available almost 53,000 square feet of work space to, and supported some, 1,076 SMEs. The number of procurement opportunities in which local businesses were invited to quote has risen from 26.5 per cent to 34 per cent in the last year and the value of business generated for local firms through community benefit clauses in major contracts totals £10.5 million. The 'Employment Charter for Construction' also provides training and employment on City construction sites, with 257 workers undertaking on-site assessment and training. These initiatives have secured significant additional employment opportunities locally.
- 91 The City of London has successfully used planning to support business needs. Over the last 20 years, over 50 per cent of the floor space has been renewed with for example all major banks now represented in the square mile. Planning policies are facilitating an estimated additional 2.5 million metres squared of gross office floor space by 2016 which will accommodate the projected increase of over 100,000 city workers over this period. The City's property team plays a key part in encouraging, facilitating and managing the delivery of the necessary floor space.

- 92 The City of London is actively addressing global environmental issues locally, pan London and nationally. Sustainability is a key element within the Corporate Plan with initiatives aimed at reducing the City's carbon footprint. The City of London was instrumental in setting up the EU emissions trading scheme and it has a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy to help the City cope with the impacts of climate change. Energy use is monitored and use of renewable energy has helped to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 27 per cent compared with 1990 levels. This focus on environmental issues encourages the City's businesses to adopt more sustainable methods of construction and waste management.
- 93 The City of London has made significant improvements to public spaces and a number of schemes have won national awards, such as the public space at the Old Bailey scheme which won the Local Government News Street Design Award 2006. In March 2007 the street scene team received the Worshipful Company of Architects award for its 'consistent quality of achievement and significant contribution made...towards the enhancement of the streetscape of the City of London.' The City of London also manages over 10,000 acres of high quality open spaces across London and neighbouring counties, including Epping Forest, Burnham Beeches and Highgate Woods and Hampstead Heath.
- 94 The City of London is actively involved in promoting and improving access in fringe boroughs and campaigns for improvements in public transport. It is the lead authority for the Central Sector of the London Bus Priority Network and coordinates the funding and implementation measures to improve bus services in the City and the surrounding boroughs. It has been successful in lobbying, and in some cases providing funding for public transport improvements and new infrastructure such as Crossrail, the East London Line, Thameslink, Cross River Tram and the City Tram.
- 95 There is a clear understanding of housing needs in the area and good progress has been made with delivering affordable housing and meeting the decent homes standard. The Mayor of London's targets for housing supply have been met and the City of London is on track to meet new targets. Supplementary planning guidance supports funding for affordable housing schemes with £1.9 million secured since 2004. It is also on target to meet the decent homes standard. By the end of 2006/07, 64 per cent of all homes met the standard and a fully resourced plan is in place to achieve the standard, as well as environmental improvements, for all its stock within the City and in neighbouring boroughs.

