



**Report to:** Community Protection Cabinet  
Panel

**Date:** 22 January 2007 25 January 2007

**Subject:** Performance Report: Wigan and Leigh Housing 2006/07  
Half Year

**Report of:** Director Designate of Environmental Services

**Contact officer:** Peter Layland Ext 4135

**Purpose/summary:** To report the half year performance of Wigan and Leigh Housing for 2006/07.

**Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended:**

**Recommendation/decision:** To note the report

**Key Decision:** This report does not involve a key decision.

**Implications:**

Financial:	Housing contract valued at £16m per annum
Staffing:	None
Policy:	Housing Strategy
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	Report includes progress on equality issues.
Wards affected:	All
Special Interest Members – Which have been consulted	None

Monitoring Report

Has the Director of Legal and Property Services confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council's Constitution?	<b>Yes</b>
Has the Director of Finance and IT confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council's budget?	<b>Yes</b>
Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council?	<b>No</b>

**For Cabinet reports only :**

Categorisation of the report:	<b>X</b>
Discussion leading to a decision	
Monitoring	<b>X</b>
Sharing for corporate understanding	

	<b>X</b>
Discussion	
Decision	
Information	

**Tracking/Process:**

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
Community Protection 22.1.07		Cabinet 25.1.07	

List of Background Papers in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:

Document	Date	File Reference	Place of Inspection
Notes of quarterly meetings	November 2006		Unity House, Westwood Park Drive, Wigan

Proper Officer Martin Kimber

Date 10 January 2007

## **Background:**

In April 2002 the Council set up an Arms Length Management Organisation to manage its stock of Council dwellings. The nature and scale of the contract with Wigan and Leigh Housing is significant. Within the contractual arrangement with Wigan and Leigh Housing (WALH) the company is required to submit performance management information.

Wigan and Leigh Housing manage approximately:

- 23,500 Council houses
- additional ALMO capital resources of £137m
- payment of an annual management fee of over £15m
- contributes to key housing and corporate objectives

The company's performance also impacts on key government assessment of the Council's performance notably:

- Council's Housing Strategy and
- Comprehensive Performance Assessment

The performance management framework that helps govern the relationship between Wigan and Leigh Housing and the Council was reviewed in 2005 and its main elements are :-

- System of monthly and quarterly meetings
- Monitoring of key performance indicators
- Annual meeting
- Annual Questionnaire

This half year report provides information on key performance targets (Appendix 1) and also on WALH progress on the years agreed priorities within the Annual Business and Delivery Plan (Appendix 2). In addition comparative information on a range of performance indicators has been made available for CPA purposes by the Audit Commission. This is shown in Appendix 3 and it provides a clear view of WALH's relative performance in comparison with other councils in England.

Given a new contract with WALH will operate from next April, it is intended that a revised performance monitoring system will be proposed for next year which will reflect the aims / objectives of this new agreement.

## **Summary of Performance**

Wigan and Leigh Housing (WALH) demonstrated improvement in most service areas during 2005/06, especially around tenant liaison, investment and most aspects of repairs. Performance during the first half of 2006/07 shows continued progress with 80% of performance indicators either on or close to target. Areas where improvements continue to be made include the key areas of repairs, the time taken to re-let property and in customer satisfaction. The main concern continues to centre on homelessness due to the pressures faced in this area. It should also be remembered that a significant number of indicators are only available annually and a complete picture is not available until the year end.

In relation to performance against the priorities within the Annual Delivery Plan progress is also generally satisfactory. Most priorities are on course to be met during the year, although the target around Value for Money will not be completed. Within this area it is more important that the process is carried out systematically and to best effect. For these reasons some aspects of this task will be carried out in the next year. Despite this in reality WALH have made very strong contributions over the past couple of years to the Gershon efficiency targets and this will continue in the current year.

