

Brighton and Hove

Area Assessment

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oneplace

for an independent overview
of local public services

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Brighton and Hove at a glance

This independent assessment by six inspectorates sets out how well local public services are tackling the major issues in Brighton and Hove. It says how well they are delivering better results for local people and how likely these are to improve in future. If, and only if, our assessment shows that the following special circumstances are met in relation to a major issue, we use flags to highlight our judgements. We use a green flag to highlight where others can learn from outstanding achievements or improvements or an innovation that has very promising prospects of success. We use a red flag to highlight where we have significant concerns about results and future prospects that are not being tackled adequately. This means that local partners need to do something more or different to improve these prospects.

Green flags - exceptional performance or innovation that others can learn from

-  Green flag: Partnership working reducing youth disorder and improving the security and quality of life for people in the city at night time

Red flags - significant concerns, action needed

-  Red flag: Council homes not meeting basic standards

The local area

Brighton and Hove City is located on the south coast of England. About 250 000 people live in the city and the number is increasing. The population is generally young and diverse and many people were born outside England. The city is home to two universities and there is a large student population. People are attracted to the city because of its vibrant and varied culture and its seaside location close to London. Nestled between the coast and the South Downs, it is home to the Brighton Pavilion and it hosts some of the largest festivals in England.

Many people in the city are highly qualified but the local economy is dominated by many low skill jobs. Admissions to hospitals related to alcohol, suicide rates and mental illness are high compared to other areas.

The city council, public services, voluntary organisations and businesses work together to improve the quality of life for local people. They have agreed on priorities they will tackle and have set targets for improvement.

The next section tells you how Brighton and Hove's public services are doing in each of their local priority areas.

How is Brighton and Hove doing?

Promoting enterprise and learning

Partners understand the local economy well. They have worked closely together to help local people and businesses through the recession. For example, they have set up business clinics and offered free training for people who have lost their jobs. Many residents are well educated and student numbers are high with two universities in the city. There is a strong financial and business service sector but many jobs are low skilled. Partners understand this and work hard to solve the mismatch between skills and demand across the city. But there is more to do including improving the school results of young people at age 16.

Reducing crime and improving safety

Partnership working has reduced youth disorder and made the city a safer place at night. There is much that others can learn from and we have included a green flag to share the learning .

Improving health and well being

The health of people in the city is varied. Men die earlier on average than elsewhere and there are more early deaths from cancer. Partners show strong commitment to tackling the variations in health across the city and they target their effort where it can have most impact. But there is much more to do - drug misuse, hospital stays related to alcohol and suicide rates are high. Partners need to set clearer targets for the future to ensure they make a real difference.

Improving housing and affordability

The city has high house prices. Partners work well to provide homes that local people can afford to buy or rent and to reduce homelessness.

But almost half of local council homes fail to meet minimum government standards. This poor performance means that about 6,000 council homes do not have basic quality of facilities such as modern kitchens and bathrooms, proper heating and insulation. This affects significant numbers of people in the city many of whom already suffer disadvantage for example through unemployment and ill health. The Council decided to transfer council homes to a housing association but a tenant ballot in 2007 rejected this option. It has worked hard since then to involve tenants in decisions over the future of the housing stock. However, it is clear the government's target for achieving the decency standard by 2010 will be missed, largely due to lack of progress in finding a workable solution.

Large amounts of money are needed to fund the work required to bring

homes up to an acceptable standard. There has been recent progress with plans but major uncertainties remain. This means that the projected achievement of minimum standards by 2013 is not certain. The Council with its partners needs to do more to ensure contingency plans are in place so that minimum standards are met at the earliest opportunity.

Strengthening communities and involving people

High numbers of residents believe that people from different backgrounds get on well together. This is important in a diverse city with a rich mix of communities. The city has an international reputation for celebrating diversity and this is part of its attraction to residents and visitors. The strong role of arts and festivals contributes to the sense of belonging. For example the city is home to many well-known festivals such as 'Pride'. But the partnership does not receive much information about this priority. It needs to set out its expectations clearly and track success.

Promoting resource efficiency and enhancing the environment

Partners are saving energy in many ways but carbon dioxide emissions are not falling quickly enough to meet local targets. There are many examples of energy saving - such as electric vehicle charging points on the city streets.

