
PERFORMANCE RATINGS FOR SOCIAL SERVICES 2004

**Responsible Cabinet Member(s) - Councillor Eleanor Lister, Adult Services Portfolio;
Councillor Chris McEwan, Children's Services Portfolio**

Responsible Director(s) - Margaret Asquith, Director of Social Services

Purpose of Report

1. To inform Members of the Star Rating (performance rating) awarded to Darlington Borough Council's Social Services Department for 2004. The Council's star rating has gone up from a one star rating in 2003 to a 2 star rating (range is from zero to 3 stars).

Information and Analysis

2. Each year in November, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) awards a star rating to all Social Services Departments within Councils in England.
3. The star rating is awarded following an annual review meeting with Social Services Departments earlier in the year. Darlington's annual review meeting (ARM) outcome was reported to Cabinet on 21st September 2004. The ARM sets out the context and summarises the separate priorities for adults and children for the following year. In assessing overall performance, CSCI use evidence against a set of 6 standards, the Department's PAF performance indicators, any Inspection reports, and monitoring information from the Department's Delivery and Improvement Statement (DIS). The Department's DIS was also reported to Cabinet on 21st September 2004.
4. The notification of star ratings was sent first to Councils on 15th November 2004 until 18th November 2004, when all Authorities' ratings were then published nationally. A copy of the notification letter is attached at **Appendix A**. Overall comparisons nationally are also provided and these are attached at **Appendix B**.

Outcome of Consultation

5. No consultation was required in the production of this report.

Legal Implications

6. This report has been considered by the Borough Solicitor for legal implications in accordance with the Council's approved procedures. There are no issues which the Borough Solicitor considers need to be brought to the specific attention of Members, other than those highlighted in the report.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998

7. The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is not considered that the contents of this report have any such effect.

Council Policy Framework

8. The issues contained within this report do not represent change to Council policy or the Council's policy framework

Decision Deadline

9. For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this does not represent an urgent matter.

Recommendation

10. It is recommended that Members note the improvement of our Social Services Department's performance from a 1 star rating to 2 stars.

Reasons

11. The recommendation is supported by the following reasons: -
 - (a) The star rating for Social Services is a key factor in the Council's overall Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) rating. (Below a 2 star rating limits the Council's overall CPA rating to "good"); and
 - (b) The star rating is required to be reported publicly.

**Margaret Asquith
Director of Social Services**

Appendices

- A** - CSCI Letter dated 15th November 2004
"Performance Ratings for Social Services November 2004"
- B** – CSCI Judgements and Star Ratings November 2004

Background Papers

No Background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

M Asquith : Extension 2099