During the last few weeks the results of the key tri-annual status survey on customer satisfaction has become available. Given this is now the third survey in the series, it can be used to track progress in the critically important area of how tenants perceive the services they receive.

	2000 Survey	2003 Survey	2006 Survey
Tenant satisfaction with the overall service provided by WALH	79%	83%	84%
Tenant satisfaction with the opportunities to participate	51%	63%	73%

The table shows the progress made since WALH was formed. In both of the measures progress has been made and this is especially true in terms of participation measure which reflects the effort and investment made. As assessed within the CPA by the Audit Commission both measures represent high top quartile performance in comparison with other councils. Indeed the overall satisfaction rate is one of the best in England.

Finally comparison between Wigan and Leigh's performance and the Audit Commission's CPA benchmarking has shown that overall performance continues to be relatively solid. However further work is needed on some of the homelessness aspects and also on some possible future measures now under consideration.

The main detailed issues to emerge from the 6 month review are the following:

### **Critical Risk Factors**

- Empty Homes

Whilst the number of empty homes is still relatively low at 1.69%, this has increased in comparison with last year's performance and is not meeting target. WALH explain that this has been caused by the return of significant numbers of properties due to the ending of the asylum seeker contract and expect this to reduce again. This explanation is supported by the reported improvement in the time individual properties are empty over the same period. Performance will continue to be monitored closely in Quarter 3.

- Use of Bed and Breakfast

The performance during 2006/07 is better than the previous year and in a national perspective it represents top quartile performance. However, given our aim to reduce bed and breakfast to zero (via better preventative work and other alternative provision) this result is below target. A review of progress in order to set a revised but demanding target is currently underway.

- Proportion of homeless people who were accepted as homeless within the last 2 years

Concerns were expressed over performance in this area in 2004/05 and this resulted in the development of a service improvement plan. Performance last year improved dramatically. However in quarter 2 of the current year, performance has worsened. WALH have pointed out that this is due to a relatively small number of cases and have identified a surge in repeat domestic violence cases as one of the main reasons. The WALH Preventative Team is carrying out an analysis to determine future actions. A review of progress will be maintained and the quarter 3 figure will be monitored closely.

- Proportion of homelessness applications on which decisions / written notification goes to the applicant within 33 days

The Homelessness Directorate current advice is that preventative measures and the quality of the decision making are more important than the speed of homelessness decisions (this measure is no longer a CPA indicator). However the proportion of cases meeting the 33 days' timescale has fallen significantly. This is partly as a result of better investigation and in the quality of decision making taking longer. Whilst accepting these reasons, it is felt that current performance is not satisfactory.

- Value for money

Significant work and resources are being devoted to this area by WALH. However it is vitally important that this is done systematically and this will mean that it will continue into next year.

## **Good Performance**

- Satisfaction with Services

The satisfaction levels of all aspects of WALH services are either improving or are outstanding. This reflects well on the company. Especially noteworthy are the high levels within the repair and improvement programmes, whilst the measures on overall satisfaction and opportunities to participate are also exceptional. Improving satisfaction within the allocations process also represents good performance given that this is currently a difficult area due to the housing demand situation.

- Repairs Performance

Excellent progress has been made in the response times for urgent repairs whilst maintaining outstanding performance on non-urgent items. Combined with high levels of satisfaction this is now a strong area.

- Investment Programme

Continued good performance in this area with a steady reduction in the numbers of non-decent housing and high tenant satisfaction

– Re-let times

Good progress has been made in reducing the re-let time (time empty) from 51 days last year to the current 37 days.

### **Conclusion**

General performance by WALH continues to improve in most of the key areas. Indeed in relation to tenant satisfaction, repairs and improvement works, performance is outstanding. However the report has identified some areas of concern with the main one being the increase in repeat homelessness. Monitoring will continue, but it needs to be recognised that despite significant investment in extending preventative services and improving service quality, homelessness remains a pressurised area. This is principally due to the dramatic changes in the local housing market.