Residents think streets are clean. There has been a successful focus on reducing graffiti and litter. The amount of waste collected is not falling as quickly as some other areas. The city has many fine buildings and conservation areas. Local people are being consulted on plans for the future. Partners need to align plans for new homes and jobs with protecting the natural environment.

Promoting sustainable transport

The city needs effective transport to make sure that local people and visitors can move around the city. Local people are using buses more and they are cycling and walking more. The new transport plan needs to clarify the way forward. Partners need to find ways to set clear measures of success against which they can track progress.

Providing quality services

It is not clear what this priority delivers for local people. It is more about how effective organisations are than what partners can do together. Partners need to consider what is gained by having this as a priority.

About Brighton and Hove

A recent survey shows that in Brighton and Hove 86 per cent of people are satisfied with their immediate local area as a place to live. This is higher than the average for similar areas and higher than the national average of 81 per cent.

Brighton and Hove is a diverse and dynamic city that attracts a rich mix of people and communities. It has an international reputation for its culture, arts and festivals. Its seaside location near London makes it attractive to more than eight million visitors a year. Nestled between the coast and the South Downs, it is home to the Brighton Pavilion and it hosts some of the largest festivals in England. These include the Brighton Festival - the largest arts festival in England - and the Pride Festival, the country's largest festival for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

It has a growing and varied population of about 250 000. Unlike neighbouring towns - which are home to growing numbers of older residents - the city has a high proportion of people of working age. There are many students. Many people were born outside England and there are many workers from eastern European countries. There are many people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT).

Many areas of the city are prosperous but some parts are among the most deprived ten per cent in the country. The number of people on Job Seekers Allowance is high in some parts of the city and more than 20 per cent of children live in households with no working adults.

Local people are generally less healthy than elsewhere in England. Men and infants are likely to die earlier than in other parts of the region and there are more early deaths from cancer than the England average. More people are admitted to hospital because of alcohol than in other areas and suicide rates and rates of mental illness are high.

There is a mismatch between the skills of local people and the needs of the local economy. Many local people are highly qualified compared to other places but there is a lack of high skilled, well paid jobs. People choose to live in the city because of its many attractions and take jobs that do not fully use their skills or commute to London. This means that many lower skilled jobs are not available for the people who have few skills.

The city is a hub for future growth and 11 400 new homes are to be provided in the next 20 years. House prices are high and there is a shortage of family homes. There is a need for more homes that people can afford to buy or rent and a broader mix of homes. There are good transport links to London and a well-developed public transport network.

The city council, public service providers, voluntary organisations and businesses work together to improve life for local people and they set targets for improvement. Through the 2020 Partnership they have agreed eight priorities that they need to tackle: Promoting enterprise and learning; Reducing crime and improving safety; Improving health and well being; Improving housing and affordability; Strengthening communities and involving people; Promoting resource efficiency and enhancing the environment; Promoting sustainable transport; and Providing quality services.

These priorities are set in a Sustainable Community Strategy called 'Creating the City of Opportunity'.

How well do priorities for Brighton and Hove express community needs and aspirations?

Partners work well together and with local people to understand the needs of the city. There are good examples of partners listening to the views of local people. For example, children and young people - including those whose situations make them vulnerable - are involved in decision making and their views on services help to improve things further.

The key challenges for the city include providing the right types and numbers of homes, adequately protecting the beauty of the natural landscape and ensuring local jobs meet the needs of local people. These challenges are well understood by partners and reflected in the sustainable community strategy called 'Creating a City of Opportunity'. The choice of priorities was made after local people were asked for their views. A comprehensive review of inequalities looking at the variations in disadvantage across the city. This has helped partners to understand local needs including the needs of people who suffer disadvantage through, for example, ill health or poverty. They are using that review to make sure that they target their work where it is likely to have most impact.

