

Glasgow City Council

The Audit of Best Value and Community Planning

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Commission findings



The Audit of Best Value

This report is made by the Controller of Audit to the Accounts Commission under section 102(1) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973. After considering it the Commission may do any or all of the following:

- Direct the Controller to carry out further investigations
- Hold a hearing
- State its findings

The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 introduced new statutory duties relating to Best Value and Community Planning.

The scope of Best Value and Community Planning is very broad but in general terms a successful council will:

- work with its partners to identify a clear set of priorities that respond to the needs of the community in both the short and the longer term
- be organised to deliver those priorities
- meet and clearly demonstrate that it is meeting the community's needs
- operate in a way that drives continuous improvement in all its activities.

The challenge for local government is to find new ways of working across services and with other bodies to achieve the best results for citizens and service users. The key objectives of this audit were to:

- assess the extent to which Glasgow City Council is meeting its duties under the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and
- agree planned improvements with the council to be reviewed by the council's local external auditor over the next three years.

As Best Value and Community Planning encompass all the activities of a council it is not realistic to audit everything in depth, so we plan our detailed work in two ways.

Where possible, we draw on the findings of other scrutiny processes, such as the work carried out by the council's external auditors and by inspectorates. These are incorporated into our report.



We select certain aspects of the council's performance for detailed audit investigation. A wide range of sources, including the council's own assessment of its performance, reports issued by external audit and inspections and national Statutory Performance Indicators, informs this selection.

The report reflects this selective approach, with detailed commentary on some areas and limited or no coverage in others. While we have made some comparisons with other councils, our overall approach has focused on performance trends and improvement within Glasgow City Council. The report also reflects the picture available at the time of our main audit work which was conducted between June and November 2005.

We gratefully acknowledge the co-operation and assistance provided to the Audit Team by Councillor Steven Purcell, Leader of the Council, George Black, Chief Executive, Anne Connolly, Corporate Policy Manager and all other elected members, community planning partners and staff involved.



Overall conclusions

Glasgow City Council is Scotland's largest council and attracts significant interest and commentary on its activities. There is no doubt that the council's context presents some significant and complex social and economic challenges and that the council's performance, in delivering some key services to the most vulnerable groups within the communities it serves, still needs to improve.

However, in recent years the council has put in place a number of arrangements to support continuous improvement. Elected members and senior officers have sustained a focus on what matters and have delivered visible improvements in the city, underpinned by strong leadership. The council still has a lot to do and has not yet realised the benefits of all of its investment in performance, but it is clear that it is committed to continuous improvement. In doing this the council needs to further consider how it supports and manages its staff, who are critical to the delivery of its ambitions.

1. Glasgow is located at the centre of the Clyde Valley conurbation and is Scotland's largest city, with a population of over 585,000. As such, it attracts significant profile, interest and commentary on all of its activities. The city is home to more than 50,000 students and a relatively high proportion of the resident population is made up of people from ethnic minority groups. The health of these residents is not good compared with the rest of Scotland and indicators of wealth, health, crime, employment and educational attainment reveal the scale and extent of deprivation in Glasgow to be much greater than in any other area.
2. This is a challenging context for any council let alone one which is also trying to balance the competing demands of its national, regional and international profile as Scotland's largest city. There are many benefits to the scale and profile of Glasgow's context, including the ability to lead and influence national policy and debate, the opportunity to participate in and lead high profile national and international initiatives, and the ability to access appropriate capacity to invest in its priorities. Glasgow has made active use of the opportunities its scale presents, although a number of challenges remain in terms of improving its delivery of services to local people.
3. Since local government reorganisation in 1996, Glasgow has become an increasingly self aware council. It knows where it most needs to improve. It has focused on the physical regeneration of the city to deliver visible improvements, for instance securing over £155 million of investment in the regeneration of the River Clyde area and achieving one of the largest rates of growth in employment of any UK city by securing 53,000 jobs since 1995.
4. The council has also taken difficult decisions, sometimes in the face of potentially adverse public opinion, and has seen things through. Key achievements have included delivering the largest Housing



Stock Transfer in Europe, the largest education public private partnership in the UK and, more recently, obtaining significant levels of support from partners and the Scottish Executive for the City's Commonwealth Games bid.

5. Despite this progress, Glasgow often finds it difficult to overcome some of the perceptions of its past performance. It is, however, making progress in improving its service delivery and in recent years its rate of improvement has been amongst the best of all Scottish councils although this year the rate of improvement has slowed down. It is also clear that Glasgow has made a significant contribution to the resurgence of the local economy and the renewal of the city centre and along the River Clyde, and this is borne out by recent independent reports from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the Scottish Labour Market Intelligence Service.
6. At the time of our audit the council was in the process of refocusing its agenda for the next ten years, building on its achievements in the physical regeneration of the city so far. The refocused priorities of the council aim to deliver sustainable 'social renewal' for local people in Glasgow, which will allow them to benefit from the projected economic growth and job opportunities. This represents an ambitious and challenging long term agenda for the council at the same time as it needs to focus and demonstrate a step change in some aspects of its service performance.
7. Over the last few years, Glasgow has focused on improving its corporate management arrangements and systems, as a platform from which to build service improvement. The council has developed a clear vision and sustained its focus on what matters to deliver its achievements to date. The council now has a clearly articulated vision within the Community and Corporate plans and improvement themes are linked to service and operational plans. This planning infrastructure is underpinned by effective leadership from both senior elected members and senior officers. The new leader of the council has made a significant impact in and outside the council in articulating Glasgow's ambitions and priorities for the next ten years.
8. It is important that the council now implements its plans to revise its corporate and service plans to take account of the changed emphasis of the council's priorities, and to improve how it reports its performance against these priorities, in a more balanced way, to the public.
9. The chief executive is well respected by elected members, officers and partners. He has been in post for almost three years, and during that time, has maintained a clear focus on improving corporate working across the council, and has also provided a sustained focus on the need for an effective Budget and Service Planning framework. Significant progress has been made in these areas, and the management culture of the organisation is also changing, with more interdepartmental working and more senior women officers on the corporate management team.



10. Although there is evidence that the council has sought to modernise both its political and managerial structures, the council acknowledges that there is further scope to refine these arrangements. The council has indicated that it is committed to further modernising its managerial structures with the appointment of two executive directors. These posts, whilst very recent, are intended to provide a clearer focus on corporate and cross-cutting issues. The council has also indicated that it intends to review its political structures and it is important that these arrangements are complementary and are not developed in isolation.
11. The council is clear that partnership working is central to the realisation of its ambitions. Over recent years the council has participated in and led a wide range of partnership activity focussed on delivering particular projects or objectives. Its efforts in establishing effective Community Planning arrangements with a shared level of commitment, through Glasgow Alliance for instance, have been less successful and the arrangements did not fulfil their potential. The council has recognised this and recently agreed new arrangements for more effective community planning. These arrangements are very recent and ambitious, and significant investment will be needed to establish more detailed implementation and resource plans to support the introduction of the agreed framework.
12. The council has effective mechanisms in place to support community consultation, although there remains some scope to improve its arrangements further. A citizen's panel is used to conduct twice yearly surveys and booster groups are used to target consultation for some hard to reach groups. The council, along with its partners, has also recently issued a draft community engagement strategy for use within its planned community planning arrangements. There are, however, opportunities to improve on the consistency and quality of consultation which is carried out as part of the council's best value reviews, and the council has been slow to put in place effective arrangements for handling complaints across all of its services.
13. The council has put in place a number of mechanisms to support continuous improvement. In particular, the council's emphasis on delivering Efficient Government and the need to fund its Equal Pay settlement are acting as significant drivers in its approach. Beyond this the council has made good use of its best value reviews and targeted use of option appraisal to support improvement.
14. The council has a number of additional building blocks to support it in achieving improvement, including effective financial management based on sound systems of budgetary control and robust budget and service planning and performance management arrangements, as well as a focussed view of ICT as an enabler to improve services and generate efficiencies. There are, however, some areas where the council has still has more to do, including the delivery of a comprehensive Human Resources (HR) strategy, a more robust asset management framework and further development of its approach to risk management.



15. Despite these improvements in its management arrangements and systems, the council has yet to realise the full benefits of its investment in improved service performance. The council has achieved a good rate of improvement in recent years although this has levelled off in 2004/05. Overall in 2004/05 the council maintained its performance, with ten Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) improving by 5 per cent or more and nine deteriorating by 5 per cent or more since 2002/03. In both 2002/03 and 2004/05, 70 per cent of the council's SPIs were in the upper and middle quartiles, which shows that Glasgow is maintaining its performance relative to other councils, despite its relatively low starting point in some areas.
16. Within this overall picture, however, a number of areas still need to significantly improve, including the educational attainment and achievement of children, the academic attainment of looked after children, better support for people leaving the criminal justice system, the speed at which children made the subject of a supervision order are seen by a supervising officer, and the council's performance on recycling and cleanliness.
17. Finding solutions to some of these issues is complex and there is evidence that the council is proactive in its approach to improvement. There are many examples of innovative service improvements, including the council's improved school estate as a result of investment in the secondary PPP and pre-twelve strategy, improved management arrangements in both education and social work services, investment in healthy eating for school age children, the introduction of integrated teams for tackling addiction and homelessness, and significant investment in physical and economic regeneration.
18. The council needs to improve some aspects of its staff management. The council compares well with others in its sickness absence rates amongst craft, manual and teaching staff, indicating good management of this issue, but absence among APT&C staff is rising. The council's culture in the past was characterised by a strong and directive management style. The management culture has improved in recent years but as the council's 38,000 staff are potentially the council's greatest ambassadors it is important that the council invests more in how it manages and engages with its staff.
19. In particular, the council needs to demonstrate its commitment to supporting and developing its staff through robust workforce planning and an effective personal development system. The council has plans to carry out a full staff survey by 2007 and, although interim arrangements are in place, this means that it will be some time before the council has a full picture of staff views to inform its investment priorities.
20. The council is making good progress with its efforts to mainstream equal opportunities and customer care, through a range of policies, responsibilities and structures. Leadership is apparent from both elected members and officers, and the council's approach to equal opportunities is likely to be helpful



to other councils as they review their own practices. The council is also making progress with its commitment to sustainable development, but recognises that the focus on economic and social regeneration must be balanced with more work on the environmental agenda.

21. The council is developing a 'Best Managed Local Authority' initiative and the emerging transformation map has significant potential for managing the wide ranging and challenging change agenda the council has set. The council needs to give further consideration to how it will manage its change agenda to ensure that clear responsibilities, resources and realistic timescales are in place and that all of its priorities can be met. However, the council's achievements in recent years, have demonstrated that it has the ability to implement improvements by sustaining its focus on what matters.



Part 1: Does the council have clear strategic direction?

Glasgow is a city of contrasts. The local economy and the physical infrastructure of the city have improved significantly over recent years, but it still faces very significant challenges in terms of deprivation and poor health. Glasgow City Council has changed a lot since local government re-organisation in 1996 when it faced large budget cuts and record rises in council tax, and had a very traditional approach to service delivery and distinctive management culture.

The council's vision and strategic direction have been clear for a number of years and the focus is now shifting from physical regeneration to social renewal. Detailed plans to articulate what this means in practice still need to be developed, but it is clear that key stakeholders both within and outside the organisation have a shared vision.

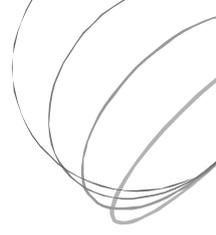
The council has a good foundation to build on, with clear leadership from members and officers, a good planning infrastructure and a sustained focus on what is important for the city. The council recognises the need to focus on improving on its performance in key areas, on getting the right political and managerial structures in place, developing community planning arrangements and further developing more balanced public performance reporting.

Context

22. Glasgow occupies sixty eight square miles of west central Scotland and is located at the centre of the Clyde Valley conurbation. It is Scotland's largest city, with a population of over 585,000 and 38,000 employees. It is also home to more than 50,000 students. People from ethnic minority groups, chiefly of Pakistani, Indian, Chinese, African and Caribbean origin, account for about 5.5 per cent of the city's population, a higher proportion than in any other council area in Scotland.
23. In line with the trend across the whole of Scotland, the population of Glasgow is declining and is expected to continue to decline in the future. The number of elderly people in Glasgow's population, already below the Scottish average, is projected to decrease further although the proportion of the population aged over 85 is increasing. At the same time, Glasgow's already high proportion of young adults (age 20-39) is expected to increase.
24. These changes in Glasgow's age profile are important considerations for the council when it is planning the shape and size of demand for its services in the future. The council recognises the need to address these challenges, including:



- Providing affordable housing within a balanced housing market which meets the increase in the proportion of young people living in the City, the growth in single person households (almost half of the families with dependant children are headed by a lone parent), and the low proportion of dwellings in council tax bands F-H, which at 4.92 per cent is very low compared with the average of 10.72 per cent.
 - Increasing the educational attainment of its resident population; 41 per cent of Glasgow's population have no qualifications compared with 33 per cent for Scotland, and competition for well paid jobs is high due to the proportion of higher education graduates.
 - The impact of the reducing population and changing profile of the city population on demand for Glasgow's culture and leisure facilities.
 - Assessing, with partners, the impact of the changing profile of the elderly population on future demand for the council's social care services.
25. Glasgow's mortality rates are considerably higher than the Scottish average reflecting in part residents' generally poorer state of health. Glasgow has higher rates of lung cancer, coronary heart disease and chronic respiratory disease than the rest of Scotland and the UK. These are challenges which require longer term co-ordinated planning and investment and which are addressed as a priority in the community and corporate plans.
26. Glasgow's economy has undergone significant change over the past two decades. Industries such as shipbuilding and heavy engineering have been replaced by a modern mixed economy dominated by the service sector such as finance and banking, public administration, education, healthcare, hotels and tourism. The city retains a strong link to the manufacturing sector with strengths in engineering, food and drink, printing, publishing and clothing as well as new growth sectors such as software and biotechnology.
27. Glasgow is a city of economic contrasts. The gross average weekly earnings in Glasgow at £389 is slightly less than the Scottish average of £393, and in January 2005, 4.8 per cent of the population was unemployed and claiming benefit, compared to 3.3 per cent for Scotland as a whole. More than one in four working age Glaswegians (28 per cent) are benefits claimants, and whilst this has reduced from 37 per cent in 1995, it is still the highest in Scotland. This is a significant challenge for the City when 91,000 people of working age are described as 'workless'. This means that approximately one third of the working age population are not working compared to an average of around a quarter of the UK population as a whole. We will consider how the council is addressing these challenges as a key theme within the following sections of the report.
28. Glasgow has 324 data zones in the most deprived 10 per cent across Scotland. This represents almost half (49.8 per cent) of the total across Scotland. The number of crimes recorded by the police