## Appendix 2

### Progress on the Annual Business and Delivery Plan

<b>Theme: Visioning the future</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Success Measure</b>	<b>Progress (6 months)</b>
1	We will develop a longer-term strategy beyond 2007 that encompasses a vision for social housing in the borough	An approved strategy in place to inform future plans	Achieved
2	We will review the management structure and portfolios to facilitate effective delivery of the new vision.	New structure embedded.	Achieved
3	We will review the governance structures for the company.	Governance structures agreed and operational.	Governance Structures agreed. Will become operational in early 2007.
4	We will negotiate an extension to the Management Agreement with the Council following a review of the clauses in the existing agreement.	New agreement signed.	Agreement negotiated. Formal signing delayed due to a revised contract template being issued and seeking confirmation from Counsel on recent European Court rulings.
5	Develop the Neighbourhood Management Role entrusted to WALH by LSP.	Knowledge management system developed and operating.	Small area data group set up. Work developing.

<b>Theme: Value for Money / Efficiency</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Success Measure</b>	<b>Progress (6 months)</b>
6	We will review the remaining bought-in services from Wigan Council.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreed and signed SLAs for all bought-in services; to include performance measures</li> <li>Efficiency savings of at least 2.5% achieved.</li> </ul>	Model SLA agreed. Most SLAs also agreed. Some work continuing on Audit and Payroll SLA.
7	We will identify costs of services and inputs and prioritise them for review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Costs identified and costing structure agreed.</li> <li>Priority list for review agreed.</li> </ul>	Task deferred until 2007. Will over-run into 2007/08.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VFM Project Plan produced and implementation started.</li> </ul>	
8	We will test all services against the Value for Money Key Line of Enquiry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Documented tests with action identified and incorporated into overall VFM Project Plan.</li> </ul>	Task deferred until 2007.

<b>Theme: Continuous Service Improvement</b>			
<b>No</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Success Measure</b>	<b>Progress (6 months)</b>
9	We will complete the implementation of phase 3 of the Service Excellence Review of Area Housing offices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part-time offices closed and efficiency savings realised.</li> <li>• Staff relocated into remaining AHOs.</li> <li>• Staffing changes implemented and efficiency savings realised.</li> </ul>	Largely complete. Some relocation of offices still needed.
10	We will implement the revisions to the Council's allocations policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revisions to policy agreed by Council and implemented.</li> </ul>	Approved by Cabinet in November
11	We will complete the Job Evolution pilot and project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evolution completed</li> <li>• Scoring system agreed ready for pay modelling</li> </ul>	Pilot completed On target to complete interviews by March
12	We will tackle the remaining improvements identified by the Audit Commission's Housing inspectors in the last inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main criticisms dealt with to satisfaction of Council client.</li> </ul>	Main issues tackled with the exception of value for money (see 6).

## Appendix 3

### Audit Commission Benchmarking Analysis (CPA)

	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Wigan's Current Threshold Position (2005/06 Performance on Annual Indicators or Mid Year Position on Quarterly Indicators)</b>
	Proportion of Non-decent LA Homes	Mid quartile
	Percentage change of LA decent homes	Top quartile
	Urgent reports in time	Top quartile
	Average time for non-urgent repairs	Top quartile
	Percentage of planned to responsive repairs funded from revenue expenditure	New (likely bottom quartile)
	Rent collections / arrears	Mid quartile
	Average relet times	Not known (likely Mid Quartile)
	Average weekly costs	Mid quartile
	CRE Code for Rented Housing	Achieved
	Council has energy rating	Top quartile
	Overall satisfaction with housing services	Top quartile
	Satisfaction with opportunities to participate	Top quartile
	Average time in temporary accommodation (B&B)	Mid quartile
	Average time in temporary accommodation (hostels)	Top quartile
	% change in use of temporary accommodation	Bottom quartile