Partners are currently reconsidering the choice of local priorities and working hard to ensure that the views of local people, including harder-to-reach communities, are taken into account. They are organising meetings with local groups and arranging public events to ensure these views are heard. This includes talking with specific groups such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Partners work well together. The city council, public services, voluntary organisations and businesses work together through the 2020 partnership. Relationships are mature and leadership is strong. Its debates are open to the public and each meeting debates a topic of local interest in a way that enables local people to shape decisions. Its website is user friendly and enables local people to know what partners are doing to improve the city.

There are many voluntary organisations in the city. They play a key role in deciding what is important and improving the quality of life for local people. Their role is respected by partners. The local Arts Commission is a partner reflecting the influential role of the arts in delivering local priorities.

Partners have agreed a set of targets through the Local Area Agreement. They have agreed many local targets in addition to those required by central government. Partners are starting to study regular reports on progress. These reports are well laid out and use a colour-coded dashboard to show which targets are on track and which are not. But the picture of performance is not consistent. Some priorities have clear shared plans and targets. Others do not.

For example, the partnership does not receive a clear picture of progress for its priorities for sustainable transport and quality services. This means that some priorities get more attention than others. It also means that partners can't be sure that they are providing value for money or that they are making a real difference to local people through working together to tackle all priorities.

Promoting enterprise and learning

Historically the city's economy has performed strongly seeing significant falls in employment and rises in average earnings. There has however been virtually no change in the employment rate due to the high and increasing numbers of working age residents in the city.

The city has a strong financial and business service sector but many jobs are low skilled and average wages are low. Many residents are highly educated and student numbers are high with two universities in the city. The result is a mismatch between skills and demand across the city's economy. There are not enough higher skilled jobs to match the skills of local people. People commute to London or take lower paid jobs because they find the city an attractive place to work or live.

Partners understand the local economy well. They understand the need to ensure that the city stays attractive to people and businesses and that housing and space for business development meet local needs.

They have agreed as an aim 'to provide a wide range of job opportunities, supporting businesses to grow, encouraging investment, innovation and a healthy, sustainable economy actively promoting learning and training opportunities for all.'

The most pressing issue recently has been understanding and responding to the economic downturn.

The recession has not hit employment as much as feared. But some local targets - to reduce numbers of working age people claiming out of work benefits and gross value added per head of population - are unlikely to be met. Partners are monitoring trends closely. Partners have worked closely together to help local businesses. For example they have set up business clinics and free training for people who have lost their jobs, trained council officers to signpost available advice services, raised awareness of business rate relief for small businesses (targeting more than 1100 local businesses). They have also promoted a 'be local - buy local' campaign to encourage local trade.

Partners understand the risks if unemployment rises further and the knock-on effect for families and communities. They are monitoring trends to pick up any evidence of a second wave of recession.

Providing enough jobs and homes whilst protecting the natural beauty of the landscape is a challenge. The city council is currently consulting on its plans for future development set out in the core strategy. Aligning this with refreshed partnership priorities will be an important step in setting clear local priorities

for partners going forward.


The city's economy goes beyond the city boundaries. There are examples of how partners work well with neighbours but few practical results for local people.

Educational standards need to improve further. Most young children progress well during their early years. At the age of 11 children achieve similar results to elsewhere. Asian children and those of mixed heritage do well at age 11 but achievement by Black children is low by national standards. At 16, fewer young people achieve 5 good GCSEs including English and mathematics when compared to similar area or the country overall and the rate is not improving as quickly as in some other areas. Also, fewer than average young people achieve 2 or more good GCSEs in science subjects. Improving the quality of secondary schools and young people's achievements at age 16 is a key challenge for the city. Results differ across schools and less than half of secondary schools in the area are good or better. Fewer than average secondary schools have a good standard of behaviour. Persistent absence is however reducing well particularly in some targeted schools. Numbers of children permanently excluded from school is low. Achievement by Black young people is improving well at age 16 and outcomes for different minority ethnic groups are as seen elsewhere. There are no significant differences in achievement between children and young people from low income families and others at ages 11 and 16 when compared to similar areas. Gaps in achievement between children and young people from low income families and others are not narrowing however.

Children's homes in the area as well as the local authority fostering agency are outstanding and the adoption agency is good. These services help children and young people whose circumstances make them vulnerable very well. But those in foster care arrangements need to have more stability by not moving so often. Results for children with special needs are about average compared to elsewhere.