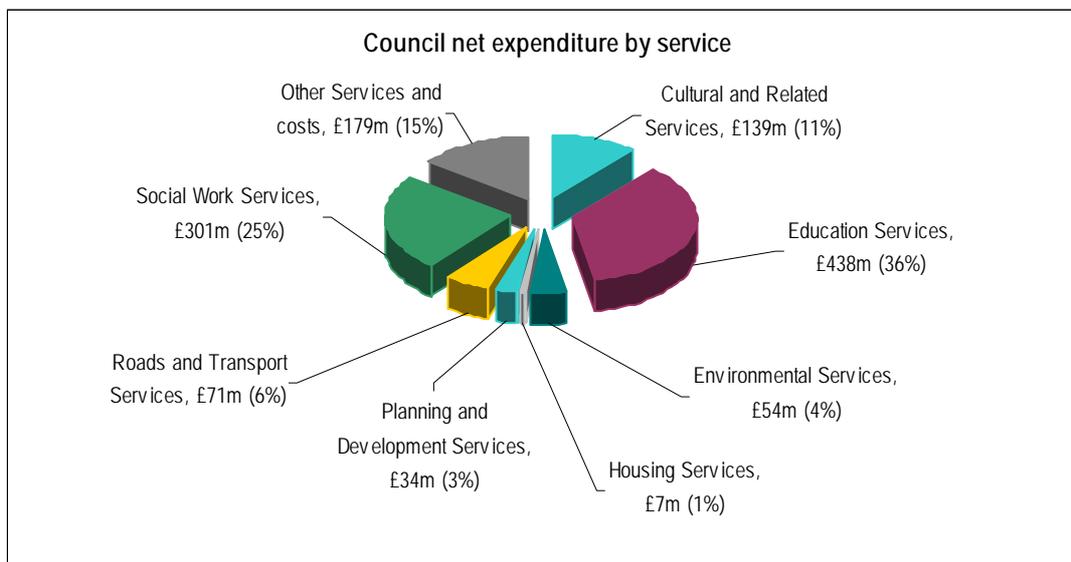


per 10,000 population and the crime index are higher than for any other council area in Scotland. Almost any indicator of wealth, health, employment and educational attainment reveals the scale and extent of deprivation in Glasgow to be much greater than in any other Scottish council area.

29. In 2004/05 the council's net revenue expenditure was £1.223 billion. Band D council tax for the same period was £1,213 which is the highest of all Scottish councils. Net expenditure per person is £2,119. This is clearly a significant amount of resources and with 38,000 employees. [Exhibit 1](#) below sets out the revenue budget spent on each service in 2004/05.

Exhibit 1.

Council net expenditure by service



Source: Consolidated Revenue Account, Glasgow City Council Financial Statement for Year ended 31 March 2005

30. There have been many positive developments over recent years. There has been a significant resurgence of the local economy and a renewal of the city's infrastructure, particularly in the city centre and along the River Clyde. The council's achievements have been recognised by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the Scottish Labour Market Intelligence Service. These achievements include:

- Success in job creation compared to other UK cities, adding 53,000 new jobs in the seven years to 2002, a growth of 16 per cent, which is bettered only by Manchester amongst its UK comparator cities.
- The best performing UK retail centre outside London.
- Europe's fastest growing conference destination with a doubling of the market share since 1997.



- A net reduction in vacant and derelict land in the city of 17 per cent from 1998 to 2004.
- GDP growth of 2.4 per cent per annum between 1999 and 2002

31. In May 2005 a new council leader was appointed following the resignation of the previous leader who had held that post since 1999. The council has a strong labour majority with 71 out of 79 elected members alongside three Scottish National Party, three Scottish Liberal Democrats, one Scottish Conservative and one Scottish Socialist members.

Responding to the needs of Glasgow

31. Within this context it is clear that Glasgow City Council still faces many challenges. Furthermore the council fulfils a number of roles given its size and status within Scotland. The council recognises that it has roles at the international, national and regional level in addition to its role within the city and meeting citizen's needs at the local level.

32. Over the last five to ten years the council has prioritised and invested in the physical regeneration of the city. Paragraph 29 above indicates that the council can demonstrate a number of achievements as a consequence of this investment and the leadership of key officers and members during this time. Whilst the council acknowledges that the physical regeneration of the city needs to continue, it is now shifting its focus to a complementary 'social renewal' agenda to address the social and economic well-being of its residents. The election of a new leader of the council in May 2005 has been a catalyst for this refocusing but is also the means by which the council aims to refocus its longer term vision.

[Exhibit 2](#) sets out the council's statement of its longer term social renewal aspirations.

Exhibit 2

Our focus for the next ten years is to ensure that local people can benefit from the wealth, economic growth and job opportunities that are predicted for Glasgow. We regard this as a natural progression from the achievements we have made in regenerating the city. But we also recognise this as the hardest element to deliver. We regard the next ten years as critical and the best opportunity in 30 years to make real sustainable social and economic improvement in our city. Our immediate priority is to move forward in the next two years on social renewal and this has been prioritised in the Budget and Service Planning Strategy issued in July 2005.

Source: Glasgow City Council

33. The detail of the new social renewal agenda is evolving but the council has already taken steps to define the agenda more clearly through its recent 'Delivering for Glasgow' seminars with senior managers, and the Policy and Resources (Social Renewal) Working Group. To date, social renewal priorities have been expressed in terms of:

- Worklessness



- Educational attainment
 - Personal success, participation, aspiration
 - Community planning and engagement.
34. As part of developing its vision and focus, the council is currently carrying out a root and branch review of how well people are supported, in order to determine the effectiveness of the arrangements it already has in place. This review covers all services and focuses on securing improved outcomes for Glasgow residents through its current and future investment.
35. The council's newly refocused agenda is not yet fully reflected in the plans of the council or its partner's and there are understandably no demonstrable outcomes or achievements so far. The council can, however, demonstrate that in a relatively short time the leader of the council and senior officers have invested significantly in articulating these ambitions and have started to put in place some of the mechanisms by which it plans to implement them.
36. Despite the pace of this progress so far, it is clear that this is an ambitious agenda and it is, therefore, essential that the council continues to apply the principles of Best Value to realise its ambitions. Furthermore, with such a far reaching agenda it will be important to ensure that the council expresses not only what it wants to achieve but also how it intends to achieve its ambitions, by embedding a common understanding of what is expected, identifying clear responsibilities through the planning framework, and prioritising its resources in line with its stated ambitions for the city.

Leadership

37. Leadership is essential in any organisation. In one the size of Glasgow City Council, with such an ambitious agenda this is even more important, in order to maintain a focus on what matters. The chief executive and directors work with elected members to establish and deliver the strategic direction of the council, ensuring that international, national and local ambitions and priorities are balanced and addressed. Relationships between members and officers are sound, leading to constructive working relationships. Glasgow City Council has and continues to develop strong leadership at both the political and managerial levels and recognises the need to build on this for the future.
38. The previous leader of the council demonstrated a clear focus on the council's priorities, particularly in terms of the physical and economic regeneration of the city. This manifested itself in the active establishment of effective partnerships that have delivered improvements such as the ongoing regeneration of the Clyde waterfront and significant inward investment to the city.
39. The new leader, though early on in his tenure, is also showing strong and clear leadership, particularly in the articulation of the council's future ambition and priorities. This is demonstrated by the



enthusiasm and energy with which the social renewal agenda has been communicated to both the media and across the council. The leader has made it a priority to share his vision with council managers in all services through cross service meetings, as well as by meeting each departmental management team to provide a service focus to the broader vision.

40. Political leadership is also manifested in the role played by the leader and other elected members in the recent Equal Pay negotiations and in the role of senior members as well as senior officers and partners in the emerging Community Planning arrangements.
41. It is also important that any council's political management arrangements are fit for its own purposes. In 2001, the council completed a Best Value Review of its political structures and retained its existing structures which comprise 14 committees, 24 sub committees, 32 member working groups and 11 Area Committees. The council has 10 spokespersons for what it considers key issues, including City Marketing and Events, Environmental Sustainability and Health.
42. With the exception of the Policy and Resources, Audit and Ethics, Environmental Sustainability and Licensing Committees, most committees are essentially aligned to service departments. The committees have a role in policy development, planning, performance management and scrutiny. This type of structure, while assisting with openness and accountability, does have the potential to be resource intensive and lack a strategic approach. The council's Best Value Review also committed the council to reviewing its arrangements each electoral cycle, so the council will review the current decision making arrangements before the end of 2006. This is a good opportunity to maximise the potential efficiencies in developing more streamlined political management structures.
43. The chief executive has also demonstrated effective leadership skills since his appointment in 2003. He is well respected by elected members, his Management Team and partners. He has maintained a clear focus on improving corporate working across the council. Whilst there is still more work to do in this area, it is clear that progress has been made. Particularly significant factors in this progress include further restructuring of the council's service departments, promoting gender equality and the involvement of more senior women officers at management team level, and the renewed focus on Budget and Service Planning and performance management to sustain the council's day to day focus on what matters.
44. Although there is evidence that the council has sought to modernise both its political and managerial structures, it acknowledges that there is further scope to refine its arrangements. Since 1998 the council has reduced the number of service departments from 22 to 10. However the Corporate Management Team (CMT) is still a large forum within which to deliver effective strategic planning and address cross cutting issues effectively. Likewise, political structures appear to have become more complex by adding new responsibilities to the more traditional service committee arrangements, which



in turn, potentially place additional demands on both member and officer time in attending and servicing them.

45. The council has indicated that it is committed to further modernising its managerial structures with the recent appointment of two executive directors. These new posts are intended to provide a clearer focus on corporate and cross-cutting responsibilities and working practices. The council needs to ensure that subsequent reviews of political and managerial structures result in arrangements which are complementary. This is an area where the council may be able to generate some of its much needed efficiencies to meet its efficient government targets and invest in its priorities.
46. The effectiveness of the council's Corporate Management Team is improving. Areas of underperformance are challenged by the chief executive using the newly introduced corporate issues report which examines progress on projects linked to the achievement of each of the council's five corporate themes. Performance is also challenged at CMT using a performance report using a range of performance information on services which includes statutory performance indicators, local performance indicators and Measures of Improved Performance (MIPS). CMT agendas also provide an improved focus on corporate priorities. It is important that these developments are built upon, and that previous criticisms of the lack of corporate engagement of some service departments are overcome.

Vision

47. Given the profile and the complexity of the role and challenges that Glasgow City Council has within Scotland, it is essential that there is clarity of vision and purpose both within the council and in working with its partners across the area. The vision for Glasgow is expressed at a number of levels, including:
 - internationally
 - metropolitan/ region wide
 - city wide and
 - city council wide
48. Although the vision is not expressed in exactly the same language at each of these levels, the themes and priorities identified result in a broadly consistent and complementary vision for the city.
49. Glasgow has been proactive over recent years in promoting the city on the international stage. After winning the title of European City of Culture in 1990, Glasgow was designated as the UK's City of Architecture and Design in 1999, European Capital of Sport in 2003 and hosted the Special Olympics in 2005. The city is also currently bidding to host the 2014 Commonwealth Games.



50. Glasgow is a member of the Clyde Valley Community Planning Partnership which brings together eight local authorities and other key agencies operating in the region. The vision of the partnership is stated in *Metropolitan Glasgow – our vision for the Glasgow city region*. (Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3

Metropolitan Glasgow Vision

We want the Glasgow City Region to be one of the most dynamic, economically competitive and socially cohesive city regions in Europe. A city region which prospers and, through effective partnership working at all levels, includes all of its people in its success. A place of quality, where people choose to live.

Our success will be assessed against how well we create:

- **a working region** which continually adapts to economic change, grasps new economic opportunities, encourages innovation, and is attractive to investors
- **a learning region** which maximises the potential of its educational infrastructure and which provides lifelong learning opportunities to ensure the availability of the skills which our economy will increasingly need
- **a living region** where our citizens feel all of their lifestyle needs and aspirations can be satisfied, and where their contribution to the development of the city region is acknowledged and valued
- **a vibrant, creative region** which harnesses the contribution which our centres of higher and further education, our creative industries, tourism, culture and leisure and the built and natural environments can make to enrich the quality of life of our citizens and visitors
- **a connected region** which has integrated physical and virtual infrastructure to allow access to external markets, which facilitates easy movement across our area and takes advantage of the opportunities offered by new e-technologies
- **an inclusive region** where programmes are in place to tackle the root causes of inequality and disparity, however manifested, which welcomes cultural diversity and which promotes equalities
- **a well managed region** where the public services we provide are of the highest possible standard, where they provide an environment which is caring, safe, healthy, and attractive, and where the agencies work together towards common objectives.

Source: Metropolitan Glasgow

51. At the **city level** the Community Plan 2005–10 has been established following consultation with a wide range of agencies, community groups and citizens. The Community Plan sets out the following key themes:

- A Working Glasgow



- A Learning Glasgow
- A Healthy Glasgow
- A Safe Glasgow
- A Vibrant Glasgow

52. At the **city council level** the Glasgow City Council Plan 2003/07 states that the council's objectives as being to:

- Provide accessible, accountable council services that are effective and offer value for money.
- Create a cleaner, safer City and a sustainable environment.
- Promote social inclusion and tackle poverty and improve health and well being.
- Sustain the physical, social, economic, cultural and environmental regeneration of Glasgow.
- Develop Glasgow's metropolitan role, quality of life, heritage and services.

53. The vision at international, region, city and local levels consistently identifies the areas of agreed priority for the council and its partners. The vision also provides a good fit with the city's underlying social, economic and demographic context and aims to address some of the underlying factors which contribute to this position.