Safer and stronger communities

- 96** The City of London as the City Police Authority has a strong track record of effective partnership working, including the Safer City Partnership, which has sustained low crime rates and low fear of crime. A 20 per cent reduction in all crimes has been achieved in the last three years from an already low baseline. Residents' survey results confirm that high numbers feel safe during the day (87 per cent) and after dark (75 per cent) including in disadvantaged wards. These figures compare well with regional and national averages and are consistently high. LAA stretch targets have been agreed for further reductions in levels of crime. The City Police authority has a national and international reputation for successfully tackling areas of specialist crime including anti fraud and counter terrorism. As a result residents and City workers enjoy a good quality of life and a safe environment.
- 97** The City of London's emergency planning arrangements are robust. Multi agency procedures are regularly updated and tested through training exercises. New technology is being used to reinforce security measures. Vulnerable groups have been identified and arrangements tailored to their needs. The City Police force has achieved international recognition for anti terrorism preventive work in its successful Project Griffin. This was achieved by close working with security personnel in City businesses through a well coordinated approach including training and briefings. Crime prevention and emergency planning are also mainstreamed with staff, including parking attendants and refuse cleaners, reporting suspicious incidents to prevent serious crime and terrorism. The City is an active member of a number of multi agency fora, for example, its officers chair the Central London Resilience Forum and strongly support the London Resilience Forum. Resident and business surveys consistently confirm high levels of confidence in the City's capability and capacity to respond to emergencies.
- 98** A clear vision and well coordinated approach has achieved low levels of anti-social behaviour and youth offending. Partnership work in the strategic Anti Social Behaviour Forum and simplified ways for the public to report concerns have been successful in providing prompt responses to cases of anti-social behaviour. A clear strategy is in place to minimise the risks of serious disorder due to the night time economy. As part of this, nightclubs and other licensed premises receive prevention advice as well as targeted interventions by police in identified hotspot areas. Alcohol related anti-social behaviour is being robustly tackled with initiatives, including the successful Safety Thirst scheme. Since its launch two years ago this has encouraged higher standards of safety and security in licensed premises and awards are given to the best performing outlets. Taxi marshalling schemes, which encourage more black cab drivers into the Square Mile, make it easier for City workers to get home safely. Users have fed back that these provide increased levels of reassurance and personal safety.

- 99** The City of London is performing well against national and local road casualty reduction targets. A good record in reducing accidents has been achieved through sound partnership work with the emergency services. Areas of particular concern, such as the number of cycling related incidents, are being proactively addressed through prevention measures and increased publicity. The City's performance has contributed to a safer environment for residents and workers.
- 100** Good partnership working is promoting safety and maintaining a low level of fear of crime amongst older people. Ward policing teams have developed constructive relationships with older residents on estates to provide reassurance and respond quickly to any concerns. These include recent increases in anti-social behaviour because of rough sleepers and the night time economy. Well attended residents meetings are also being used to address specific issues and seek timely resolutions. As a result surveys in areas where the majority of older people live consistently confirm lower fear of crime than in London generally.
- 101** The City of London has a clear commitment and ambition to sustain community cohesion. There is good support from residents and businesses. Two thirds of residents in the most recent survey confirm the City is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well. Multi agency work and additional funding targeted at the homeless and ethnic minorities has achieved successful outcomes, such as support for rough sleepers helping them into a more stable lifestyle rather than just moving them. Outreach services address substance misuse, rehabilitation and domestic violence support. A range of preventative services are available through schools and the youth service for young people and those most at risk. This allows the City of London to target its resources in areas where they are most needed and where they will make the greatest impact.
- 102** Community consultation is well established and contributes effectively to achieving social inclusion. Consultation and engagement with business and resident communities through well attended resident meetings, local surveys and ward policing teams are achieving high levels of reassurance including in more disadvantaged areas. Regular fora are also used effectively with specific groups, such as resident representation on Safer City Partnership and young people on the Young City Safe scheme. A new community centre, opened in September 2007, in one of the most disadvantaged localities fosters closer links with community groups and such initiatives are having a positive impact on community cohesion.
- 103** Significant commitment to education, learning and regeneration in neighbouring boroughs delivers the ambition to promote a cohesive community in these areas. This commitment is backed by substantial investment. For example, the LSO, with support from the City of London, has a base at St Lukes providing training to young musicians in some of the most deprived parts of Islington and Hackney. The City of London is also investing in the regeneration of its neighbours through its ambitious City Academy programme. It is co-sponsoring three City Academies to improve education and learning, the first one opened in Southwark in 2005. As well as offering the usual curriculum there is a focus on business and enterprise and pupils also benefit from work opportunities in the City.