Partners help children and young people to develop the skills and knowledge they need to work. Numbers of 17 year olds in education or training is higher than average and improving slightly faster than elsewhere. The city has fewer good or better school sixth forms than other places - although most young people who are studying for A-levels attend one of the two good sixth form colleges which serve the area. Numbers of young people not in education, employment or training is slightly higher than average. More young people however are achieving appropriate skills and qualifications by the age of 19 and the rate is increasing. More young people from low income families than average progress to higher education.

Reducing crime and improving safety

 **Green flag: Partnership working reducing youth disorder and improving the security and quality of life for people in the city at night time**

The city is a safer place at night because partners are reducing disorder through an impressive package of action, which other resort towns could

learn from. Key measures include an award winning approach to helping people safely enjoy pubs and clubs, a strong approach to hate crime, a quick response to youth disorder, and support to the most disruptive families to turn their lives around. Residents are less concerned than they were two years ago about people being drunk or rowdy or using drugs in public places. At 86 per cent, the percentage of people who are satisfied with Brighton & Hove as a place to live is high compared with similar places.

Partners have worked together to make the city centre a safer and more enjoyable place to be at night. The partnership approach to managing the impact of pubs, clubs and restaurants is very effective and won national acclaim in 2008. Night time violence and disorder associated with drunken behaviour has reduced over the past year. The number of assaults in the city fell by 14 per cent compared to 6 per cent in the south east overall. Practical measures include a night time bus service to clear crowds from the city centre and make people feel safer. A red and yellow card system is operated by around 190 licensed premises across the city, and can result in those acting in a disorderly way being excluded from all venues.

Brighton & Hove is a diverse city, and so tackling racist and religiously motivated incidents including hate crime against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people is a priority. Partners work with local community representatives through casework panels to solve local problems and provide support for those affected. This contributes to the high numbers of local residents in a recent survey who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together and that they treat each other with respect.

Operation Park successfully targets youth disorder. High visibility patrols are backed by close working between the police, the youth offending service and the children's services. Since June 2008 575 young people have been stopped as potentially involved in anti-social behaviour. The parents of all those stopped were contacted and not one of the young people concerned has been taken to court, as help was given to change their behaviour.

A project aimed at reducing the number of anti social behaviour complaints made against particular families in the city where there is a child at risk of offending has been introduced. A project working with families known for anti-social behaviour is having a positive impact not only for the families concerned but in reducing tensions amongst neighbours. Complaints against the families reduced by 79 per cent. This programme looks not only at the individual young person but the family environment.

The successful approach is founded on a history of strong partnership in reducing crime together.

Reducing crime and improving safety

Partners have agreed a priority for the city to be 'a place in which children, young people and adults can feel safe and at ease by reducing crime and fear of crime (especially violent crime and crime in public places), antisocial behaviour, racially motivated and homophobic crime and by tackling drug and alcohol related crime'.

Overall crime in the city is below average for similar places, as is concern

about anti-social behaviour. Crime rates reduced last year. All local targets set by partners are on track except convictions for prolific and priority offenders.

There is well established partnership working that has been built up over time. Community safety teams include staff from key partners including social care, police, probation, third sector, health, youth offending. This ensures a strong local focus and sharing of information across partners. There are many examples of successful partnership initiatives that are having an impact for local people.

Partners engage well with local people - including minority communities. The 'safe in the city' website is user friendly and provides much information for local people. Local action teams bring partners together at the local level to discuss issues raised by residents and traders and find solutions. These teams feed into city wide joint action groups and inform strategic decision making. Local people therefore help find direct solutions to local issues as well as influencing broader decisions about future policy.

Whilst the target for reducing reoffending by the group of offenders identified as of most concern has not been met, partners have worked together closely to understand why this has been the case, as previous results had been good. A revised approach has been put in place including changes to record keeping and more resources directed at the highest risk offenders. Prospects for future improvement appear good.

Operation Reduction tackles class A drug supply through mapping and disrupting organised crime and increasing the availability of treatment services. Young people however report substance misuse to be higher than in similar parts of the country.