Community planning and partnership working

54. Glasgow City Council is clear that partnership working is central to the realisation of its ambitions. Over recent years the council has had a wide range of partnership arrangements focussed on delivering particular projects or objectives, but its efforts to develop effective community planning arrangements with its partners have been less successful.

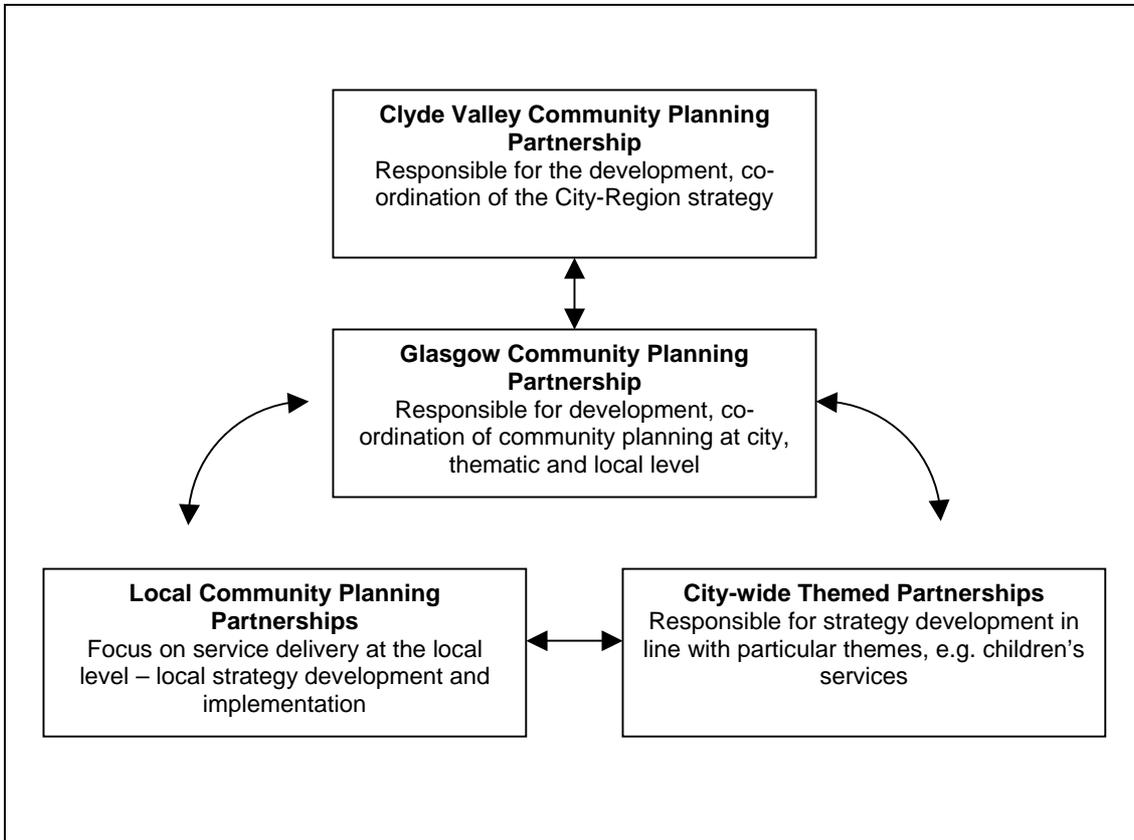
Community Planning

55. Community Planning in Glasgow operates at a number of different levels and these are explained in [Exhibit 4](#).



Exhibit 4

The Structure of Community Planning in Glasgow



Source: Glasgow Community Planning Partnership Regeneration Outcome Agreement 2005

56. The Clyde Valley Community Planning Partnership brought together all eight local authorities and key agencies including the Health Board, Strathclyde Police, the Local Economic Development Companies, the Chamber of Commerce and Strathclyde Passenger Transport, operating in the Clyde Valley. The Clyde Valley Partnership has agreed a metropolitan vision which identifies a programme of key regeneration projects and delivers this vision and programme through the Cities Growth Fund. Leaders and chief executives meet twice a year supported by an officers' network.
57. Until 2003, community planning at a city wide level was taken forward by the Glasgow Alliance. There is a general consensus within the council, and amongst some key partners, that the arrangements over that period did not fulfil their potential and there was a need to re-invigorate this process for the future. Since 2003, Glasgow City Council has taken a clearer lead role in establishing a more effective partnership. The partnership has now identified two key improvement priorities which are worklessness and addictions. These priorities are considered to be critical in achieving the partnership's key objectives around health and community safety.



58. In August 2005 Glasgow Community Planning Partnership approved *Our Vision for Glasgow – Community Plan 2005 -2010*. The plan sets out five key themes for the partnership and 28 ‘Targets for Action’, most of which are specific and timetabled. An example of the targets for the ‘working Glasgow’ are set out in [Exhibit 5](#).

Exhibit 5

Working Glasgow

- Reduce the proportion of working age adults not in work by 30,000 by the end of 2010.
- Reduce the ILO (International Labour Organisation) unemployment rate to 6 per cent by the end of 2010.
- Close the gap between Glasgow’s unemployment rate and the national average by a minimum of 1 per cent per annum between 2005 and 2010.
- Increase the city’s labour productivity level to equal the Scottish average by the end of 2010.

Source: Our Vision for Glasgow: Community Plan 2005-10: Glasgow Community Planning Partnership

59. The plan also contains 10 targets relating to engaging communities and adding value through partnership working. This represents an improved focus by the partnership on measuring and demonstrating its impact, although there is scope to improve the focus of targets on outputs and outcomes rather than processes.
60. The city wide partnership has taken responsibility for developing local community planning and has secured agreement on a number of principles including local community planning arrangements extending beyond the former social inclusion partnership areas, co-terminosity of boundaries and local community engagement structures to underpin the activity of the local partnerships.
61. The partnership has agreed the boundaries for the local partnerships and is in the process of finalising support arrangements. There is a huge level of expectation resting on the local community planning partnerships in terms of both community engagement and service delivery. The council and its partners need to ensure that what emerges meets the requirements of Best Value. For example, there is a growing awareness in the council of the potential tensions that might exist between localised service delivery arrangements and the efficiencies associated with the economies of scale. This will be a difficult balance to achieve but is critical to the success of the partnership.



Partnership Working

62. The council has a wide range of partnership arrangements at both strategic and more operational levels. The importance of partnership working is understood by members and officers and they are clear that the council cannot deliver on its ambitions for the city without effective partnership working. In general, partners also report that the council demonstrates a positive attitude to partnership and joint working, though the council recognises that more work is needed to develop its working relationship with the voluntary sector. The council has a lead role in a number of specific partnerships, which include Children's Services Planning, Childcare Partnership, Joint Economic Forum, Equal Access to Employment Forum, Community Learning Partnership, Community Safety Partnership, Healthy Cities Partnership, Homelessness Partnership; and the Youth Justice Forum. The council has also worked extensively with partners through Social Inclusion Partnerships.
63. With such a complex range of partnerships, involving public, private and voluntary sector agencies the council must ensure that these partnerships are delivering the outcomes they set out to achieve. For some partnerships, the results are evident ([Exhibit 6](#)); for others the benefits are less clear. In many cases this is because the partnerships are still developing and are yet to realise the benefits of partnership working in terms of tangible improvements in outcomes or outputs.

Exhibit 6

Addictions Partnership

The Addictions Partnership was established in 2004, bringing together the services previously provided separately by Social Work Services and the Primary Care Division of Greater Glasgow NHS. It was set up to create a single, integrated care service for people with alcohol or drug problems and their families.

Nine local Community Addiction Teams were set up under the single management of the partnership to provide locally-based access to all relevant services. This means that people experiencing problems with alcohol or drugs are now offered a full range of services, from information and advice to specialist medical treatment and support for families, through a single point of contact. They are no longer referred between a number of different services in different locations across the city.

The multi-disciplinary Community Addiction Teams plan and manage appropriate support for service users throughout their treatment and offer rehabilitation opportunities linked to longer term training and employment. For the people who use this service, this more joined-up approach has resulted in:

- Services closer to their homes
- Faster access to a wider range of more intensive support
- Reduced numbers of different journeys to access the support they need



- More say in determining the type of support, treatment and care they receive
- Services that match best with their needs in the least disruptive way

Since the Partnership and Community Addiction Teams were set up in 2004, 44 per cent more adults with addiction problems received treatment in 2004/05 than in the previous year, and over 1,200 were given pre-employment support, training, education or employment opportunities (an increase of 130 per cent on the previous year). The restructuring of addiction services was met from within existing resources.

Source: Glasgow City Council

Engaging with communities

64. The council has effective consultation arrangements in place at the corporate level. Since 1999, the council has used a Citizen's Panel with around 1,000 households as its principal method of gathering the views of the citizens of Glasgow. The panel is well established and provides an indication of citizens' views through surveys which are carried out by an independent and experienced market research company twice each year. These surveys are timed to inform the budget and service planning process and performance reporting. The panel is used to recruit citizens for focus groups on particular subjects. The results of each panel survey are presented to the relevant committees and senior management teams, fed back to participants through a regular newsletter, and reported in the council's Annual Performance Report.
65. The panel has been consulted on a range of matters. At a strategic level there have been surveys on the use of and satisfaction with particular services, housing stock transfer, the local housing strategy, and how people access information about and how they contact the council. There has also been consultation on a wide range of other issues including contact with local councillors, the use of council run markets, street cleaning, recycling, road safety, culture and leisure facilities, school crossing patrols and cycle paths.
66. In 2001 and 2004, the panel included additional ethnic minority 'booster' samples of 205 households, and the findings from these surveys were used to inform the council's equality policies. There is evidence of good engagement with hard to reach groups at area committee level. This has involved setting up and supporting networks, and carrying out targeted research. The council has recently appointed a capacity building officer to develop the ability of groups to engage with the council and its partners
67. Engagement at service level is more varied and there is scope for improvement. For instance, much of the consultation activity at service level has been conducted as part of Best Value Reviews and whilst corporate guidance has been issued on this, the quality of the consultation activity has varied between reviews. There are examples of good engagement with communities – predominantly in



respect of existing service users or local communities that will be affected by specific initiatives, for example the schools pre-12 programme. [Exhibit 7](#) describes a Social Work Carers and Users Conferences which was used to inform planning and identify service improvements.

Exhibit 7

Social Work Services: Service Users and Carers Conference 2004

The council has a Joint Community Care Committee, which has representatives from the council, Greater Glasgow NHS Board and Glasgow Housing Association. It has now hosted 3 annual conferences for users of community care services and their carers.

210 people attended the 2004 conference, including 170 service users and carers. The focus of this conference, 'The 2004 Equal Partnership Conference', was to consult on proposals for involving users/carers in service planning and delivery. Key issues that came out of the consultation discussions included identifying the need for:

- a range of support mechanisms to facilitate involvement
- genuine partnership working, with users/carers seeing action taken as a result of their contributions
- improved communication from services with users/carers
- working across agency boundaries
- simplification of service planning structures / processes

As a result of the conference:

- A formal Action Plan has been agreed.
- A joint Implementation Group of officers from Health and Social Work has been set up to take forward the actions.
- 11 volunteer users/carers have joined the Group and a separate Service User and Carer Reference Group has been established.
- The Group's work programme includes training for group members, development of a Good Practice Guide on community engagement and developing early relationships with the new CHSCP structures.

Everyone who attended the conference received a report of the findings and agreed actions.

Source: Glasgow City Council

68. In the future the council sees the local Community Planning Partnerships as being central to the way in which it engages with the community. However, to date there has been little joint consultation with partners, and formal arrangements are not yet in place or embedded in respect of the local



Community Planning Partnerships. Despite this, the council has recognised that it is important that it makes progress and a draft Community Engagement Strategy, developed by the Community Planning Partnership, was out for consultation at the time of the audit. It proposes that the co-ordination and facilitation for community engagement takes place through 'hubs', one for each local partnership.

69. The council recognises that it needs to improve its complaints handling arrangements. The council's corporate comments and complaints framework has been slow in coming to fruition. The Corporate Management Team noted that it should be developed as a matter of urgency in September 2003 but it is only now in the process of being rolled out. A customer relationship manager was appointed in 2004 to take this project forward.

Corporate, Budget and Service Planning

70. The existing corporate plan *The Glasgow City Council Plan 2003/07* is succinct and provides a sound basis for the council to deliver its priorities. The plan sets out five main objectives, each of which has a number of commitments associated with them as follows:

- Provide accessible, accountable council services that are effective and offer value for money (25 commitments).
- Create a cleaner, safer City and a sustainable environment (18 commitments).
- Promote social inclusion and tackle poverty and improve health and well being (33 commitments).
- Sustain the physical, social, economic, cultural and environmental regeneration of Glasgow (20 commitments).
- Develop Glasgow's metropolitan role, quality of life, heritage and services (15 commitments).

71. There is, however, variation in the degree to which the council's 111 commitments focus on desired outcomes and outputs. The commitment to 'support skills development and employment opportunities in the city by promoting the provision of assisted places for unemployed and disadvantaged persons, with a target of 20,000 training places by 2007' has a clear output focus. By contrast, the commitment to 'continue to develop family learning centres which provide both education and care for children aged 0 – 5 years and their families which bring together relevant services to provide support to families including parenting support' is less specific. Improving the focus on its desired outputs and outcomes will help the council to assess whether it has delivered on the commitment and allow it to demonstrate the impact of its efforts.

72. Service Plans are generally clear and cover the required areas. Corporate guidance is issued to establish the core content although the level of detail and precise layout of plans varies across the



service departments. The quality of service plans has improved over recent years and the council should ensure that this continues. Service Plans generally have clear links to the corporate plan, though some services, notably Direct and Care Services and Building Services should make links more explicit. Like most other councils, Glasgow could also improve plans by being more explicit about the resources being deployed to deliver the objectives and activities set out in the plans.