Healthier communities

- 104** The City of London is working well with partners to make a positive contribution to the health of the City's residents and workers with some notable achievements. The health of the City's residential population is good and improving. Cardiovascular disease is the most common cause of premature death for City residents. A wide range of healthy lifestyle programmes are achieving positive results for smoking cessation and increasing participation in sports and recreation activities. Health inequalities in disadvantaged wards are being effectively addressed through a wide range of preventive services.
- 105** A clearer, shared understanding of the needs of specific population groups has been achieved. Health equity audits have provided a rich source of intelligence for targeted prevention and support work with good outcomes, particularly in diabetes and mental health. Specific needs assessment is commissioned where there is limited data and information, for example, in the Bengali community. This informed the health equity audit on women's health needs and as a direct result locally tailored services are now in place. Campaigns organised jointly with health partners are increasing the take up of flu immunisation and breast screening rates for those most at risk. As a result more targeted services are available to meet diverse needs.
- 106** Access to services for those most at risk of disadvantage is being improved. Joint work with the voluntary sector provides transport passes to residents with impaired mobility and those with long term disabilities. Outreach services to increase immunisation have been established within the Muslim community and in the new Children's Centre. The only GP practice based in the City has increased its accessibility as a health and social care centre for joint teams. Local data analysis suggests approximately 2,000 City residents are not registered with GPs and action is being taken to address access problems. As a consequence, there is a better understanding of where specific interventions are needed to minimise health inequalities.
- 107** Walk in health centres are available which are well used by City workers. These enable easy access to treatment for work related health issues such as stress and physical injuries to upper limbs and backs. An occupational helpline provides free, accessible information and advice to businesses on a wide range of workplace health issues. As a result the City is providing a useful range of progressive facilities to meet the needs of both its residents and workers.

- 108** A well established partnership infrastructure is in place which is delivering national and local targets. The multi agency 'Thriving, Healthy Communities Partnership Board', a sub group of The City Together, is coordinating the LAA's healthier communities block. Through the LAA stretch targets a number of key health objectives have been prioritised including improving health outcomes through reduced smoking and tackling obesity. Short term targets for smoking cessation reductions have been achieved for residents and workers. Medium to long term targets are being implemented to achieve sustained progress. City specific issues have been prioritised by the production of the first City health strategy with the two neighbouring PCTs and the mental health trust. Regular progress on the health strategy and its action plan implementation is monitored by the City's health scrutiny committee. As a result of these collaborative initiatives the City and its partners are better able to target resources and maximise capacity to improve the health of the community in a sustained manner.
- 109** Sound partnership working is achieving locally based initiatives which are having a positive impact on the health and well being of the most disadvantaged localities. A major achievement is the City's collaboration with Tower Hamlets PCT to establish a valuable new community health centre for residents in Portsoken ward. Outreach clinics for oversubscribed specialities in GP practices, such as diabetes and high blood pressure, are planned to be located in this centre. Performance monitoring and consultation with users and professionals using this facility has been incorporated. This will enable health inequalities of residents' needs to be identified to inform future service development.
- 110** Community based mental health services are well supported by joint funded posts. A current priority is rough sleepers, as the City has the second highest number of rough sleepers in London, many of whom have serious mental health problems. A joined up approach is being taken with statutory and voluntary sector providers which is enabling them to promptly access accommodation, emotional support and counselling. This has resulted in a significant reduction in numbers of those on the streets from 56 to 28 from May to August 2007.
- 111** The 'Young at Heart' health promotion programme is very effective. It provides a free and wide range of health and fitness activities and has successfully tripled its participants in two years to over 300 members with good results achieved in a range of health measures, such as improved cardiovascular results. Health promotion is being targeted at those most at risk of disadvantage and there is free membership of leisure centres to vulnerable residents through direct payments for health or social care services. Healthy eating programmes, including breakfast clubs for families needing additional support, are well established in the City's school. There is good access in all council and partner service points to a wide range of quality information and guidance about healthy living.
- 112** The independence of people living at home with long term conditions is being increased through a joint rehabilitation team of health and social care workers. They also have access to the latest technology such as telecare and telehealth systems. These deliver health related services through the innovative use of new technology without the need to travel.

