

Comprehensive Performance Assessment 2007

East Riding of Yorkshire Council

1.1 This assessment has been undertaken as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) programme and does not represent a full inspection of East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Benefits service. This report has been produced pursuant to powers contained in sections 10 and 11 of the Local Government Act 1999.

1.2 We gathered information for this assessment from a range of sources including:

- the self-assessment and evidence provided by the council
- Best Value Performance Indicators and performance measures
- discussions with senior officers in the council
- BFI's CPA 2006 report.

Overall Performance

1.3 In 2006 we reported that the council met 10 of the 12 performance measures and all 65 enablers. The council's most recent self-assessment showed that it achieved a rating of excellent against 12 of the 13 performance measures now scored by the Department and met all 65 enablers. This resulted in the scores reflected below:

Performance Standards score	Excellent
Audit Commission score	4

1.4 The council continued to provide a Benefits service to customers through a public/private partnership arrangement. The arrangement continued to work well, with 5 out of 6 Claims Administration performance measures achieving a rating of excellent.

1.5 A rating of excellent had also been achieved in all of the 4 Security performance measures. The council had introduced a number of initiatives and improvements during 2006/07 to enhance its counter-fraud performance. In recognition of its commitment to continuous improvement the Fraud team had been short-listed for the Institute of Revenues, Ratings and Valuations *Fraud Team of the Year* award.

1.6 East Riding of Yorkshire Council provided a full self-assessment against 2006 HB/CTB Performance Standards. The evidence provided by the council supported its self-assessment.

1.7 Figure 1.1 compares the scores for the individual Performance Standards theme scores for CPA 2006 and CPA 2007 to highlight any changes in reported performance.

Figure 1.1: Performance Standards theme scores			
Theme	2006	2007	Change
Claims administration	4	4	=
Security	4	4	=
User focus	4	4	=
Resource management	4	4	=
Overall score	4	4	=

Source: BFI analysis

Findings

Claims administration

1.8 East Riding of Yorkshire Council's performance measure data for Claims administration is shown in Figure 1.2.

Figure 1.2: Claims administration performance measures 2006/07						
Performance measure	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Full year	Score
PM 1: Average time for processing new claims (days)	19	18	19	18	19	4
PM 2: % of new claims outstanding over 50 days	16	7	10	16	16	3
PM 3: % of new claims decided within 14 days of receiving all information	97	97	98	98	98	4
PM 4: % of rent allowance claims paid on time or within 7 days of a decision being made	87	93	94	98	95	4
PM 5: Average time for processing changes of circumstances (days)	5	4	5	4	4	4
PM 6: % of cases for which the calculation of the amount of benefit due is correct	98	100	100	100	100	4

Source: East Riding of Yorkshire Council
(Full year figures are based on an annual calculation and may not reflect the average of 4 quarters performance)

1.9 In 2006 we reported that the council met 5 of the 6 performance measures. The council's most recent self-assessment showed that it achieved a rating of excellent against 5 of the 6 performance measures scored by the Department. We also reported that the council met all of the 16 enablers. The council's most recent self-assessment showed that it continued to meet all 16 enablers.

1.10 The council only failed to achieve a rating of excellent against one performance measure, PM2. However, it suspected that the performance data relating to this measure was inaccurate and it had taken this up with its IT supplier.

1.11 The processing of benefit claims continued to be provided by a public/private partnership arrangement, which, at its core, had a proactive performance management system. This ensured that any delays in the processing of claims and changes of circumstances were identified quickly and remedial action taken. In October 2006, in recognition of the high standard of service being provided to customers, the council's Benefits team was named *Benefits Team of the Year* by the Institute of Revenues, Ratings and Valuations.

Security

1.12 In April 2006, Performance Standards were revised to include a scoring mechanism for performance measure PM16. This takes account of the number of successful sanctions applied in relation to a council's live caseload.

1.13 East Riding of Yorkshire Council's performance measure data for Security is shown in Figure 1.3.

Figure 1.3: Security Performance measure scores 2006/07			
Performance measure	Annual target	Performance	Score
PM 10: Interventions where review action completed	10,120	118%	4
PM 11: Data matches resolved within 2 months	Not applicable	100%	4
PM 12: Customers visited	3,370	157%	4
PM 16: Number of successful sanctions per 1,000 caseload	Not applicable	6.94	4

Source: East Riding of Yorkshire council

1.14 In 2006 we reported that the council met all of the 3 performance measures. The council's most recent self-assessment showed that it achieved a rating of excellent against all 4 performance measures scored by the Department. We also reported that the council met all of the 21 enablers. The council's most recent self-assessment showed that it continued to meet all 21 enablers.

1.15 The council continued to provide an efficient counter-fraud service and had introduced several initiatives to improve its overall effectiveness. For example, an electronic fraud investigation file system had been introduced which had improved the flow of investigation work and helped to reduce costs. It had also established an intelligence gathering team, enabling investigators to concentrate their time on investigative work, rather than administrative tasks. It continued to work jointly with the Department and other local authorities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of investigations.

1.16 In recognition of the continuous improvements and developments made in the counter-fraud area, the council's Fraud team had been short-listed for the 2006 Institute of Revenues, Ratings and Valuations *Fraud Team of the Year* award.

User focus

1.17 East Riding of Yorkshire Council's performance measure data for User focus is shown in Figure 1.4.

Figure 1.4: User focus performance measures 2006/07						
Performance measure	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Full year	Score
PM 17: % of applications for reconsideration /revision actioned and notified within 4 weeks	90	81	92	89	88	4
PM 18: % of appeals submitted to the Appeals Service in 4 weeks	62	77	81	73	73	4
PM 19: % of appeals submitted to the Appeals Service in 3 months	97	91	100	100	97	4

Source: East Riding of Yorkshire Council

(Full year figures are based on an annual calculation and may not reflect the average of 4 quarters performance)

1.18 In 2006 we reported that the council met 2 of the 3 performance measures. The council's most recent self-assessment showed that it achieved a rating of excellent against all of the 3 performance measures scored by the Department. We also reported that the council met all of the 12 enablers. The council's most recent self-assessment showed that it continued to meet all 12 enablers.

1.19 Performance across all of the 3 performance measures had improved upon 2005/06.

Resource management

1.20 In 2006 we reported that the council met all of the 16 enablers. The council's most recent self-assessment showed that it continued to meet all 16 enablers.

1.21 A key element of the public/private partnership arrangement was the monthly, quarterly and annual reporting of the performance of the service provider across a range of key performance indicators. Over half of the indicators carried a significant financial penalty if a target was not met. The performance indicators were supported by compliance measures and protocols, which were regularly monitored to ensure that a high level of service had been delivered.

1.22 The council continued to be accredited with Chartermark and retained its Investors in People status.