73. While there are generally clear links between the corporate plan and departmental service plans, the links between the corporate plan and the community plan are less well articulated. The plans cover similar themes and there is a consistency of purpose, but clearer links between the plans and more consistent use of language would help to improve clarity. This will be particularly important as revised community planning arrangements are implemented and progress is made in establishing more service delivery arrangements through partnerships.
74. The council has a strong and effective budget and service planning process that was established in 2000. Each year the council produces a Budget and Service Planning Strategy that aims to produce an annual budget within a medium term financial strategy based upon financial forecasts and indicative council tax levels. Each service produces an annual service plan detailing service priorities and developments linked to associated resources. There is guidance for the drafting of plans, an officer briefing process and an agreed timetable.
75. Each draft plan is considered by senior officers and elected members at the Budget Working Group. Final plans are considered and approved by service committees. The Budget Working Group also considers themed briefing papers on emerging corporate issues throughout the budget process to inform decision making. Services are required to consult their elected members, staff and Trade Unions on the draft plan proposals.
76. At the time of our audit, the Corporate Plan was in the process of being reviewed to reflect the new focus on the social renewal agenda and other new priorities including the Commonwealth Games bid. The revised plan is expected to be completed by February 2006.

Accountability and openness

77. The council has a range of methods that it uses to demonstrate openness and accountability. The council has established an accountability framework for the respective roles and responsibilities of elected members and officers through its Scheme of Delegation for officers and members. This has been maintained up to date and was last reviewed in October 2003. The scheme covers the respective roles and responsibilities for all of the council's main functions in Committees and Sub-Committees.



78. A key mechanism by which elected members can demonstrate a culture of openness and accountability is in how effectively key strategic and policy decisions of the council are scrutinised and reported both internally and externally. The council publishes *Glasgow*, a 30 page magazine which contains general news and information on Glasgow and carries features on council services, benefits and facilities. It also provides information on council decisions and performance. The magazine, which is published every second month, is delivered free to all Glasgow homes and most business addresses. The local auditor has also confirmed that audit committee principles and other scrutiny arrangements are being operated effectively and that attention is paid to matters wider than issues of internal financial control, such as risk management.
79. The council's website contains a large amount of information on its plans, strategies, services and performance. The council publishes an annual performance report, and each service reports to committee and publishes a report on its own performance. Committee agendas, minutes and reports are also all accessible via the website. However, a recent citizen's panel survey has indicated that there is a low level of awareness of the council's annual report and that residents would prefer to receive information on a local area basis.
80. The council recognises that, like other councils, it needs to improve the balance of reporting in its annual performance report and magazine. In addition to the 'good news stories' the reports should show performance against pre set targets and demonstrate outcomes for customers. This performance information should also be more closely aligned to the priorities expressed in the community and corporate plans and be communicated in a way that is easily understood by the residents and communities it serves. The council is also aware of the need to develop its performance reporting at a more local level especially with the planned implementation of local community planning partnerships.



Part 2: Is the council organised to deliver continuous improvement?

Generally the council has sound arrangements in place and an understanding of where improvements are needed. The council has effective arrangements in place for strategic planning, service planning and budgeting and performance management, but more improvement is needed on workforce planning and development, the management of assets, and public performance reporting.

Efficient use of resources

Resourcing priorities

81. The council has an effective budget and service planning process. This process aligns resources to priorities. Through the current 'audit on social renewal' the council intends to review its resource allocation and move resources to priority areas.
82. Each year all Glasgow's departments are expected to deliver a 2 per cent efficiency saving. This saving is placed in a 'central pot' which is re-allocated to priority areas. The council demonstrates that, since 1999, £68 million of budget and service planning efficiencies have been realised and re-invested in front line services. They have shown a net average of £19 million efficiencies have been re-directed each year to council priorities including:
 - £5million to Education Services each year
 - £1.8million to Development and Regeneration Services each year
 - £11million to Social Work Services each year.
83. The effectiveness of these processes will be challenged in both the short and medium term as a consequence of the £40 million equal pay settlement. This settlement must be met from the current year budget and balances, with an ongoing increase in the council's pay bill for the future. The council's ability to continue to deliver efficiencies will, therefore, be critical to the medium and longer term financial stability of the council.



Managing people

84. The council employs over 38,000 people and has a range of policies and procedures to recruit, retain, develop and manage staff including a recruitment and selection procedure, supported by training, a range of flexible working arrangements to accommodate work life balance, and a harassment policy. The council has not yet finalised its draft Human Resources (HR) Strategy to set the strategic direction and bring together its existing arrangements in an integrated way. Human resource support is provided using a decentralised model, with a corporate HR team which is responsible for strategic direction, developing corporate HR policies and providing specialist support to service based HR teams. Service based HR teams are responsible for providing operational HR support, but in the absence of a corporate strategy, each service has its own approach.
85. The council recognises that there is much more to do. Both members and officers have described the need to 'win the hearts and minds' of the workforce. This will be particularly important as the council seeks to move forward its Modernising Employment agenda. The modernisation programme has already resulted in new ways of working and changes in terms and conditions for groups of staff through changes to services. Examples include: the council's housing stock transfer, education PPP and Best Value service reviews of libraries, museums and revenues and benefits, the creation of the Access Centre and the Shared Service Centre.
86. The council's relationship with the Trade Unions when moving forward these changes has, to use the council's own words, 'sometimes been challenging'. There is evidence however from the negotiations around the equal pay settlement that relationships are improving. This will be extremely important as the council continues to move forward the Modernising Employment agenda. There is an expectation from the council that a move towards more flexible working arrangements and generic 'job families' will form a keystone of modernised service delivery and improved efficiency and it is important that the council is able to keep both staff and unions on board throughout these negotiations.
87. The council's decentralised HR arrangements have led to variation in the extent to which services have training and development plans in place for staff. The desire to move towards more flexible working and the re-deployment of staff will increase the importance of structured staff training needs identification and appropriate training and development programmes. Although arrangements are in place in some services, the introduction of a council-wide system has been protracted and there is a sense from both staff and managers that the current roll out of Personal Development Plans really must succeed. The council needs to invest in supporting these developments if it wants staff to take proper ownership of the new arrangements.
88. There is little evidence of corporate workforce planning, although there are some examples within services. There is a lack of articulated workforce strategies at corporate or departmental levels. This is a significant omission when the projected changes in the council's demographic profile are likely to



result in changing levels of demand for its services in the future. The council is missing the opportunity to build effective capacity, in terms of both skills and numbers, in its existing workforce to meet future demand.

89. The council has in place some cross departmental mechanisms to support its decentralised HR arrangements but it is unclear how effectively these are being utilised. As a consequence of the council's decentralised model, different parts of the organisation have different arrangements in place. To mitigate this, and potentially to promote greater consistency and learning opportunities, the council has established a cross departmental forum of HR managers. It is not clear that this mechanism is being used effectively to systematically review the developments in departments and share good practice.
90. The council has not carried out an organisation-wide staff survey. This is a missed opportunity to find out what matters to staff and gauge what they think of the council as a whole. It is an opportunity to establish a baseline against which staff morale can be monitored in the future. The council plans to conduct an all staff survey on a phased basis between 2005 and 2007 and focus groups will be used in the interim, before a full survey is carried out in 2007. This means that it will still be some time before the council has a comprehensive picture of the views of its staff or the ability to prioritise future improvements in how it manages its staff.
91. The council takes the issue of absence management seriously. The council has policies, procedures and systematic monitoring arrangements in place to monitor absence management corporately on a quarterly basis and more frequently within services. The figures compare well to other authorities and manual worker rates are better than the national average, with year on year improvement. A recent increase in absence levels in some services, particularly among APT&C staff, is being tackled promptly by a specialist team set up for this purpose.
92. The council makes efforts to communicate with its 38,000 employees but finds this challenging given the wide range of channels it needs to use. The main form of communication with staff is through team meetings and line management; there is also a staff magazine *The Insider* and some services, though not all, make good use of the intranet site. The chief executive holds development seminars for senior and middle managers under the banner 'Delivering for Glasgow'. The seminars mix information sharing with workshop sessions and recently included presentations by the council leader and the new executive directors. The size of the council requires around eight seminars to be held in each cycle of seminars to ensure coverage and this represents a real investment in and commitment to communicating directly with managers. During the course of the audit directors and senior managers were also involved in a series of large staff meetings to share information on the Equal Pay and Modernising Employment agendas.



93. The council has dealt with a number of significant employment issues over recent years, including: revised or new conditions of service in libraries, museums, home care, social work, cleansing, revenues and benefits, the shared service centre and the access centre, and the transfer of former Housing Services staff to the Glasgow Housing Association. The council also has a successful model for the recruitment and retention of social workers which has been commended by the Scottish Executive and the Care Commission.

Managing finance

94. Financial management is a key driver for the council and the very nature of their phrase *budget and service planning* hints at this centrality. Overall the council manages its finances efficiently and effectively. The council has good systems of budgetary control and a robust budget and service planning framework.
95. The council's financial code of practice sets out officer responsibilities and key financial regulations and monitoring procedures. Revenue Budget Monitoring Reports are scrutinised by the Financial Services (Monitoring & Review) Sub-Committee on a four weekly basis and by service committees at each 6 weekly meeting. Revenue Budget Monitoring Reports are prepared jointly by the director of Financial Services and the relevant service director. More recently regular capital budget monitoring reports have been introduced for the service committees and the Monitoring and Review Sub Committee.
96. The council recognises the need to continue to develop its financial management arrangements and has identified the challenges that it faces to deliver on the social renewal agenda and its significant capital commitments. In the Report to Members on the 2004/05 audit the local auditors reported that the council has established effective systems of budgetary control underpinned by a Financial Management and Control Code of Practice which applies to members, officers with financial responsibilities and finance practitioners throughout the council. The council has also adopted a sustainable, robust and affordable approach to capital planning evidenced by a clear treasury management strategy linked to the prudential code.
97. There were areas where the local auditor considered that arrangements could be improved, for example a detailed policy on the level and use of reserves, and the need for a comprehensive asset management plan, including the wider use of recognised option appraisal techniques as part of the project approval process. Improvements are suggested in relation to costing service plans beyond a one year horizon to improve medium term financial planning and using the disciplines of the prudential code across all capital investments and regularly reporting on these to committee.



Managing assets and controlling risk

98. The council has an extensive portfolio of assets. It owns over £1.5 billion of assets. The most significant are land and buildings, with a value of £889 million at 31 March 2005, £262 million of infrastructure assets, £167 million of investments and £124 million identified as surplus and available for disposal.
99. The council has made progress in this area but recognises that it still has a significant amount of work to do. The council has an asset management plan for the schools estate but does not have comprehensive corporate or departmental asset management plans in place. Given the size of the portfolio it is clearly important that this is addressed in order that the council can demonstrate efficient use of its assets as well as identifying clear and risk based priorities for investment through its future capital programme.
100. Both members and officers acknowledge the importance of this improvement priority and the council is using an Efficient Government Review of Asset Management and Accommodation to improve its focus on corporate asset management. Part of this review involves external consultants reviewing over 500 properties occupied by council services for operational purposes. This provides more robust information as well as an opportunity for the council to consider its accommodation strategy, the efficient use of its resources and the potential for future efficiency savings. Despite this opportunity, the scope of the planned review does not include non operational assets, land, plant and machinery – all of which need to be considered in a comprehensive asset management plan.
101. The council has risk management arrangements in place and these continue to be developed. The council has a corporate risk register and risk assurance process, and has recently appointed a Risk Manager based in Financial Services. Departmental and corporate risk registers were introduced in 2002 and their introduction was supported by training across the council. Efforts to create clearer linkages between departmental risk management and the budget and service planning process were introduced in 2004/05 but the council acknowledges that this process will take some time to mature. The council is also aware of the need to improve the consistency of risk registers between services.
102. There are some indications that the council is making progress in embedding its approach to risk management, for instance risk management forms a standing item on the agenda of Corporate and Departmental Management Teams. Risk assessment also forms part of the council's option appraisal process in Best Value Service Reviews and in areas of service improvement such as the introduction of the council's shared service centre and its approach to procurement.

Managing Information and Communication Technology

103. Glasgow clearly recognises the role of Information Communications Technology as an enabler for improving services and delivering efficiencies. The council's e-Government Strategy *Creating a 21st*



Century City sets out the role that technology will play and also expresses how both outcome goals and technology goals will contribute to the council's five key objectives.

104. The council has a number of strategic projects that are supported by technology, for instance. '1 Business' is a major change programme with an objective of delivering improvements and efficiency in the council's back office functions by using a common methodology and system to secure improvement. Phase one of the programme saw the creation of a shared service centre and a rolling programme of integrating service based functions including sales and credit controls, human resources, payroll and accounting functions across the council.
105. The size and scale of the council offers both opportunities and challenges in relation to ICT. Technology is used to support front line services, for instance mobile technology was introduced in Direct and Care Services to ensure that their care staff were in constant contact with their HQ. This technology was subsequently rolled out in other areas, including to elected members who use it to access e-mail accounts and conduct other council business. The council has a wide range of core application systems in service departments which have to be upgraded and the council has a programme in place to support this process.

Procuring goods and services

106. Procurement within Glasgow City Council accounts for more than £1.3 billion of expenditure per year. The major components are £356 million spent on goods and services, £260million on Social Work related activities and £400million on capital projects.
107. The council is making progress in developing its procurement arrangements. Procurement has been prioritised as one of the council's seven Efficient Government Review areas and is linked to the 1 Business project. The council has set up an e Procurement Board, which includes five lead services and a representative from the Scottish Executive. The council has also established a Corporate Procurement Unit to embed more robust and consistent procurement arrangements across the council.
108. Glasgow has attracted development resources from the Scottish Executive's Efficient Government Fund and plans to lead the development of e-Procurement arrangements for West of Scotland councils. The council has set itself challenging targets for procurement efficiencies as part of its Efficient Government Review, and aims to deliver £5million in 2005–2006 rising incrementally to £15million in 2007-2008. The council completed a review of procured goods and services in June 2005 and identified a total of 100 areas and 40 priority areas totalling £346 million where they consider that they can make 'quick wins'.