CLIENT PERFORMANCE REPORT- RENTS

Ref	Indicator	Target 2005/06	Actual 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Half Year	Quarter 2 Comments
Rents								
CPA BV 66 (a)	Proportion of Rent Collected including Arrears C/fwd	97.90%	97.44%	97.90%	☹ 95.44%	☹ 96.03%	☹ 96.03%	Performance improved on last year - half year performance in 2005/06 was 95.97%.
BV66 (b)	Number of LA tenants with more than 7 weeks of (gross) rent arrears as a % of LA tenants	5.10%	5.21%	5.10%	☺ 4.29%	☹ 4.90%	☺ 4.60%	Performance improved on last year with fewer people having arrears of 7 weeks or more.
BV66 (c)	% of LA tenants in arrears who have had Notices Seeking Possession served	43.93%	43.15%	42%	☹ 12.31%	☹ 16.17%	☹ 27.46%	
BV66 (d)	% of LA tenants evicted as a result of rent arrears	0.21%	0.36%	0.21%	☹ 0.09%	☹ 0.09%	☹ 0.17%	
L9a	Proportion of former tenant arrears collected	40%	7.23%	15%	Annual	Annual	Annual	

CLIENT PERFORMANCE REPORT- REPAIRS (PROGRAMMED AND DAY TO DAY)

Ref	Indicator	Target 2005/06	Actual 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Half Year	Quarter 2 Comments
<b>Repairs</b>								
L21	Percentage of responsive(but not emergency) repairs during 2006-07, for which an appointment was both made and kept Old BV18	80%	67.45%	80%	not avail	not avail	not avail	IT and recording issues mean the data for ths indicator currently under review. No longer a CPA indicato
CPA L19	% age of urgent repairs completed within Government timelimi	94%	95.78%	97%	☺ 97.15%	☺ 99.29%	☺ 99.17%	Performance above target in this area.
CPA L20	Average time to complete non-urgent repair:	9 days	7.5 days	8 days	☺ 6.92 days	☺ 5.98 days	☺ 6.50 days	This is very strong performance and well into top quartile.
<b>Percentage of repairs completed within target time</b>								
L22	BEST/MERIT	97%	97.89%	98%	☺ 98.75%	☺ 98.83%	☺ 98.84%	
L23	Emergencies	97%	96.43%	95%	☺ 97.09%	☺ 99.31%	☺ 97.97%	
L24	Voids	95%	88.27%	95%	☺ 95.21%	☺ 94.74%	☺ 94.06%	
L25	Other Repairs	90%	82.93%	90%	☺ 93.84%	☺ 95.86%	☺ 94.89%	

CLIENT PERFORMANCE REPORT- RELETS AND VOIDS

Ref	Indicator	Target 2005/06	Actual 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Half Year	Quarter 2 Comments
Relets / Voids								
CPA BV 212	Average time to Re-let Local Authority Housing (old L15)	36 days	50.87 days	36 days	☹️ 34.22 days	☹️ 38.55%	☹️ 36.74 days	Whilst performance has dipped slightly from Quarter 1, performance continues to improve on last year at the half year point.

CLIENT PERFORMANCE REPORT- DECENT HOMES / ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Ref	Indicator	Target 2005/06	Actual 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Half Year	Quarter 2 Comments
Decent Homes / Energy Efficiency								
BV63 CPA H11	Average SAP rating of LA owned dwellings	62.8	65	65	Annual	Annual	Annual	
BV184a CPA H1	Proportion of non-decent LA dwellings at start of financial year	22%	22%	16%	Annual	Annual	Annual	
BV184b CPA H2	Percentage change in proportion of non-decent dwellings between start and end of financial year	18.6%	29.0%	12.5%	Annual	Annual	Annual	
HS02	Quality of Life on Estates	N/A	2.9	2.8	Annual	Annual	Annual	
HSO 3	Proportion of non-decent homes	18%	15.9%	14%	☺ 15.40%	☺ 15.10%	☺ 15.10%	WALH still on course to achieve year end target.