Older people

- 113** There is a positive focus on independence and well being in the City of London's strategic partnership approach to services for older people. Quality of life issues such as employment and income, transport, age discrimination and fear of crime are clearly addressed. Partnership working is coordinated well in key activities including the multi agency Thriving, Healthy Communities Partnership Board. The current older people's strategy is being reviewed with assistance from Better Government for Older People advisers and action plans are being developed in consultation with services users and carers. These will be incorporated in a revised strategic framework within an overall Adult Services plan by the end of 2007. Collaborative initiatives are enabling the authority to maximise its capacity and target its resources.
- 114** There is effective corporate leadership on older people issues from the Older People's champion who has ensured mechanisms to engage with older people are well established. The Older People's Forum has an average attendance of more than 100 people and draws its membership from a good cross section of attendees including people from disadvantaged localities. Voting systems are used to identify key issues for action to inform planning and decision making. A quarterly news bulletin for adults and older people, 'City Matters', contains useful articles on healthy lifestyles, community activities, safety, energy saving, crime prevention, and feedback on consultation exercises.
- 115** Effective mechanisms for involving older people in service evaluation and quality assurance are developing. Service users are engaged in considering policies and new initiatives at an early stage of development and are involved in reviewing the use of new technology, such as 'telecare'. The website for adults and older people is being re-designed to make it easier to use and to provide an additional channel for consultation. Free-standing information kiosks are shortly to be erected on estates so that responses to on-line questionnaires can be input directly. As a result engagement processes are becoming more accessible to meet diverse needs.
- 116** The City of London and its partners are providing a good range of preventative services for older people. A needs assessment of the extent of depression and isolation experienced by older people is informing a joint strategy with GPs and hospital and social work staff to meet any gaps. A City carers' strategy is being developed with the voluntary sector to address unmet needs. Initiatives are also encouraging additional needs to be identified and addressed, such as a Bangladeshi women's sewing group. This has led to referrals to other services including the library and adult literacy service.
- 117** Intergenerational activities are improving the understanding between generations and provide real learning opportunities. These include the exchange of skills and training between older and younger people in activities such as craft, new technology and outbound events. The Older People's Forum has also used intergenerational work as one of its annual themes using creative drama to improve dialogue and understanding. This year's Lord Mayor's show will also publicise the theme of cross generation to promote future activities.

- 118** Effective partnership work is improving the income of older people. The City of London works closely with the Citizen Advice Bureau (CAB) and the local pensions service to increase welfare benefits take up. Home visiting takes place, on behalf of a number of services, to assess the immediate needs of the older person. Outreach services are also provided by Age Concern and the CAB in disadvantaged wards and these are very well attended. Ward members are also active in encouraging older people to apply for welfare benefits. Significant income generation is being achieved which benefits vulnerable older people.
- 119** A good range of services is provided to support the independence of older people and performance outcomes in key indicators are amongst the best nationally. For example, hospital admissions are consistently low as are admissions to residential or nursing care. Joint health and social care rehabilitation teams are also helping to minimise delayed transfers of care from hospital. One major achievement to support independence has been the 'Young at Heart' programme for those aged 50 and over. Originally designed to help reduce falls and generally break down barriers for participants, the programme has developed to include a range of free pursuits. Health checks are provided at regular intervals and latest figures confirm that over 60 per cent have reduced their blood pressure in the first 12 months of membership.