109. To date, the council has focused on developing the infrastructure within which it plans to make savings. It has also reported savings of £0.8 million to date and has set challenging targets for 2005/06. It is important that the council ensures that robust monitoring arrangements are in place to ensure that it can continue to demonstrate future efficiency savings as they are realised.
110. The council has carried out a number of exercises to test the competitiveness of its functions. All of its trading activities have been subject to review but not necessarily formally market tested. The council has, however, won several contracts in open competition. Since 2001 eight DLO/DSO areas have been the subject of best value service reviews: Transport (completed 2001), Street Cleansing, Roads Operations, Grounds Maintenance, Burial and Cremation Services (completed 2002), Refuse Collection, Sport and Recreation (completed 2003) and Parks and Open Spaces (completed 2004). All of these reviews resulted in reconfiguration of existing arrangements.
111. All former DLOs /DSOs were also the subject of option appraisal and benchmarked again more recently by a Best Value Review of Trading Services and Facilities Management which was led by the Chief Executive and involved a steering group chaired by the leader of the council. The review reported to the Policy and Resources Committee in March 2005 with a range of recommendations primarily focussing on in-house delivery and the consideration of expansion.
112. A second phase of the review is currently under-way which has been remitted to:
- identify the core trading business for council services and major external clients
 - review the current arrangements in light of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003
 - examine alternative models for delivering those core services where there are opportunities for significant improvements
 - develop options for the future delivery of trading services which are in line with the council's priorities and which continue to deliver Best Value; and
 - consider the scope for extending trading operations to cover new trading areas in line with the Act.
113. The review will report in 2006 and is considering a range of service areas including Parking, Sports and Recreation, Home Care, Markets, Property Management, ICT, Access Centre, Shared Service Centre, Procurement, Building Services Professional and Technical Services, Legal Services, and Council Tax and Housing Benefit Administration. The Policy and Resources Committee also agreed to extend the remit of the review to consider the balance of in-house and external services in the council.



114. Building Services, Direct and Care Services, Environmental Protection Services and Land Services have all won contracts with external clients since 1996; these range in value between £13,000 and £35 million annually.

Managing performance and scrutiny

115. The council has a systematic and well developed performance management framework, though it recognises that it can be improved further. The corporate framework is based around:

- Quarterly reporting of a suite of corporate local performance indicators - Measures of Improved Performance (MIPs) - to the Corporate Management Team.
- Quarterly milestone reporting of progress against agreed strategic priorities drawn from the Council Plan and emerging issues to the Corporate Management Team.
- Comparisons of SPI performance against comparable councils each year.
- Annual performance reporting of Council Plan commitments, operational performance and priorities for the coming year by each service to individual service committees.
- A Council Annual Performance Report agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee and published in October.

116. The regular and systematic consideration of performance information by the Corporate Management Team provides a good mechanism for scrutinising performance. There is potential to enhance the effectiveness of these arrangements by approaching them in a more corporate and thematic manner, rather than by reference to individual projects within each of the overall corporate themes. In addition to the information reported corporately, services maintain and monitor a range of performance information which is used by senior management teams to scrutinise and challenge performance.

117. [Exhibit 8](#) shows a selection of Glasgow's Measure of Improved Performance (MIPs) against each of the five corporate objectives. Quarterly reports are produced which evaluate whether the council is on course to meet targets by the end of the year. Measures are flagged by a red, orange green classification, allowing clear indication of which aspects are most in need of attention.



Exhibit 8

Corporate Measure of Improved Performance 2005-06

Measure	Target	Comments
Key objective 1 – Provide accessible, accountable council services that are effective and offer value for money		
% of calls answered within 15 seconds through the council's Access Centre.	80%	Performance affected by additional services coming on line
Sickness absence levels	Different for different grades	Performance for quarter 1 below target across all categories.
The number of clients consulted within home care.	2,400	Year to date low but service confident that annual target will be met.
Key objective 2 – Create a cleaner, safer city and a sustainable environment		
Capital receipts: (£) generated over the target period of 2003-2006 General receipts Special receipts	£55m £60m	Targets likely to be exceeded.
Refuse recycling %: household and commercial waste	14%	On basis of current performance should make target.
% of days when more than 15 vehicles idling unnecessarily are approached.	80%	Performance significantly above target
Key objective 3 – Promote social inclusion and tackle poverty and improve health and well being		
Learning centres: number of times the terminals are used per 1,000 population	1164	Projected to meet annual target
Free milk/fresh fruit juice uptake in primary schools	85%	Performance is generally in line with target.
% of young people leaving care in education, training or employment		(Figures not yet available)
Number of people aged over 65 receiving more than 20 hours home care per week.	598	Target set to hold current levels due to budget pressures.
Key objective 4 – Sustain the physical, social, economic, cultural and environmental regeneration of Glasgow		
Regeneration of the River Clyde: the total value of property investments underway per annum.	£80m by 2007	Target achieved. Target to be reviewed
Key objective 5 – Develop Glasgow's metropolitan role, quality of life, heritage and services		
Visits at Museums and galleries	1,800,000	29% towards target
Educational visits at Museums and galleries	100,000	33% towards target

Source: Glasgow City Council/ Audit Scotland

118. The development of the MIPs is significant in that it provides the council with a tool to focus on the performance of the areas that it considers to be a priority. The framework can be improved further, but it represents a significant foundation on which to build. Like many councils, Glasgow recognises that it needs to improve its target setting and develop more output and outcome focussed measures.



119. The information made available to elected members is generally good in terms of its frequency and content. Both members and officers describe a healthy level of challenge and scrutiny both within and outwith committees. It is important that officers make every effort to support members in fulfilling their scrutiny role by providing clear information and appropriate training and support. The council has recognised that there remain some opportunities to improve in this area by making better use of officer quarterly performance information to inform elected member scrutiny.

Continuous improvement

120. The council has a range of mechanisms in place to secure and promote continuous improvement in the way it works, although it is acknowledged that there is an opportunity to improve further on this for the future. These mechanisms include the use of Best Value Reviews as a catalyst for change and the use of targeted option appraisal to support some difficult decisions such as the housing stock transfer, secondary schools Public Private Partnership and the introduction of 1 Business, all of which have changed the way that the council delivers its services. These changes have not been without their challenges, but it is significant that Glasgow City Council has often been amongst the first to take on such challenges and sustain its focus on what it wants to achieve.

121. The council has carried out an extensive rolling programme of service reviews since 1998. To date it has completed 102 Best Value Service Reviews with nineteen currently underway. The Best Value Review process and other continuous improvement activities are identified as part of the Budget and Service Planning process. The council reviewed its BVR programme in 2002-2003 and introduced the following arrangements:

- A discreet number of Strategic Reviews which focus on more corporate and cross cutting issues.
- A range of Continuous Improvement Reviews at service level to improve performance in operational areas.

122. A number of the council's reviews have resulted in service improvement, including the reviews of sport and recreation, residential elderly care, day care and public access which are described in [Exhibit 9](#).



Exhibit 9

The Best Value Review of Sport and Recreation has delivered:

- Opening of one new Leisure Centre and one Community Sports Centre.
- Creation of a sports development team with programmes that have attracted over 1.14 million attendances during 2003/04, an increase of 18% on 2002/03.
- The industry quality standard (Quest) being attained by 10 leisure centres and the sports development service.

The Best Value Review of Residential Elderly Care has delivered:

- improved single occupancy levels
- all care homes upgraded, with all meeting Health and Safety standards
- national standards attained in all homes
- provision of dementia care units within residential homes
- the range and volume of home care has been extended.

The Best Value Review of Day Care Services for Older People has resulted in two new day care facilities and approval for three more planned in 2005/06 as well as other service improvements.

The Best Value Review of Public Access/ Call Centres resulted in the establishment of our Access Centre, and an Efficient Government Review is under way to ensure that it delivers further planned improvements. It has improved performance by:

- Reducing the number of roads faults and bulky uplift abandoned calls from 50% to less than 5%.
- Answering 80% of calls in 15 seconds.
- Reducing by 39% the number of callers failing to get through for council tax queries.
- Increasing revenue collection by over £1million.

Source: Glasgow City Council

123. Whilst the examples in [Exhibit 9](#) show that the council can demonstrate improvements from its best value reviews, this is not consistently the case. The council recognises that it needs to improve its monitoring systems to track the implementation of improvement action plans and the benefits that derive from service reviews. In many cases the link between reviews, their action plans and the resulting outcomes is not clear, so that it is difficult for the council to determine the effectiveness of the exercise or the benefits it has stimulated within services.



124. The council has clear corporate guidance in place for conducting its Best Value Reviews, but this is not applied consistently by services. A sample of the best value reviews identified that a number of the early reviews had limited scope, and the application of techniques such as benchmarking and options appraisal was limited and inconsistent. The council should ensure that developments to the monitoring framework include a robust quality assurance component. The council should also ensure that the objectives of the Strategic Best Value Reviews are sufficiently clear to enable them to demonstrate that these objectives have been met.
125. The council makes varying use of benchmarking as a mechanism to promote continuous improvement and learn from the best councils. The council cites its size and the lack of comparable Scottish authorities as the main reason for this, but there are opportunities for the council to make better use of established networks such as the 'core cities' network that includes councils like Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester which are more comparable in terms of size and scale as well as in the range of challenging issues they face.
126. More recently, the priority of Efficient Government influenced the shape and focus of the strategic review programme. Seven of the twelve reviews are Efficient Government themes. There are no Continuous Improvement Reviews in the programme as the council wishes to concentrate its efforts on the Efficient Government Programme and to focus its capacity on delivering this programme. The council has developed and is in the process of refining a monitoring framework to capture the efficiencies being derived from the efficient government activity.
127. The council is also developing its Best Managed Local Authority initiative. Though in its early stages, the work to date has involved the development of a transformation map that identifies the key drivers and stages between the current 'as is' position and the ideal – 'to be' position. If pursued in a systematic way, this initiative may provide benefits in planning and co-ordinating the council's significant, ambitious and challenging improvement agenda over the next few years. This could be a key tool for managing the council's planned change agenda in a more corporate manner.

Equal opportunities

128. The council has in place well developed policies and structures to address equality issues and there are a number of examples of innovation and good practice. Recent reviews have identified that the council needs to further improve its approach to mainstreaming equalities into its business and planning processes, the monitoring of service delivery and to build the capacity of its consultative forum, the Equalities Network.
129. The council has an elected member equality spokesperson, who chairs the Policy and Resources (Equalities) Sub Committee and the Equalities Network Forum. The council also has a corporate equality team and devolved equality staff based in service departments. There are two officer support



groups, the Anti Racism Officer Working Group and the Disability Equality Officers' Forum. There is also a shorter-term project based group of property managers to audit, prioritise and monitor accessibility to the council's facilities.

130. The council is reviewing its Equality Policy, launched in 2002, to ensure it reflects the current priorities which include disability, race, gender and sexuality, asylum seekers and refugees, gypsy travellers, lesbians and gay men, bisexual and trans-gendered people, older people and faith communities. Equality issues are very apparent in all levels of the councils plans including the city/region metropolitan plan, the community plan, the corporate city plan and in service plans as well as in thematic equality related plans.

131. In 2002 and in 2005 the council assessed its response to the Race Relations Amendment Act and recently completed a review of its compliance with the scheme, using an external adviser. As a result of this review the council has identified a number of areas for improvement across its services.

132. The council has made some progress in mainstreaming equalities through its business processes such as service plans and Best Value Reviews and also has action plans for each service to deliver priorities in relation to disability and race. There is also an action plan on anti sectarianism. Progress is reported regularly to the Equalities Sub committee and guidance has been provided to service departments. The council recognises that this approach is not yet applied consistently across its services.

133. The council recognises its progress on mainstreaming equalities has not delivered the level of desired improvement and has recently taken the following action:

- reconfiguring the equality team, with some officers moving into service departments
- developing two model equality impact assessments which are being piloted on the race equality scheme and the best value review of customer care
- conducting an external review of attendance at the Equality Network Forum.

134. The council has brought more than 12,000 asylum seekers to Glasgow since April 2000 and there are currently 5,862 asylum seekers in the city. Social Work Services is responsible for welcoming, accommodating and supporting them. The council works in partnership with the Health Service, which registers asylum seekers with local GPs and, where appropriate, specialist services and the Education Service which assesses and identifies suitable places for children of school age. The council also works in partnership with voluntary and community organisations to provide drop in services, mentoring, befriending and humanitarian aid. The Chief Executive's Department leads a longer term



strategy to integrate asylum seekers and has been successful in attracting external resources from Communities Scotland and the European Social Fund in order to fund integration programmes.

135. Since its approval in March 2003, the council has made progress in implementing its action plan on sectarianism. It has introduced licensing conditions for street traders to prohibit the sale of sectarian merchandise at football grounds, developed a successful media campaign on sectarianism and wider discrimination and, following consultation, introduced a policy on processions and demonstrations in April 2005. The Licensing Board has approved a policy statement on preventing racial, political or sectarian conduct in licensed premises and wide ranging education work with a range of partners on anti-sectarian initiatives continues. The Scottish Executive has jointly funded an interfaith officer.

The council as an equal opportunities employer

136. The council has range of flexible working procedures in place to support work life balance. These include home working and adoption and carers leave. Most of these policies go beyond the statutory minimum. The council also has a range of policies and practices in place to recruit and retain a diverse workforce, and has established service targets for the recruitment of black and ethnic minority employees which are reported to the Policy and Resources (Equalities) Sub Committee. The council also monitors and reports its recruitment and selection outcomes to committee, analysing the number of applications from candidates and their success rates. The council has self organised employee forums for black and ethnic minority employees, disabled employees and gay and lesbian employees.

137. The number of black and ethnic minority employees in 2005 increased for the third successive year from 532 to 545 employees. This represents less than 2 per cent of the council's workforce and is not in proportion to the higher than average level of resident population from black and ethnic minority backgrounds resident within the city. Over 64 per cent of the council's workforce are women, though they continue to be concentrated in lower salary bandings. There has, however, been an improvement in women entering higher salary bandings in recent years, for instance in 2004/05 there was a 16 per cent increase in the number of women in salary Band A1 to 26 per cent.



Part 3: Is the council delivering better public services?

The overall trend in the council's reported SPI performance shows a picture of a council which in recent years has broadly improved its performance and which has achieved a good rate of improvement relative to other councils. This year the rate of improvement has levelled off but the council's performance still compares favourably with other councils. This trend, however, masks the need for a significant amount of improvement in some services such as education and social work which serve the most vulnerable groups in the community.