The Council and its partners work well to protect children and implement child protection arrangements. The numbers of young people offending, and those re-offending dropped in 2008/09. Re-offending rates are low but more young people than average are sentenced to custody. Too few young offenders are involved in appropriate employment, education or training and the situation is not improving quickly enough.

Road safety has improved. For example the numbers of children and young people killed or seriously injured on the city's roads fell from 17 in 2006 to 13 in 2008.

Improving health and well being

The health of people in the city is varied. Men die earlier on average than elsewhere in England and there are more early deaths from cancer. People who are disadvantaged - for example, by poor housing conditions or poverty - tend to have the poorest health. Men in the most deprived areas of the city tend to die nine years earlier than elsewhere and women five years earlier.

Drug misuse is worse than the average for England. Hospital stays related to alcohol misuse are high and suicide rates are amongst the highest in the country. Child poverty is worse than the south east England average.

However, during the past ten years early death rates, including from heart disease and strokes, have decreased. The number of obese adults and the proportion of people diagnosed with diabetes are lower than elsewhere. Obesity among very young children is lower than average but by the time they leave primary school is the same as elsewhere.

Almost 80 per cent of local people say their health is good or very good, according to a recent survey.

There is more to do to offer high quality health services for all people across the city. The quality of healthcare services is mixed and varies depending on where you live and where you are sent for treatment. The quality of service provided at hospitals varies from excellent to weak.

Improving health and wellbeing is a priority for partners and there is strong commitment and leadership. The city has World Health Organisation status which recognises this commitment. Partners understand that achieving good health is not just about healthcare. People who suffer poor health often suffer other disadvantages. They are often in need of better housing and struggle to get jobs because low skill jobs are taken by people who are more qualified. Before agreeing new major policies partners look at the potential health implications to try to ensure that all their policies work together to contribute to improving the health of local people. For example, they encourage walking and cycling as part of their transport priority.

Partners are working well together to tackle the variations in health across the city. There has been a thorough review of these inequalities. This review has highlighted that some people who live in well-off areas can suffer the same problems as those in poorer areas. Partners are responding by focusing more on the needs of individuals and families rather than targeting the less well off neighbourhoods. For example, family intervention programmes provide support to families that are facing a number of challenges. But partners need to set clearer targets for the future if they want to ensure they are making a difference.

Child poverty is worse than many other places in England. One in three children live in low income households and the target for improvement is not likely to be hit. But partners have clear plans to improve things and are planning to raise the profile of child poverty in the new children and young people plan. This gives confidence that future progress will be made. The number of primary aged children who are obese is about the same as similar areas. Health education and sport are provided in local schools but secondary schools do not do enough to help young people adopt healthy lifestyles.

Too many teenage girls are becoming pregnant. Reducing teenage pregnancies is a local target agreed by partners. Although numbers are falling they are not falling as quickly as elsewhere. The highest rates in the city are in the most disadvantaged areas. Partners have agreed a new strategy to reduce numbers further by, for example, making making birth control advice more widely available and targeting sexual health services at the young people in most need.

The number of people going to hospital for reasons related to alcohol is higher than the national average. Alcohol misuse, including binge drinking, is a growing problem particularly for men. The number of drug-users who inject is

relatively high.

The city has had one of the highest suicide rates in England for many years. A local audit in 2003-05 showed that a majority of people who committed suicide had also been diagnosed with mental illness and most were young white men. Partners understand these issues and work well together to tackle the causes. For example, management of the night time economy to encourage sensible drinking and supporting people who suffer mental illness. But there is more to do and we will track progress to see if plans deliver improvements.

Healthy ageing is a priority for partners. The population is relatively young compared to similar areas of England but older people make big demands on inpatient hospital services. Partners understand this and take a range of steps to keep older people healthy and independent. Social care is assisting people to live independently. Services for carers are comprehensive. Good short term home care support is helping many people to stay at home longer without needing to go to hospital. Choice of who provides care services is increasing including, for example, giving money to those who need care so that they pay for it themselves - known as 'direct payments'.