Children and young people

- 120** Outcomes for children and young people in the City of London are excellent. Still birth, infant mortality and teenage pregnancy rates are all comparatively low. Few young people need treatment for substance misuse. There are no children and young people currently on the child protection register. Children in early years provision and at the one maintained primary school make good progress as do looked after children of all ages. Young people participating in youth service provision achieve well. Children and young people are confident that their views are listened to and have an impact. No young people are currently subject to anti-social behaviour orders or acceptable behaviour contracts and the number of young people with whom the youth offending team needs to be involved is very low. The number of young people not in employment, education and training has fallen. Success rates in National Vocational Qualifications are well above average.
- 121** Service management within the City of London's services for children and young people is outstanding. Very good use is made of a wide range of intelligence to identify user needs and priorities for service development. Ambitions are challenging and realistic, with a strong focus on inclusion and tackling disadvantage. There is very effective partnership working between the local authority and its partner agencies at all levels, from planning through to service delivery. There is strong leadership at senior level, both from elected members and officers. Both middle managers and front line staff are of high quality, the result of effective recruitment and very good provision for continuing professional development. Resourcing levels are good and financial management effective. Performance management is good and providers learn very well from the lessons of experience.

- 122** The work of the local authority and its partners in securing the health of children and young people is outstanding. Very good information about local needs is used to good effect and services are delivered in a way which is sensitive to the diversity within the local community. Advice and guidance for children and young people on living healthily is good. There is a comprehensive child and adolescent mental health service which meets individual needs very well. Early identification of needs and effective provision before problems become acute is particularly successful. Health services for children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are excellent and their delivery is well coordinated with other provision. Provision for looked after children is also very good.
- 123** Children and young people appear safe and arrangements to ensure this are outstanding. Partner agencies work very effectively together, with clear understandings of roles and responsibilities and very good information sharing. There is early identification of developing problems and very effective intervention which addresses child and family needs holistically. The quality of key staff is very good. Very good management supervision of child protection cases is backed up with excellent independent reviewing officer involvement. A weakness is that there is not yet an agreed policy and strategy to meet requirements on private fostering. Services provide a safe environment for children and young people and there is particularly good liaison between the police and other services in dealing with concerns about harassment and bullying. There is an effective approach to dealing with domestic violence, including the provision of support for victims.
- 124** The impact of services to help children and young people enjoy their education and to achieve well is outstanding. The quality of early years education and day care provision overall is good. At the City's one maintained primary school provision is very good throughout. Educational support for children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities is excellent. Assessment is prompt and provision is both well resourced and of very good quality. Reviews of provision are regular and rigorous. Looked after children attend good quality school and college provision and are well supported, generally, in making educational progress. There is a wide range of recreational and voluntary learning opportunities, including a good youth service.
- 125** The impact of all local services in helping children and young people to contribute to society is outstanding. Consultation with children and young people is regular, extensive and well designed. The views they express have a significant impact on what is provided. The involvement of both looked after children and children and young people with learning difficulties in planning and reviewing the particular provision made for them is very good. Action to deter and prevent anti-social behaviour and to reduce offending is very effective. Good opportunities and encouragement are given to children and young people to make a contribution to society through voluntary activity.

- 126** The impact of all local services in helping children and young people and families to improve their economic well-being is outstanding. Child care provision is well matched to the needs of most families. Advice, guidance and support for young people in making further education and employment choices are good. The local authority has developed a wide range of partnerships with other agencies and organisations and uses these well to enhance employment opportunities locally. Looked after children are well supported in the transition to adult life and leaving care.
- 127** The capacity of council services to improve is outstanding.

Appendix 1 - Framework for Corporate Assessment

- 1 This corporate assessment was carried out under section 10 of the Local Government Act 1999, under which the Audit Commission has power to inspect local authorities' arrangements for securing continuous improvement. The results of the corporate assessment contribute to the determination of the overall CPA category for an authority, which the Audit Commission is required to assess and report on under section 99 of the Local Government Act 2003.
- 2 The Council's self assessment provided a key resource in focusing the assessment activity which included consideration of:
 - key documentation, including the Council's improvement plan;
 - updated performance indicators and performance data; and
 - interviews and meetings attended.
- 3 The assessment for the City of London was undertaken by a team from the Audit Commission and took place over the period from 3 to 14 September 2007.
- 4 This report has been discussed with the City of London, which has been given the opportunity to examine the Audit Commission's assessment. This report will be used as the basis for improvement planning by the City of London.