Service performance

138. Audit Scotland publishes a set of 79 statutory performance indicators (SPIs) for each Scottish local authority. While these do not give a comprehensive picture of performance across all services, they do allow some comparisons to be made between councils and over time. The council makes use of the SPIs in addition to its own Measures of Improved Performance and service department level measures.
139. The overall trend evident in the council's published performance information over the three year period to 2004/05 is one of improving performance, with the council achieving amongst the best rates of improvement of all Scottish councils in recent years. In 2004/05 this rate of improvement levelled off and the council maintained its performance with 10 measures improving by 5 per cent or more since 2003/04 and performance deteriorating by 5 per cent or more on nine measures. In both 2002/03 and 2004/05, 70 per cent of the council's SPIs were in the upper and middle quartiles which shows that Glasgow is maintaining its performance relative to other councils, despite its relatively low starting point in some areas.
140. Data underpinning four SPIs reported in 2003/04 were deemed unreliable due to data collection difficulties associated with inadequate systems or clerical error. In 2004/05, information on four SPIs was also classified as unreliable. New data collection systems are planned to address these specific difficulties.



Exhibit 10

Statutory Performance Indicators 2002/03-2004/2005

Statutory Performance Indicators compared with Scottish councils: Number in each quartile by service area

Service area	Upper quartile 2003/04	Middle 2003/04	Lower quartile 2003/04	Omitted 2003/04
Adult Social Work	4	6	3	Failed to report 2 indicators
Benefits Administration	2	1	0	
Children's Services	1	4	4	1 indicator unreliable data
Corporate Management	4	3	4	
Cultural and Community Services	1	6	1	2 indicators unreliable data
Development Services	2	2	2	
Housing	0	1	1	5 indicators no service
Protective Services	1	6	1	
Roads and Lighting	2	2	1	
Waste Management	2	2	1	
Totals	19	33	18	9

Statutory Performance Indicators: Performance change between 2001/02 and 2003/04

	Performance change between 2001-02 and 2003-04					
	Measures that worsened by ...			Measures that improved by...		
	>15%	10-14%	5-9%	5-9%	10-14%	>15%
Scotland average	6	2	4	3	2	9
Glasgow	4	1	4	5	3	2

Source: Audit Scotland

141. Four service areas have indicators which show that they are amongst the poorest performing eight councils in the country and that performance has deteriorated since 2002/03. These relate to the allocation of social enquiry reports to social work staff, primary school occupancy rates, the percentage of the population borrowing books from libraries and the speed with which planning applications are dealt with.
142. Areas of service performance that show an improvement since 2002/03 and place the council amongst the top eight councils in the country include: home care, sickness absence for craft and manual employees and teachers, the time taken to process new benefits claims and street light repairs. Other areas of improving performance include: the proportion of qualified social work staff in



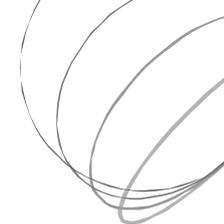
care homes, the time taken to carry out special educational needs assessments, the attendance at pools and indoor leisure facilities and traffic light repairs.

Council services

143. The audit used a risk based approach to selecting the service departments on which we focussed our audit activity. The criteria used included identifying those services with a direct role in delivering the council's priorities, which are performing particularly well or poorly in the view of the council's self assessment, which have a high level of expenditure, and which provide services to the council's most vulnerable citizens.
144. The areas selected for more detailed audit were: Education Services, Social Work Services, Direct and Care Services (particularly those teams supporting education and social work), Cultural and Leisure Services and Development and Regeneration Services (including work carried out in Environmental Protection Services and Land Services).

Education

145. Though the council has been actively addressing the issues of its school estate and introducing a range of innovative projects to improve the health of its school children, it still faces a significant challenge in improving the educational attainment of its pupils. The council needs to ensure that it has sufficient capacity to deliver its challenging and ambitious agenda. There are indications that this will not be easy, although Glasgow spends more than any other mainland Scottish council in both primary and secondary schools.
146. By way of illustration, senior managers will be involved in over 70 public meetings on the Pre 12 Strategy between September and December, at the same time as managing their other responsibilities which include the impact of the council's Equal Pay settlement, preparing budget and service plans, reflecting the council's refocused vision on social renewal priorities in service delivery arrangements and considering the implications of the new community planning framework as well as the day to day management of the service.
147. The council considers Education and, more generally, Children's Services, as central to the social renewal agenda. The establishment of the post of Executive Director (Education, Training and Young People) recognises this and places these services at the heart of much of its planned work. 'Worklessness' is recognised as one of the root causes of social deprivation and the council has identified the need to address educational attainment, achievement, employability, its record on school leaver destinations and the roll out of its pre 12 strategy on schools estate as key themes within its plans to improve outcomes for its citizens.



Attainment and achievement

148. Educational attainment has, in general, been poor across Glasgow's schools in both the 5 – 14 curriculum and in SQA examinations. There have been improvements in some areas over the last year, but both remain below the Scottish average. The council is very aware of the need to close this gap.

149. **Exhibit 11** shows that attainment has improved since 2002 in respect of primary school mathematics and secondary school reading, writing and mathematics, whilst primary school reading and writing have not improved. However, at SQA level, the picture is less positive. These overall trends mask considerable variation in attainment levels between schools, even taking account of levels of free meal entitlement as an indicator of deprivation. This variation is particularly evident within secondary schools.

150. There are, however, examples of schools which are showing improvement, even in the City's most deprived areas. Copeland Primary School is improving pupils' attainment in English language, with most pupils by P3 and P7 achieving national levels in listening, talking, reading and writing. This achievement is despite the school being in an area of deprivation; 73 per cent of its pupils are entitled to free school meals, compared with 42 per cent of Glasgow pupils, and only 21 per cent of Scottish pupils.

Exhibit 11

Attainment	2002	2003	2004		2005/06
	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Target	Target
1. Primary school performance in Reading	78	77	77	Targets not set on a yearly basis.	80
2. Primary school performance in Writing	68	69	68		73
3. Primary school performance in Mathematics	77	77	79		80
4. Secondary school performance in Reading	49	49	54		52
5. Secondary school performance in Writing	43	42	45	Targets set for 2005/06.	46
6. Secondary school performance in Mathematics	42	39	47		46
7. SQA Performance: SCQF 3 Eng/Maths	86	86	84		90

Attainment	2002	2003	2004		2005/06
	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved	Target	Target
8. SQA Performance: 5+ SCQF 3 or better	86	86	85	Targets not set on a yearly basis.	88
9. SQA Performance: 5+ SCQF 4 or better	66	68	67		69
10. SQA Performance: 5+ SCQF 5 or better	31	33	33		33
11. SQA Performance: 1+ SCQF 6 or better	29	29	30		30
12. SQA Performance: 3+ SCQF 6 or better	19	18	19	Targets set for 2005/06.	20
13. SQA Performance: 5+ SCQF 6 or better	11	10	11		12

Source: Glasgow City Council

151. In order to provide a focus on improving educational attainment, the council set up an Attainment Working Group in August 2004. It is planned that the working group will make recommendations by the end of 2005, including proposals for different methods of assessing attainment and achievement.



152. The council participates in the 'Determined to Succeed' programme, which aims to provide school children with the opportunity to participate in enterprise activity to encourage enterprise and improve employability. In Glasgow the focus has been on the promotion of employability skills, access to enterprise and employment for pupils and improving leaver destinations. All of Glasgow's New Learning Communities have an employment and enterprise officer. The council is involved in a Schools Vocational Programme for S3/S4 pupils with six neighbouring authorities to provide work experience for youngsters. Pupils, including some pupils with special educational needs and histories of exclusion from school, are given training in construction, hospitality, horticulture, administration, sport & leisure, care health & fitness and business & customer services and helped to find employment either within or outside the council. In 2004/05, over 1,000 S3 and S4 pupils participated in the vocational programme.
153. In 2004 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) reported that good progress had been made on quality assurance processes and on more rigorous self-assessment. They also noted good progress towards having clearer policies and procedures, but only fair progress on identifying and sharing good practice, although more has been done by the council since the report, including the introduction of a good practice database for head teachers and the dissemination of good practice through teachers' development meetings.
154. HMIE also noted a good ethos in many schools, a high level of pastoral support for pupils in areas of deprivation and examples of good working arrangements with parents. There is also an extensive programme of personal, social and health education across all schools which covers issues including citizenship, race awareness and anti sectarianism. The HMIE report also highlighted that Glasgow needs to improve its record on attainment and achievement.
155. The council also recognises that it needs to improve its results on school leaver destinations so that school leavers take full advantage of employment and higher education opportunities in the city. Their performance improved in October 2003 but declined again in October 2004. The council has set a target for October 2005 of getting 20 per cent of its school leavers into higher or further education (from 18 per cent in 20004) and reducing the percentage of unemployed school leavers from 20 per cent to 18 per cent.

Schools estate

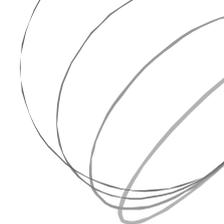
156. Improving the condition of the schools estate has been one of Glasgow's main priorities in recent years. The council agreed to improve the secondary school estate using a public private partnership arrangement and their occupancy levels are now amongst the best in Scotland. The council is tackling other schools estate issues using its Pre 12 Strategy; occupancy rates in the primary sector are amongst the worst in Scotland. The schools estate strategy also aims to deliver improvement in teaching and learning environments and improved facilities for community use of school premises.



157. The Education Services 2004/05 Annual Performance Report identifies the council's 29 clustered New Learning Communities (NLC) and their associated Joint Planning Forums as the key vehicle for integrating the planning and delivery of services for children and families at the local level. Each NLC cluster has one secondary school, a group of feeder primary schools, all pre five establishments and some special schools. The NLCs must now take the opportunity to work jointly through the Joint Planning Forums with other key service departments, most notably Social Work and Community and Leisure Services as well as with the local Community Planning Partnership and Community Health and Social Care Partnerships (CHSCPs) to deliver improved services.
158. In 2004 the HMIE noted very good progress on the council's record on consultation and engagement. This was evidenced by head teacher, teacher, pupil and parent involvement in the council's Pre-12 pilot which included on-line consultation. There is also clear evidence that development proposals altered in response to the views of staff, parents and local communities. Overall HMIE concluded that the level and quality of consultation has improved significantly.

Complementary schemes

159. The council has also introduced a number of other schemes to support the development of its young people. These include free fruit in schools, free swimming and the development of personal and social education programmes. They also recognise that more needs to be done in terms of attendance, behaviour, the needs of all pupils taking full account of the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act, health promotion, values and citizenship, school leaver destinations and employability and continuing professional development for staff. These are all seen as supporting their objective of improving pupils' attainment and achievement.
160. The council has been pushing forward with 'Hungry for Success', the national policy to improve healthy eating in schools. The council reports that it has implemented the recommendations advocated by the Scottish Executive across 184 primaries, 29 secondary schools and 29 Special educational needs schools. The council has adopted a variety of different initiatives to promote the introduction of healthier menus, tasting sessions, concert ticket promotions, a theatre show communicating the importance of healthy eating and new menu displays. There has been joint work with health on establishing hot breakfasts, with 89 primary schools now serving hot breakfasts. The council and NHS Greater Glasgow have also worked together on establishing tooth brushing schemes.

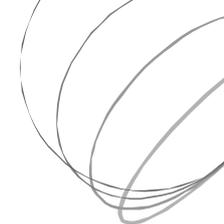


Social Work

161. In 2004/05 gross expenditure on social work services was over £440 million which accounts for around 19 per cent of the council's gross annual revenue expenditure. The council's social work services face a significant number of challenges in meeting the demands which are placed on it as a consequence of the city's high levels of deprivation, drug abuse and poor health record. The council has also suffered from high levels of staff vacancies, particularly in Children's Services. Overall, there is a mixed picture of performance and although there are some good examples of innovative practice, there is also scope for further improvement.
162. There have been many changes to improve the service over recent years and there are plans to make more changes in the future. Improvements include the introduction of a new Practice Team model and successfully recruiting staff to fill all vacant establishment posts following a large scale review and restructuring of all fieldwork services. The service has been developing its communication and consultation arrangements, expanding the use of key performance indicators and outcome measures for performance management, developing proposals for improved joint working through CHSCPs and implementing a management restructure. These improvements are ensuring a foundation from which to build planned improvement in the future.

Staffing

163. During 2002/03 Glasgow's social worker vacancy levels rose to almost critical levels and the council carried out a review of the recruitment and retention of its qualified Social Workers. This resulted in a Practice Team model which was introduced in November 2004. Its aim was to encourage experienced social workers to stay within front-line services and provide development opportunities for professionally qualified social workers, care managers and para-professional staff. Progress within the salary scales is now linked to achieving qualifications, undertaking appropriate learning and demonstrating competency. If staff are to be retained in the longer term, within this model, they will need to be adequately supported through the development and training programme.
164. Between March 2004 and March 2005 the proportion of posts vacant fell from 7.4 per cent to 6 per cent. However, during the same time sickness absence amongst social work staff increased from 7.05 per cent in 2003/04 to 7.6 per cent in 2004/05.
165. The council is also carrying out additional work to support staff including a new communications strategy and new staff induction programme, management and staff conferences every two years, staff surveys and an absence management team to tackle increasing levels of staff sickness absence.



166. The council is committed to improving front-line service delivery by reviewing and renewing practices now that staff are in place. One of the priorities for 2005/06 is to 'develop a performance management culture in which prompt workload allocation, completion of key tasks within specified time periods, the development of care plans for individual clients, and the monitoring of outcomes of care plans are key features' and to 'introduce a performance indicator for front-line service delivery e.g. waiting times. Establish reporting systems and set targets for all care groups'. A newly-formed Performance and Audit Unit has been established to move this forward.

Children and families

167. Children and Families is one of the service's main priorities for improvement. Glasgow has the highest number of children in care or under supervision in Scotland – almost double the national average – but some services for these children are poor. Only 70 per cent of the children made the subject of a supervision order were seen by their supervising officer within 15 days. In 2004/05 36 per cent of reports to the Children's Reporter were submitted within 20 days which is an improvement on previous years but still places the council 19th out of 32 councils.

