

Leader's Statement to Council

Performance outturns for 2007/08

Our Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) results for 2007/08 confirm the improving picture that we have seen through the past year. Almost three quarters of the indicators show improvement or maintained performance. In comparison to all other councils we now have over half of our indicators in the top 25%. This reflects the improvements and sustained effort across the whole council made over several years.

This is the last year that we will be reporting on BVPIs as we are now moving into the new performance framework of Comprehensive Area Assessment with a new National Indicator Set.

Sub National Review (SNR)

Over the past several weeks I have been involved in meetings regarding the Sub National Review in my capacity as Leader of the Council and also as a board member of Yorkshire Forward. The consultation period ended in June and the Minister's decision is now awaited.

The major step forward has been agreement by local authority leaders and the Yorkshire Forward Board on the future structure of regional decision making. This involves the establishment of a regional board consisting of eight local authority leaders and eight members of Yorkshire Forward together with four thematic boards for transport, skills, planning and housing. The Minister for the Region, Rosie Winterton, was presented with the submission by the Chairman of Yorkshire Forward and the Chairman of Local Government Yorkshire and Humber.

Local Government Association Annual Conference

I recently attended the LGA annual conference in Bournemouth. There were five political speakers – Hazel Blears, David Cameron, Nick Clegg, John Healey and Boris Johnson. In addition to speaking to the themes of devolution, subsidiarity and local empowerment all parties emphasised their continuing commitment to local government. Minister of State, John Healey, said that he wishes to see the movement from the criminal to civil courts for non payment of Council Tax. Members will also note that in the week following conference the Government has published its 'Communities in Control' White Paper, the themes of which will be the subject for wider discussion and consultation within local government.

Executive Appointment

I wish to formally notify Council of the appointment of County Councillor Greg White as Executive Member for Community Services – community planning, community safety, cultural services, economic development, public protection, and post-16 lifelong learning - in place of County Councillor Helen Swiers.