CLIENT PERFORMANCE REPORT- EMPTY HOMES

Ref	Indicator	Target 2005/06	Actual 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Half Year	Quarter 2 Comments
Decent Homes / Energy Efficiency								
HSO 1	Proportion of Empty Homes as a percentage of the Stock	1.50%	1.41%	1.25%	⊖ 1.60%	⊖ 1.69%	⊖ 1.69%	This is a "snapshot" at year end and should not be relied on for trend information during the year. WALH state that the return of Asylum seeker properties temporarily impacting on number of empty homes but this should be resolved once let, by next quarter.

CLIENT PERFORMANCE REPORT - HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORT

Ref	Indicator	Target 2005/06	Actual 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Half Year	Quarter 2 Comments
CPA BV 183i	The average length of stay in (I) B and B of households which include dependent children or pregnant women	0 weeks	2.25 weeks	0 weeks	☹ 0.36 weeks	☹ 1.23 weeks	☹ 1.06 weeks	Performance improved on 2005/06, although still not achieving target.
CPA BV 183ii	The average length of stay in (II) Hostels of households which include dependent children or pregnant women	0 weeks	0 weeks	0 weeks	😊 0 weeks	😊 0 weeks	😊 0 weeks	Target achieved although no accommodation which meets the definition of hostel
BV203	Percentage change in average number of families placed in temporary accommodation	8%	86.25%	10%	Annual	Annual	Annual	
BV213	Households considering themselves homeless who approach for housing advice and housing advice casework intervention resolves their situation, per 1000 households	TBC new indicator	1.20	2%	😊 0.94%	😊 0.77%	😊 1.72%	Performance is still better than target with 103 cases resolved in quarter 2, making a total of 228 for the half year.
CPA BV214	Proportion of households accepted as homeless who were accepted as homeless within last two years	1%	0.74%	1%	😊 1.03%	☹ 8.33%	😊 4.27%	An increase in numbers of repeat homeless presentations has occurred in quarter 2. The Prevention Team are looking at how repeat cases of homelessness that are well known to the section can be supported.
L38	Proportion of homeless cases which comply with Quality Standard	90%	91.69%	92%	😊 96.00%	😊 91.68%	😊 93.91%	
L39	Proportion of homelessness applications on which decisions / written notification goes to applicant within 33 wkg days	96%	92.36%	94%	☹ 62.37%	☹ 60.13%	☹ 61.17%	Emphasis is placed on making quality decisions rather than quick decisions although an improvement on decision time is required.
L43	(Housing Link) % of successful tenancies (6 months after support ends)	90%	97.14%	96%	😊 100%	😊 100%	😊 100%	Target exceeded and 100% achieved.
SP KPI 1	Service users who are supported to establish and maintain independent living	New	94.87%	93%	😊 98.75%	😊 99.38%	😊 99.09%	Indicator shows service users in the Housing Link Team and sheltered housing service who were supported to establish and maintain independent living. Performance above target.
SP KPI2	Service users who have moved on in a planned way from temporary living arrangements	New	87.80%	90%	😊 88.50%	😊 88.10%	😊 88.24%	42 service users who were supported by the Homeless Resettlement Team ceased to use the service during the quarter. 37 moved on in a planned way and of the remaining five, two abandoned their accommodation and three were served with NTQ.