168. The academic attainment levels for looked after children are low, but have been steadily improving. The percentage of children leaving care aged 16 or 17 who left school with at least one standard grade has increased from 23 per cent in 2001/02 to 47 per cent in 2003/04. However, this level of achievement is still below the Scottish average of 55 per cent.

169. The council has an action plan in place for improving the quality of care of looked after children. It also has an integrated assessment framework for children, which aims to ensure that children and their families only have to provide information once and it is then shared between relevant service providers. The council has completed a review of its Fostering & Adoption services in 2004/05 and actions are now being taken forward, including a recruitment campaign to attract more foster carers and adoptive parents. The council is planning to review interventions and outcomes and to develop an Early Intervention Strategy for children. Overall, whilst the council has already implemented some improvements to its arrangements and has plans in place for further improvements, there is considerable scope to improve on the quality of service it provides to one of its most vulnerable client groups.

Services for Older people

170. A quarter of all social work expenditure is on services for older people. The council provides a good balance of care, with a high percentage of older people receiving care in their own homes, including evenings and weekends. The provision of home care is good, with services targeted to those that need them and at times when they need them. In 2004/05 Glasgow was ranked:

- 1st, with 81 per cent of home care clients aged 65+ receiving care at weekends



- 2nd with 48 per cent of home care clients aged 65+ receiving care at evenings/overnight
- 3rd for the number of home care hours provided per 1,000 population aged 65+.

171. The Home Care service in Glasgow is provided through Direct and Care Services and has expanded rapidly over recent years, with the budget growing from £17.5m in 1998 to £44.4m in 2004/05. The service has gradually moved towards a model of enhanced home care, increasingly supporting people requiring a higher level of care, and 35 per cent of clients now receive 10 or more hours of home care per week. The number of clients receiving this level of care has almost doubled over the last five years (from approximately 1,600 in 1999/2000 to 3,100 in 2004/05). The council has also shifted towards a more flexible service over the same time period, with the expansion of evening and weekend care. This has been achieved through new staff employed on more flexible contracts.

172. The council's performance in delivering a home care service within 48 hours of referral has improved since 2000/01. The service monitors unit costs for this service; but there is limited comparison of unit costs with other relevant councils.

173. The council has made some progress on improving its performance on delayed discharges, but this progress has been slow and falls short of the Scottish Executive's target of reducing by 20 per cent annually the number of people remaining in acute hospitals six weeks or more after being assessed as ready for discharge. In Glasgow the number fell by 30 per cent from 2002/03 to 2003/04 but by only 2.5 per cent between 2003/04 and 2004/05.

174. To help speed up client discharge from hospital, the council has introduced arrangements to allow nursing staff to order home care services directly across all acute hospitals in the city, and approximately 80 per cent of clients now receive this service within 48 hours. There are continued budget pressures around home care as a result of increased demand, and in September 2005 an additional £2.5m was made available by the council. The council conducts its own reassessment of clients' care packages soon after discharge from hospital and, due to budget pressures, has tried to reduce the number of care hours wherever it considers that possible without detriment to the client. Eligibility criteria for home care services have been tightened and the number of weekly care hours has reduced marginally between April and October 2005, but the council still faces the challenge of effectively responding to the demand for Home Care services.

175. The Home Care service has been the subject of a great deal of review in recent years. In 2001/02 a proposed best value review was postponed due to a staffing dispute. A report was compiled in 2004 following extensive consultation with service users, carers, next of kin, council staff and stakeholders from the NHS which made detailed recommendations for improvement. In September 2005 a follow



up report identified that 21 of the 41 action points had been delivered and that the remaining 20 would form part of an action plan that will be reported to committee in 2005/06.

Adults with difficulties or disabilities

176. The council has worked in partnership with its NHS partners to establish a number of integrated teams that deal with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health problems, addiction and homelessness. The Addiction and Homelessness teams are well-established but others are still in the early stages of implementation. Addictions outcomes have improved significantly since the Partnership and Community Addiction Teams were set up in 2004, and 44 per cent more adults with addiction problems received treatment in 2004/05 than in the previous year. Over 1,200 adults with addiction problems were given pre-employment support, training, education or employment opportunities (an increase of 130 per cent on the previous year). These improvements were delivered without additional resources being needed to support the restructuring of addiction services.

177. In 2004/05, the council also saw some improvement in the number of homeless people it assessed. The number of people assessed as homeless or potentially homeless in 2003/04 was 11,689, falling to 8,945 in 2004/05. Similarly, the number of cases re-assessed as homeless or potentially homeless within 12 months was 4,310 in 2003/04 and fell to 3,310 in 2004/05.

Criminal Justice

178. Along with Children's services, this is another area with considerable scope for improvement. A 2004 Criminal Justice Inspection found that there was room for considerable improvement in many aspects of service delivery: there was often a failure to offer offenders the types of supervision that research strongly associates with reductions in offending, there was no systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating service outcomes and there was also a lack of coherent strategic management of criminal justice social work in working with offenders across the city. A recent restructuring exercise has separated Criminal Justice from Children's Services. This is intended to be the start of a process of review and improvement in this service. It is important that clear improvement priorities and actions are identified for both services.



Culture & Leisure

179. Glasgow is very conscious of its metropolitan status and as such, places its many cultural assets and facilities at the centre of its plans. Cultural and Leisure Services (CLS) is responsible for the management of more than 140 facilities, including the Burrell Collection, the Mitchell Library, the Tramway, the Gallery of Modern Art, the Museum of Transport and a network of 23 pools and leisure centres including Scotstoun Leisure Centre and National Badminton Academy, Tollcross Park Leisure Centre and Glasgow Green Football Centre. The service operates 34 Community Libraries with integrated Real Learning Centres and 'Real on the Road', a mobile Learning Centre. There are also 42 Community Centres across the city, providing services and facilities for local communities.
180. CLS also has an ambitious set of development projects including the Kelvingrove New Century Project which is scheduled to open in the summer of 2006, plans for a Riverside Museum project and the redevelopment of the City Halls and Fruitmarket. Plans are also progressing for a National Indoor Arena in the east end of the city, a new stadium at Scotstoun Leisure Centre and a Regional Football Training Centre. The council has also received backing to be the main agent in Scotland's bid to host the Commonwealth Games in 2014. In 2003/04 Glasgow City Council spent more per head of population on its libraries, museums and art galleries, and cultural services than any almost any other Scottish council.
181. The service is involved in a variety of joint working initiatives with its partners but is only now seeking to formalise some of these initiatives by agreeing joint objectives in a draft cultural strategy. The service operates a complex range of partnership arrangements to deliver services including Glasgow Cultural Enterprises Ltd, the charitable company that runs Glasgow Royal Concert Hall and Celtic Connections, and the SECC. These are high profile partnerships and it is important that the council has in place robust governance and accountability arrangements to underpin these relationships.
182. The service's Annual Performance Report is comprehensive and structured round the council's key objectives. However CLS has recently revised its performance management framework and this needs to embed before the service can really demonstrate the impact of its investment in terms of improved outcomes and outputs for service users, and show how the service has contributed to the council's overall priorities, including the social renewal agenda. At present, further work is needed to develop more outcome based and cross-function measures for the service.
183. Improvement in the service has been driven by an extensive programme of best value reviews which has covered community facilities, major indoor performance venues, a new departmental structure, museums, heritage and visual arts, arts, cultural events and play, sports and recreation, the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, youth services and voluntary managed community facilities. The service also has a good customer comments and complaints framework which communicates the actions and recommendations it implements to customers.



184. CLS monitors the levels of satisfaction with its services. In Spring 2005, the council's citizen's panel survey rated 75 per cent of the respondents as being very or fairly satisfied with museums and art galleries, 79 per cent satisfied with libraries and 68 per cent with sports centres and leisure facilities.

185. The director of Culture & Leisure Services was one of the two recent appointments to the post of executive director, taking responsibility for Culture and Sport and has a significant corporate, cross cutting role to balance alongside her service responsibilities. In addressing the new role and focussing on the council's social renewal priorities, the service is currently in the process of restructuring to better reflect the new corporate agenda. It is important that the service supports its staff during this period of change and that the council keeps under review its capacity to deliver on its challenging corporate and service improvement agenda.

Libraries

186. Overall, the libraries service has scope for improvement in how it performs. The number of borrowers as a percentage of the population in 2004/05 was 19 per cent, one of the worst eight councils in Scotland. The time taken to satisfy book requests also declined by 18 per cent compared to 2002/03.

187. Efforts have been made to improve facilities and libraries have been made more accessible by introducing new opening times which are more responsive to customer preferences. This has resulted in new employment contracts for staff working within the libraries service which the service has managed to implement despite some initial resistance from staff. Libraries have also widened the range of services available to customers' including, conference, training and community facilities for hire, and puppet shows and "cybertot" sessions for younger children.

188. Glasgow's 35 community learning facilities – Real Learning Centres – have been accredited by the Scottish University for Industry. The centres offer a range of computer based vocational and leisure learning opportunities, including courses on basic computing skills and opportunities to research local and family history. The service is also in the process of implementing two corporate measures of performance - the number of users registered as REAL learners and the number of times terminals are used per 1,000 population. The council considers that it is on target to meet its performance in these areas, although data relating to this performance measure has been categorised as unreliable by the local auditor in previous years.

Sports & Leisure

189. The council's performance in respect of sports and leisure is improving. For instance the number of attendances at pools is improving, though at 3,189, remains below the Scottish average of 3,684. The council has also improved its performance in respect of the attendance at indoor facilities over the past three years by 23 per cent. In addition, ten of the council's sports and recreation venues and the



Sports Development section have acquired Quest accreditation. In 2004/05 the service supported the delivery of 914 after school sports clubs recording an increased attendance of 9.6 per cent.

190. The council considers the take-up rate of free swim attendances to be a key corporate indicator for its objectives of promoting social inclusion, tackling poverty and improving health and well-being. On the basis of performance information reported to date, the council will have to increase the rate of take up in order to meet the council's end of year target. To facilitate this, take up is now being monitored more closely at each pool and a water based activity programme has been introduced to improve the council's performance.
191. In 2003/04 the Score Goals programme was a partnership initiative which was delivered jointly with Strathclyde Police, Celtic, Partick Thistle, Queens Park and Rangers football clubs, using football to promote active citizenship and to divert children from drugs, crime and truancy. As a result of this programme schools reported improvements in attainment, attendance and behaviour. It is important that the service does more to capture such outcome based indicators in a more systematic way across the service.

Community facilities and support

192. The council has invested in developing and improving its community facilities and has delivered a range of improvements as a result. The council's best value review of community facilities resulted in the closure of some facilities and a change of management for others. As a result there has been a 178 per cent increase in community facility lets over the past three years. The council has also used its Community Action Teams across the city to forge area-based networks by involving voluntary, community and statutory organisations. This has included linking young people with the Family Action in Rogerfield and Easterhouse project (FARE) to address local issues. Work is also continuing to progress the Adult Literacy and Numeracy (ALN) Plan with 40 ALN projects now running in the city.
193. In 2004/05, Community Learning delivered 819 community based adult learning courses with 10,135 learners enrolled. In 2003 HMIE produced a report into community learning in the Greater Easterhouse area. The majority of indicators were classified as very good or good and six action points were identified. When the follow up visit was carried out in February 2005 only one action point required further action.
194. Glasgow is managing to sustain simultaneously its focus on maintaining both regional and national facilities appropriate for its status as metropolitan centre, and on the development and improvement of local community facilities. [Exhibit12](#) is a snapshot of community facilities in Easterhouse and Springburn.



Exhibit 12

A snapshot of cultural facilities in Springburn and Easterhouse

The council has invested in improvements to facilities in Springburn including the refurbishment of the Springburn Leisure Centre which re-opened in June 2003. This development was part of co-location with Springburn Library, which had previously been less accessible. Bringing services together has seen significant benefits of cross-fertilisation, with users of the sports centre also making use of the library facilities. A partnership with Scottish Enterprise and John Wheatley College has also seen the roll-out of Real Learning Centres within Glasgow's libraries. These centres provide free access to computing facilities and offer vocational and leisure-based lifelong learning opportunities.

Council facilities in the city are increasingly becoming focal points for the community and additional community uses are being found for its facilities, for instance Easterhouse Sports Complex provides physical activities for the local schools, holds an after-school club and hosts specific exercise classes for people with heart problems. The council also encourages users of its facilities to send in their comments or complaints and actions are then fed back via a notice board.

Like many other urban areas, Glasgow has experienced problems with vandalism. As a consequence some of Glasgow's community facilities are protected with fortress-like barred windows and doors. In response to the council's best value review of libraries, the council changed its strategy to focus more on valuing the community – with the hope that the community would respond by treating the facilities appropriately. This has paid off with attendances at the facilities increasing and local young people involved in designing and planting the external landscape.

Source: Audit Scotland

Development & Regeneration

195. Development and Regeneration Services has five core service areas: economic and social development programmes, property management and development (including markets), planning and development control functions, housing investment and development and community safety and health.

196. The service has a good service plan that it uses to sustain its focus on its priorities and a well developed and focussed annual performance report. Overall, good progress has been made on the 133 commitments contained within the 2004 service plan and in March 2005, 90 per cent of commitments have either been met or remain on target.

197. Investment in the renewal of the River Clyde waterfront has been a key area of focus for the council and its partners in recent years. To date significant inward investment has been secured which is



evidenced in the scale of development activity that is transforming the waterfront. Key regeneration programmes and projects include:

- the International Financial Service District
- the Glasgow Harbour project
- the New Neighbourhoods Initiative
- public realm improvements
- the Tradeston Initiative
- the Pacific Quay Development
- the City Lighting Strategy
- the East End Regeneration Route
- the Strategic Business and Industrial Sites Initiative
- the Brownfield Sites for Housing Initiative
- the SECC Campus Development Plan.

198. These and other projects are producing residential, commercial, retail, hotel and leisure developments. The council has a MIP that focuses on the level of investment secured for development of the waterfront, with a target to achieve £80 million of investment by 2007. In 2003/04 the value of completed projects was £143 million, up on the previous year by approximately £119m, already exceeding the target for the four year period.

