

## **EXETER CITY COUNCIL**

### **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITY**

**27 FEBRUARY 2007**

#### **NATIONAL PERFORMANCE INDICATOR RESULTS 2005/2006**

#### **HOW EXETER'S RESULTS COMPARE**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 A full analysis of Exeter's performance indicator results for 2005/06 has been sent to Members under a separate cover. This report provides an overview of the performance of those services covered by this committee. The other two Scrutiny Committees will get a similar report covering services within their remit.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Exeter's performance indicator results for 2005/06 were published in the Best Value Performance Plan. The Audit Commission subsequently published audited comparative data in January 2007.
- 2.2 The graphs contained within the detailed analysis compare Exeter's results against authorities in the Council's benchmarking group and therefore provide a comparison against other broadly similar councils. (Audit Commission family grouping)
- 2.3 The graphs have been arranged so that councils with comparatively good performance are shown on the left side of each graph. Those councils with comparatively poor performance are on the right side of each graph. Exeter's results are highlighted on each.
- 2.4 The Audit Commission uses national upper and lower quartile figures (also referred to as 75th and 25th percentiles) as benchmarks against which to judge service performance. The detailed analysis also shows quartile figures for all English district councils against each graph. Services should generally be aiming to be in the top quartile (i.e. the best performing 25% of councils in the country). The star rating shows at a glance how well the service is performing against the quartiles for each indicator. Four stars show that Exeter is in the top quartile and one star that it is at or below the lower quartile.

### **3. RESULTS OVERVIEW**

- 3.1 Exeter is in the top quartile for 25 indicators out of a total of 67 where comparisons are possible (37%), compared to 20 out of 51 (39%) last year. It is in the bottom quartile for 11 indicators, compared with 11 last year.
- 3.2 This year has seen improvement in 24 indicators with five of these achieving a higher star rating than last year. However, 16 indicators show a lower performance than last year, with eight achieving a lower star rating than last year. It is important to note that

many indicators have been introduced or have had their definitions changed from 2004/05. No comparative historical data is available for these indicators. Out of the 50 indicators that fall within the remit of this Scrutiny Committee, only seven have poorer performance. These are BVPI 66a, 183b, 184a, 86, 170a, 127a and 174. Detailed commentary on each of these is given below.

### **Council Housing**

- 3.3 Exeter is seventh in the benchmarking group and for the percentage of non-decent homes (BVPI 184a) stays in the bottom national quartile. The Council has a fully costed programme of works to ensure our stock meets the Decent Homes Standard by 2010. Our elemental approach to this programme has been endorsed by the Government Office for the South West. It is this that results in our performance appearing low.
- 3.4 In respect of rent collected (BVPI 66a), the Council maintains its position in the top quartile despite a slight fall in performance from 99.4% in 2004/05 to 99.24% in 2005/06. Although arrears have fallen, prepayments have increased.

### **Homelessness**

- 3.5 The average length of stay for homeless families in bed and breakfast (BVPI 183a) fell from 17 to nine weeks. However, Exeter remains in the bottom national quartile and is positioned 15th in the benchmarking group. The average length of stay in hostel accommodation (BVPI 183b) rose from 14 to 17 weeks, maintaining Exeter's position in the third national quartile. Exeter was 12th in the benchmarking group for this indicator. Seven councils scored 0 within the benchmarking group. Exeter has arrived at a position where the majority of those staying in hostel accommodation are there due to their support needs and cannot be moved to permanent accommodation.
- 3.6 Exeter has consistently ensured that families do not stay in Bed and Breakfast for more than the six weeks allowable. However, when calculating this indicator an applicant's total time in Bed and Breakfast in the past must be taken in to account. So if the applicant spent 12 weeks in Bed and Breakfast in 2002 for example and was then placed in private leased property until they secured permanent housing in 2006 the 12 weeks must be included in our calculations.

### **Environment**

- 3.7 Waste collection costs (BVPI 86) increased from £36.80 in 2004/05 to £40.90 in 2005/06. This is in line with national trends, as local authorities invest in improvements to recycling/composting schemes. Exeter maintains its position in the second national quartile and moves up to eighth in the benchmarking group.
- 3.8 Increasing competition in the City, together with increased waste disposal costs reduced the net income from Trade Refuse. The cost of the garden waste collection service increased because it was for a full year in 2005/06 rather than a half year as in 2004/05.

## **Culture**

- 3.9 With regard to museum visits, Exeter continues to perform well, being within the top quartile for all related indicators. The number of visits in person (BVPI 170b) rose again but the number of total visits per 1000 population (BVPI 170a) dropped from 3187 in 2004/05 to 2493 in 2005/06. Due to an ongoing transfer of two websites to an inhouse server, this figure does not include the visit figures for those sites.

## **Community Safety**

- 3.10 The number of racial incidents recorded per 100,000 population (BVPI 174) rose from 4.4 to 6.1, placing Exeter 12th in the benchmarking group, compared with ninth in 2004/05. The worst performer in the group was Lincoln with 20.8. Bedford, Dover, Lancaster, Worcester and Worthing all recorded 0. There is no quartile information available for this indicator.
- 3.11 This indicator would raise a debate about “worst” and “best” performers. Given that racial incidents are seriously under-reported, targets surround increasing reporting, not reducing incidents. There will come a point when the summit has been reached, but in this area this is unlikely to happen for some considerable time.

## **4. RECOMMENDED**

- (1) That Members consider the report and indicate whether they wish to receive any further information on any particular issue(s).

## **DIRECTOR COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT**

S:PA/LP/Committee/207SCC22  
29 January 2007

## **COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE**

### **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 (as amended)**

#### **Background Papers used in compiling the report:**

- 1) National Performance Indicator Results - January 2007