Improving housing and affordability

Red flag: Council homes not meeting basic standards

Council homes not meeting basic standards

Almost half of local council homes fail to meet minimum government standards. This poor performance means that about 6,000 council homes do not have basic quality of facilities such as modern kitchens and bathrooms, proper heating and insulation. This affects significant numbers of people in the city many of whom already suffer disadvantage for example through unemployment and ill health. Affected homes are not concentrated in one place but are scattered throughout the city's housing stock. The Council decided to transfer council homes to a housing association but a tenant ballot in 2007 rejected this option. It has worked hard since then to involve tenants in decisions over the future of the housing stock. However, it is clear the government's target for achieving the decency standard by 2010 will be missed, largely due to lack of progress in finding a workable solution.

Large amounts of money are needed to fund the work required to bring homes up to an acceptable standard. The Council plans to fund the work in two ways. First, the letting of a maintenance contract which is forecast to bring about significant savings. Second, by obtaining income from leasing up to 499 of its homes to a new organisation specially set up for this purpose. There has been recent progress with these plans but major uncertainties remain. The maintenance contract does not start until April 2010 and it is too early to say if the ambitious forecasts for savings are realistic. Government consent is required to let properties to the new organisation but this consent has not been obtained and fundamental concerns currently remain unresolved. Alternative plans to continue the scheme without Government consent are as yet untested. The current recession also makes private funding

uncertain. If the leasing option fails or the savings from the maintenance contract do not happen as quickly as planned the Council will need to find alternative ways to make up the shortfall in funds. Borrowing options are very uncertain at this time. It is not clear what impact substantial borrowing would have on the Council or delivery of partnership priorities. This means that the projected achievement of minimum standards by 2013 is not certain. The Council with its partners needs to do more to ensure contingency plans are in place so that minimum standards are met at the earliest opportunity.

What's being done in response?

The local partnership - the council, public services, voluntary organisations and businesses - is discussing how best to make the improvements needed. This may involve the partnership doing different or additional work, or seeking help from other councils or public services, or from the public sector's own improvement agency. It may also involve an inspection by one or more of the inspectorates. We'll update this section with more detailed information when this is agreed.

Improving housing and affordability

The aim of partners is for the city to be 'a place with a wide choice of decent housing to meet people's needs for a stable home and their ability to pay'. Most local targets are being met but too many council homes fail to meet minimum government standards, meaning many low income tenants and their families are continuing to live in unsuitable conditions.

Brighton and Hove has high house prices and high housing demand. Many local people cannot afford to buy or rent local houses. The population is growing and the city will need an extra 11,400 homes over the next 20 years. Forty per cent of these will need to be low cost for local people to buy or rent.

The Council with its partners has a good record in providing new housing that people can afford to buy or rent but demand is outstripping supply. They have good information about the condition of council homes and targets to bring empty homes back into use are being exceeded. Partners have been effective in preventing homelessness including for young people and they have made big cuts in the number of people who sleep rough on the city's streets. The Brighton and East Sussex Together Partnership (BEST) has improved housing conditions for vulnerable people who live in privately-owned homes.

Strengthening communities and involving people

Partners have agreed a priority to make the city 'a place where communities are strong, inclusive and have opportunities to influence decision making. A place where individuals are able to take advantage of opportunities to improve their quality of life'.

The proportion of residents who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together is higher than in similar areas elsewhere in England. The city has an international reputation for celebrating diversity and this is part of

its attraction to residents and visitors. A recent survey shows that about 28 per cent of residents think that they can influence decisions affecting their local area. This is not as high as elsewhere and partners are looking to better understand this and how people can be more involved. Most children and young people are helped well to make a positive contribution to their community and take part in decision making processes - although secondary schools and the general further education colleges located in the area are only satisfactory in the way they do this.

Part of what makes the area attractive is its cultural diversity - the variety of people and communities - and the strong role of arts and culture. These attract many visitors and is a key reason why many employers and residents move to the city. The city is the home to many internationally recognised festivals. Brighton Festival is the largest arts festival in England and Pride the country's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender festival. New events continue to develop. For example, the White Nights event marking the end of British Summer Time in 2008 encouraged people to explore the city at night. It helped to dispel fear of crime and provided alternative entertainment to drinking.

Partners work well together to ensure that this culture continues to thrive. Together they devise arts projects which help meet local priorities. For example, by staging events for older people to encourage healthy living and art projects with tenants to foster pride in local estates and discourage anti-social behaviour.