199. In 1998, the council and its partners set a target to reduce the level of vacant and derelict land by 50 per cent by 2005. The total amount of recorded vacant and derelict land in the city at that time was 1592 hectares. Almost 800 hectares of vacant and derelict land was targeted for development over a seven year period. By 2003/04 626 hectares had been developed, suggesting that the council might achieve the target, but at the time of our audit figures for 2003/04 were not available and it is not possible to assess how well the council has performed more recently.

200. In 2003 the council set a new four year target to support the provision of 20,000 vocational and non-vocational assisted training places for unemployed and disadvantaged persons over the period 2003 to 2007. By September 2004, 13,216 training places had been provided through Local Economic Development Companies and Training Initiatives which represents 66 per cent of the council's target of 20,000. This represents good progress.



201. The service also demonstrates its performance through other MIPs for 2003/04 which include:

- The generation of £24.6m general capital receipts (44.5 per cent of the 2006 target of £55m) and £27.5million of special receipts (45.8 per cent of the 2006 target of £60million).
- 3676 jobs created by inward investment (against a target of 2,200).

202. There remain some areas where improvement is needed, for instance the council's performance in planning applications dealt with within two months remains amongst the worst eight councils in Scotland at 55 per cent in 2004/05.

The environment

203. The council recognises the contribution that the environment makes to the regeneration of the city, but it is failing to meet the required cleanliness index of 67 specified within the Local Environment Audit and Management System operated by Keep Scotland Beautiful. In 2004/05 the council achieved an index of 62. In order to help to improve its performance on this index, the Environmental Protection Services proposes to generate 65 jobs for out-of-work people in 2006/07. It is anticipated that this initiative will also support the council's social renewal priority. The service also introduced 'Clean Glasgow', a six month pilot project in six council wards, which allowed the service to exceed its targets on responding to customers, clearing graffiti and 'dirtbuster' site clearances.

204. The council has failed to meet its targets for recycling and reduction of landfill and expects not to meet them in 2006/07. With a national target of 25 per cent of waste redirected from landfill by 2006 and a local target of 10 per cent, the council recycled 9.5 per cent of household, commercial and industrial waste in 2004/05 which compares poorly with the Scottish average of 18 per cent.

Roads and transportation

205. The council recognises the importance of transportation and its role in regeneration. In line with many other councils, citizen's panel results have shown dissatisfaction with the quality of roads and pavement maintenance. The council now spends 50 per cent over GAE on road repairs, but has calculated that a backlog of £95million still remains. In 2003/04, 49.6 per cent of the roads network was identified as needing consideration for maintenance, this has improved to 34.3 per cent in 2004/05, though the sampling methodology used may have been a factor in the reported improvement.

206. Glasgow met its road accident casualty reduction targets 5 years ahead of target and achieved a greater reduction than cities such as Manchester and Leeds. Traffic calming and 'twenty's plenty' schemes continue to be introduced throughout the city to support further improvements in the council's performance.



Customer service and customer care

207. The council recognises that, while it has delivered some significant developments and improvements in the area of customer care, further improvements are still needed. The council conducted a Best Value Review of Public Access and Call Centres in 1998, which resulted in the council establishing an Access Centre to deal with telephone calls for a range of services including roads enquiries, council tax enquiries and payments and special uplift requests. In 2004/05 the council achieved its target of answering 80 per cent of calls to the Access Centre within 15 seconds and exceeded its target on reducing the number of abandoned calls overall. It also reported a reduction of 39 per cent in callers with council tax enquiries who failed to get through. Phase two of the Access Centre development will result in additional services being included.
208. The council has, in the last year, appointed a customer relationship manager and has committed to introducing a council wide comments and complaints system. The council has identified customer care as being one of the five main competencies in its new staff development framework. The council is also in the process of developing a customer care strategy and has two active reviews, a strategic Best Value Review of Customer Care that aims to deliver a customer care strategy and an Efficient Government Review focussing on the Access Centre. The council must ensure that these activities are integrated and that all parts of the organisation are clear on their roles and responsibilities in relation to customer service and customer care.
209. The council's website has been rated as one of the five best Scottish local authority websites by the Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITIM). Though it has some way to go before it becomes fully transactional, the site is well structured, user friendly and contains lots of useful information for residents, businesses and visitors. There are good links to facilities and services offered by other organisations; for example the community information section contains information about more than 4,000 community, voluntary and self-help groups and other local resources within the city.

Access for people with a disability

210. The council is working towards meeting its duties under the Disability Discrimination Act. It plans to complete its audit of premises by December 2005 which will provide a clearer picture of the investment needed to improve the accessibility of its premises. The council had reviewed 85 per cent of its properties at the time of the audit and, although the council has invested some capital funds this year, a significant amount of further investment will be needed to deliver the necessary improvements.
211. The autumn 2004 Citizens' Panel introduced some new questions to supplement the council's existing information on people with disabilities. In particular some questions focussed on the accessibility of council services and the city centre for people with a disability. The panel concluded that there were



no significantly greater problems for those with a disability in accessing council services or shops and facilities in the city centre. The council recognises that there are limitations to using the Citizens' panel alone and is seeking other research methodologies to provide more in-depth information.

The council also operates a number of schemes to improve customer service for people with disabilities ([Exhibit 13](#)).

Exhibit 13

Services provided for people with disabilities

Access Guides

Glasgow City Council is working in partnership with **Describe Online** to make it easier for blind and visually impaired people to get information about public buildings in Glasgow. As a pilot project, information about the City Chambers and the Burrell Collection is now available.

Disabledgo online

Glasgow City Council supports an on-line guide which provides disabled people with detailed access information on a range of cultural, community, shopping and entertainment venues across the city.

Sign language

The Sign Language Interpreting Service offers an independent service to the Deaf, hearing impaired and deaf and blind which can be booked on-line.

Libraries

The council is committed to ensuring that its services are accessible to its customers.

Most community libraries and Real on the Road, (mobile multi-media learning and access facility) are accessible to wheelchair users or people with mobility issues.

Eighteen of the libraries and learning centres offer assistive technologies including induction loops, touchscreens, large keyboards, trackball mice, Zoomtext and JAWS screen readers.

Services for visually impaired people

Community libraries have books in large print, on tape and CD. These are also available in community languages from selected libraries. Blind and partially sighted people may borrow and reserve these items free of charge.

Website accessibility

The website has various features to make it accessible to visually impaired readers including information on text size, text and background colour and Browsealoud software which reads on screen text, access keys which allow navigation shortcuts, links to software which reads pdfs aloud.

PCs and internet access have also been provided to the homes of children with a disability



Dedicated radio station

VIP ON AIR: Europe's first radio station for blind and visually impaired people. The project is funded and supported by Glasgow City Council, the RNIB, Playback, Visibility and the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

Source: Glasgow City Council Website

Access to services for people from ethnic minorities

212. MORI carried a survey on the knowledge and perceptions of the council by black and minority ethnic residents which was reported to the Policy and Resources (Equality) Sub-Committee and the Corporate Management Team during February and March 2005. The survey identified that this group had problems accessing council services, chiefly because of a lack of awareness of what is available and because of communication issues. The council recognises that this needs to be addressed and are considering it as part of the Best Value Review of Customer Care. The council has also recruited bilingual customer services officers to its Access Centre and have developed an asylum Glasgow website which includes information in five languages.

Sustainable development

213. The council has a clear commitment to sustainable development, but recognises that the focus on economic and social regeneration must be balanced with more work on the environmental agenda.

214. Sustainability is a key theme within the metropolitan, community and corporate plans and is also considered within the budget and service planning process. The council also addresses sustainable development as part of its best value review guidance and the Local Agenda 21 framework – 'Developing the Sustainable City.' The council has an elected member spokesperson on sustainability who also chairs Policy and Resources (Environmental Sustainability) sub committee and a senior officers group on Environmental Sustainability.

215. The council's focus on physical and economic regeneration has clearly delivered benefits for the city and its focus is now shifting onto social renewal. The council recognises, however, that there can be a tension between some of the projects designed to deliver these physical and economic improvements and delivering environmental sustainability.

216. The council recognises the need to embed environmental sustainability further in its business processes, including its budget and service planning and best value reviews. It has committed to establishing an environmental sustainability strategy and action plan, and an annual performance report and further performance measures. The revised City Plan will be the subject of a strategic environmental impact assessment.



217. The council anticipates that the revised City Plan will release some greenfield sites as it continues to promote the use of derelict or contaminated land for housing and business development. This is supported through a range of initiatives including brownfield sites for housing and the derelict land strategy. The council is also developing a flood management strategy for the River Clyde and a flood prevention scheme for the White Cart Waters.

218. Though the council recognises the need to improve on the environmental agenda it does have a number of plans and arrangements in place including the 2005 Local Housing Strategy that incorporates a fuel poverty strategy, an interdepartmental energy forum, and an efficient government review of energy management. It will be important for the council to have the necessary arrangements in place to ensure that this wide range of activity forms part of a co-ordinated improvement programme.



Part 4: What needs to improve?

The council has an ambitious agenda which is underpinned by strong leadership, processes and systems. It has also demonstrated its commitment to continuous improvement and a good level of self awareness. This gives a good foundation from which to build future improvement. It is, however, clear that the council has a very challenging range of improvement priorities to balance and deliver in the future.

Developing an improvement culture

219. Continuous improvement in public services and local governance lie at the heart of the Best Value and Community Planning policy framework. Local authorities must develop an improvement culture across all service areas. Elected members and officers must focus on key policy objectives and the needs of service users and communities, driven by a desire to achieve the highest possible standards in service delivery. This requires a culture where areas in need of improvement are identified and openly discussed and in which service performance is constructively challenged.
220. Glasgow City Council has invested significantly in recent years, in putting in place good management arrangements and systems which are understood by elected members, officers, partners and other stakeholders, as a means of driving improvement through all of the council's activities in a more systematic way. Many of these arrangements are fairly recent and need to bed down before the council realises the full benefits. Elected members and senior officers of the council have provided clear and visible leadership to reinforce the importance of these developments and we believe that this priority will be sustained in the future.
221. The council has recently refocused its corporate vision from the physical regeneration of the city to social renewal. In a relatively short space of time the council has made progress in articulating this vision but there remains a significant amount of work to do in ensuring that this change is reflected in its strategic and operational plans, including its resource plans and investment priorities. In order to achieve this, the council will need to establish greater clarity about the respective roles and responsibilities of elected members, officers, partners and other stakeholders in delivering its refocused priorities.
222. Although Glasgow enjoys some benefits as a consequence of its scale and profile, it faces a number of difficult decisions in balancing the potentially competing demands of its international, national, regional and local ambitions, and its available investment capacity. This is all the more challenging when there are a number of areas of service performance which clearly require sustained investment



if they are to improve. The council has demonstrated that it has the ability to sustain its focus on what matters and it is critical that it continues to sustain this clarity about its priorities for the future.

223. The council's community planning arrangements have not so far fulfilled their potential and, as a consequence, new and significantly revised arrangements have recently been adopted. The proposals are quite radical with a focus on highly integrated and devolved service delivery arrangements for both the council and its partners in local communities. At the time of the audit, there were no firm plans in place for how the partnership intends to implement or resource these proposals. It is important that the council and its partners learn from their past experiences and develop robust implementation plans, underpinned by clear resourcing plans and responsibilities. It is also important that the partnership puts in place robust governance and stewardship arrangements.

224. The scale of the council's improvement agenda is not to be underestimated, but it has improved in recent years and can demonstrate that there are now a number of areas where it performs amongst the best of Scottish councils, such as good budget and service planning arrangements and its approach to equal opportunities. However, looking to the future when additional resource pressures such as the impact of the council's Equal Pay Settlement and Efficient Government targets will exert a greater pressure on the council's resources, it is important that the council puts in place clear arrangements to manage the whole of its change and modernisation agenda. There are some signs that the council is starting to explore this with its 'Best Managed Local Authority' initiative.

225. The council needs to improve its performance in a number of services which affect some of the most vulnerable groups within the communities it serves. It is essential that elected members and senior officers prioritise their responsibilities for scrutinising and improving the council's performance in these services. In doing this, the council should seek to further improve on the management information provided to both elected members and officers. Like many other councils, Glasgow also needs to develop its public performance reporting arrangements to ensure that the public gets balanced information in a range of accessible formats to enable judgements to be formed about the council's performance.

226. The council has made progress in developing its management arrangements but there are some areas which require further investment, including:

- Improving some aspects of staff management.
- Reviewing political and managerial structures as planned.
- Balancing the council's focus on the economic and social sustainability of the region with a greater focus on environmental sustainability.



- Continuing to embed arrangements for asset and risk management, customer care and equal opportunities.
- Developing effective community engagement mechanisms for the council and its partners.

227. The improvement agenda below sets out a number of high and medium priority actions designed to focus the council on areas for improvement. They are intended to assist the council in identifying those areas where it should focus its initial investment. This improvement plan is designed to build on the momentum that already exists and will provide the basis for review and monitoring by the council's external auditor over the coming three years.



Improvement agenda for Glasgow City Council

High Priority

- Revise existing strategic and operational plans to reflect the council's social renewal agenda.
- Sustain a focus on and improve service performance in delivering key services such as Education and Social Work.
- Develop its approach to workforce planning and development to support the development of capacity and a customer focussed culture to meet future service demand.
- Implement the council's new PDS arrangements across all services.
- Review political and managerial structures, in line with planned timescales, to ensure that they reflect and support the achievement of the council's ambitions and maximise available efficiencies.
- Clearly articulate future priorities within the overall context of balanced international, national, regional and local priorities backed up by robust resourcing plans.
- Develop appropriate mechanisms to support the implementation of the council's planned change and modernisation agenda.
- Introduce a corporate asset management planning strategy.

Medium Priority

- Build on existing arrangements to develop effective community engagement mechanisms to meet the needs of both the council and its partners within the new community planning framework.
- Further develop Public Performance Reporting to ensure it provides a balanced account of the council's performance, reported in a variety of accessible formats.
- Build on existing performance management arrangements to continue to develop more effective, outcome focused measurable impacts and ensure that the systems in place to capture performance information are reliable.
- Complete the planned staff survey to inform improvement and investment priorities.
- Continue to embed the council's arrangements in respect of asset and risk management, customer care and equal opportunities.
- Redress the balance in the council's approach to sustainable development by focussing improvement on delivering environmental sustainability.