CLIENT PERFORMANCE REPORT- TENANT PARTICIPATION

Ref	Indicator	Target 2005/06	Actual 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Half Year	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Qtr 3	Qtr 4	Actual 2006/07	End of Year Comments
CPA H13 BV75a	Satisfaction of council housing tenants with opportunities for participation in management and decision making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord	55%	62.60%	65%	Tri-annual	Tri-annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Tri-annual	Tri-annual	-	
BV75b	Satisfaction of ethnic minority council housing tenants (excluding white minority) with their opportunities for participation in management and decision- making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord	55%	52.10%	65%	Tri-annual	Tri-annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Tri-annual	Tri-annual	-	
BV75c	Satisfaction of non-ethnic minority council housing tenants with their opportunities for participation in management and decision-making in relation to housing services provided by their landlord	55%	61.60%	65%	Tri-annual	Tri-annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Tri-annual	Tri-annual	-	

CLIENT PERFORMANCE REPORT- CUSTOMER CARE AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Ref	Indicator	Target 2005/06	Actual 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Half Year	Quarter 2 Comments
Customer Satisfaction and Perception								
BV74a CPA H12	Percentage of all council tenants (or a representative sample) stating that they are satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord when surveyed	80%	83.30%	86%	Tri- annual	Tri-annual	Tri-annual	
BV74b	Satisfaction of ethnic minority LA tenants (excluding white tenants) with the overall service provided by their landlord	80%	75.70%	86%	Tri- annual	Tri-annual	Tri-annual	
BV74c	Satisfaction of non ethnic LA minority tenants with the overall service provided by their landlord	80%	83.10%	86%	Tri- annual	Tri-annual	Tri-annual	
L52 (a)	% of customers satisfied with the Allocations process	95%	88.17%	90%	☺ 96.94%	☺ 95.83%	☺ 96.14%	Satisfaction measured using the new customer satisfaction survey. Performance above target in a difficult service area given the demand for property.
L52 (b)	Satisfaction with the Furnished Tenancy Service	100%	100%	95%	☺ 100%	☺ 100%	☺ 100%	Performance continues to be well above target for this service.
L52 (c)	Satisfaction with Homelessness service	90%	80.23%	90%	☹ 79.80%	☹ 87%	☹ 84%	Performance is at a high level for a difficult management area and quarter 2 shows a significant improvement.
L52 (d)	Satisfaction of current tenants with Sheltered Housing Service	94%	94%	94%	Annual	Annual	Annual	
L52 (e)	Tenants Satisfaction with the overall Repairs Service	95%	98.13%	98%	☺ 99.13%	☺ 98.87%	☺ 98.99%	Performance above target although the return rate is still very low. WALH reviewing all their surveys/ customer consultation methods.
L52 (f)	% customer satisfaction following undertaking of programmed works	93%	94%	93%	☺ 92%	-	☺ 93%	Performance continues to meet target.
L52 (g)	% of Neighbour Nuisance Cases resolved to the satisfaction of the person reporting the incident	75%	64.08%	75%	☺ 78.57%	☺ 76.47%	☺ 77.08%	This is a good overall performance for the year to date in a difficult service area.

L53a	Percentage of tenants who consider there is a serious problem with neighbour nuisance in their area STATUS survey	11.2%	11.20%	11%	Tri-annual	Tri-annual	Tri-annual	
L53b	Percentage of tenants who feels there is a serious problem relating to cleanliness in their area	18.1%	18.10%	16%	Tr-annual	Tri-annual	Tri-annual	

CLIENT PERFORMANCE REPORT- ACCESSIBILITY

Ref	Indicator	Target 2005/06	Actual 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Half Year	End of Year Comments
BV164 CPA H10	Does authority follow CRE code of practice in Rented Housing & good practice standards for social landlords in tackling harassment	YES	YES	YES	Annual	Annual	Annual	
BV2	Level of Equality standard for Local Government to which ALMO complies	ES "3"	ES "3"	ES "3"	Annual	Annual	Annual	
BV156	Proportion of public buildings with access for the disabled	50%	38%	50%	Annual	Annual	Annual	

CLIENT PERFORMANCE INFORMATION- FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Ref	Indicator	Target 2005/06	Actual 2005/06	Target 2006/07	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Half Year	End of Year comments
CPA H9 L56A	Average weekly management cost per LA dwelling	None set	£12.33	£12.45	Annual	Annual	Annual	