Individual partners work well together to stage arts projects and festivals. The Brighton & Hove Arts Commission has a big say about the choice of cultural events and how they should be staged. Arts projects are reviewed to see how well they have worked and how they can be improved in the future. But the 2020 partnership does not receive much information about this priority. It should be clearer about what success looks like so that it can monitor whether value for money is being given. It needs to be sure that the arts and festival programme will continue to help meet local priorities by setting out its expectations clearly and tracking success.

Promoting resource efficiency and enhancing the environment

Partners have agreed to aim for the city to be 'a place to live which is clean, attractive, uses energy and natural resources efficiently, reduces pollution, ensures the best use of land, promotes biodiversity, approves well designed developments and has accessible open space and countryside'.

Carbon dioxide emissions are not falling quickly enough to meet local targets agreed by partners. Partners understand the need to speed up progress and are putting in place steps to do more.

But there are many examples of progress in saving energy. For example, there are more than 70 car club parking spaces across the city and electric vehicle charging points are being installed.

Streets are clean according to a majority of local residents in a recent survey. Numbers of abandoned or burnt out cars on the city streets have dropped and the city council has taken focussed action to reduce graffiti and litter. Communal bins across the city are helping make the streets cleaner.

Recycling levels are lower than elsewhere and many local people say they are not satisfied with the refuse collection and recycling service. The amount of waste collected from homes is not falling as quickly as in some other areas.

The city has an attractive natural environment nestled between the sea and the South Downs. It has many fine buildings and conservation areas. The city council is currently consulting local people on plans for future development - known as the core strategy. Providing enough jobs and homes for an increasing number of residents whilst protecting the environment is a key challenge. Partners need to align plans for future development with their priorities for more jobs and homes.

Promoting sustainable transport

The city needs effective transport to make sure that local people and visitors can move around the city. The attraction of the city as a place people want to live, work and visit is damaged if people can't move around easily. Plans to increase numbers of homes and encourage businesses into the city will increase transport needs.

Partners have agreed an aim that the city be 'a place with an integrated sustainable transport system that minimises damage to the environment and promotes walking, cycling and public transport use and contributes to a safer, cleaner, quieter city'. They understand the importance of effective transport for improving the quality of life for local people as well as for encouraging visitors and businesses.

There is much progress. Bus passenger numbers continue to increase. Buses that run all night and changes in the way travel information is given - including talking bus stops for those with poor sight - contribute to high numbers of local people using the services. This has also reduced fear of crime and cut numbers of car journeys. More people are walking and cycling and partners understand how this is improving health and helping the environment by easing traffic congestion.

Plans to develop park-and-ride and integrating various forms of transport at key sites across the city and beyond are being drawn up but they are at an early stage. These are complex decisions and partners will need to work together effectively to ensure they agree on future progress.

The 2020 partnership does not receive much information about how partners are working to improve transport and deliver this priority. Except for two targets in the local area agreement partners do not regularly consider progress. This means that partners cannot be satisfied that there is value for money and that all opportunities to improve transport are taken.

Providing sustainable transport involves complex and expensive long-term decisions. The political administration of the Council has changed since

'Creating a city of opportunity' was adopted. As the transport authority, the council needs to develop its new transport plan and clarify what it intends to do. Partners need to develop the refreshed sustainable community strategy to reflect shared priorities and ensure that there are shared plans for improvement. Partners need to find ways to set clear measures of success against which they can track progress. At the moment this priority is not given sufficient attention by partners.

Providing quality services

A priority for partners is that the city 'be a place where residents, workers and visitors receive high quality customer focussed services'. However, the partnership does not measure how successfully it is doing this. They have not clearly set out what success looks like.

Partners need to consider what is gained by having this as a priority. It currently reads as a priority for individual organisations not partners together.

CAA looks at how well local public services, working together, are meeting the needs of the people they serve. It's a joint assessment made by a group of independent watchdogs about the performance of local public services, and how likely they are to meet local priorities. From 9 December you will find the results of Comprehensive Area Assessment on the Oneplace website - <http://oneplace.direct.gov.uk/>

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