

QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Environment
SERVICE: Environmental Health and Planning
PERIOD: Quarter 4 2005/06

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This monitoring report covers the Environmental Health and Planning Department Fourth Quarter period up to 31st March 2006. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place, a Financial Statement for the period has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment.

The way in which traffic lights symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Appendix 5.

This will be the last report with this remit, with the Environmental Health and Planning Department being integrated with the Landscape and Waste divisions of the former Neighbourhood Services Department to form the newly created Environmental and Regulatory Services Department.

2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

On 10th March 2006 a Health and Safety seminar was organised for businesses in Halton at the Training Centre around 'Slips and Trips'. This was followed by a practical workshop for attendees to learn to use a new slip meter that has recently been acquired by the service that will be available for use after prior arrangement.

A second 'Safer Food Better Business' training session funded by the Food Standards Agency took place at the Halton Stadium to assist food businesses in Halton in preparing their own hazard analysis procedures.

Fixed penalty notices for dog fouling were introduced at the beginning of the year. We have now issued 15 notices resulting in one prosecution for non-payment.

A Supplementary Planning Document, which guides new Industrial

Development was adopted February 2006 and the New Local Development Scheme, which sets out which other documents will follow was adopted in March 2006.

Within the last quarter work on the Core Strategy Document has started and the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report has been produced in Draft. This work will result in the longer term with the replacement development plan.

The Council were accredited by the ODPM with 21 "Pendleton" points for electronic planning information on the website. This was the highest mark possible.

Electronic payment and electronic application submission for Development Control and Building Control upgrade work has now been completed. A marketing campaign to improve take up of these services is also planned.

Public accessible GIS application is now live on the Council website. This gives public access to planning application boundaries and the UDP. There has also been integration with the Council's award winning 'Planning Applications Online' system with the addition of a view map button.

3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

Following an historic vote in the House of Commons on 14th February 2006, there will be a total ban on smoking in all public places as part of the Health Bill. The ban may be introduced as early as Summer 2007 and it is now clear that Environmental Health professionals will be responsible for enforcement. The Health & Safety Executive has indicated that they will not enforce the ban on premises they currently enforce legislation. This means that the Council may have to enforce the ban in these additional premises and this could present an additional burden to existing staff.

Over the next year the Contaminated Land Strategy will have to take into account the addition of radioactively contaminated land. This will be an additional type of contamination not previously considered, which could bring further technical and communication challenges to the overall work programme.

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 deals with many of the problems affecting the quality of our local environment. The Act includes provisions on noise, dogs and statutory nuisances such as light and insects. The commencement date for these provisions is 6th April 2006 and therefore is likely to impact on the workload of the Environmental Protection Group and generate an additional training need for members of staff.

The Food Safety Service are currently working with IT to introduce a service to Halton residents via the Halton website called 'Scores on the Doors'. This will enable the most recent risk scores following a food safety inspection to be made accessible to the public.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY OBJECTIVES/MILESTONES



(Appendix 1)

4.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER OBJECTIVES/MILESTONES



(Appendix 2)

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW

There have been no internal or external service reviews in this quarter.

6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



(Appendix 3)

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



(Appendix 4)

7.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Progress against Key Objectives/Milestones
Appendix 2- Progress against Other Objectives/Milestones
Appendix 3- Progress against Key Performance Indicators
Appendix 4- Progress against Other Performance Indicators
Appendix 5 - Explanation of Traffic Light Symbols

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2005/06 Key Milestone	Progress	Commentary
Planning				
PL03	Statement of Community Involvement	To be adopted by June 2006		On target. Consultation responses on draft document received and sent to Planning Inspectorate. Inspector to produce a binding report.
PL05	To achieve the timetable and milestones agreed within the Local Development Scheme in respect of the progress made towards the adoption of SPD's/Development Plan documents for Regeneration Action Areas	To achieve the 100% of targets set within the LDS		21 planning policy documents will be produced under the new LDS 2006 programme. Approved 22 nd March. Four SPD's are slightly behind timescale but are still on target for adoption in June 2006. These are the three Town Centre SPD's and the Open Space SPD. Overall scheme on target.
Environmental Health				
EH01	Complete the next annual review of the Food Service Inspection Plan	Review completed and preparations for 2007 review in place. By June 2006.		Completed
EH02	Complete the next annual review of the Health and Safety Service Plan	Annual review and 2006 update shared with members. By end of June 2006.		Completed

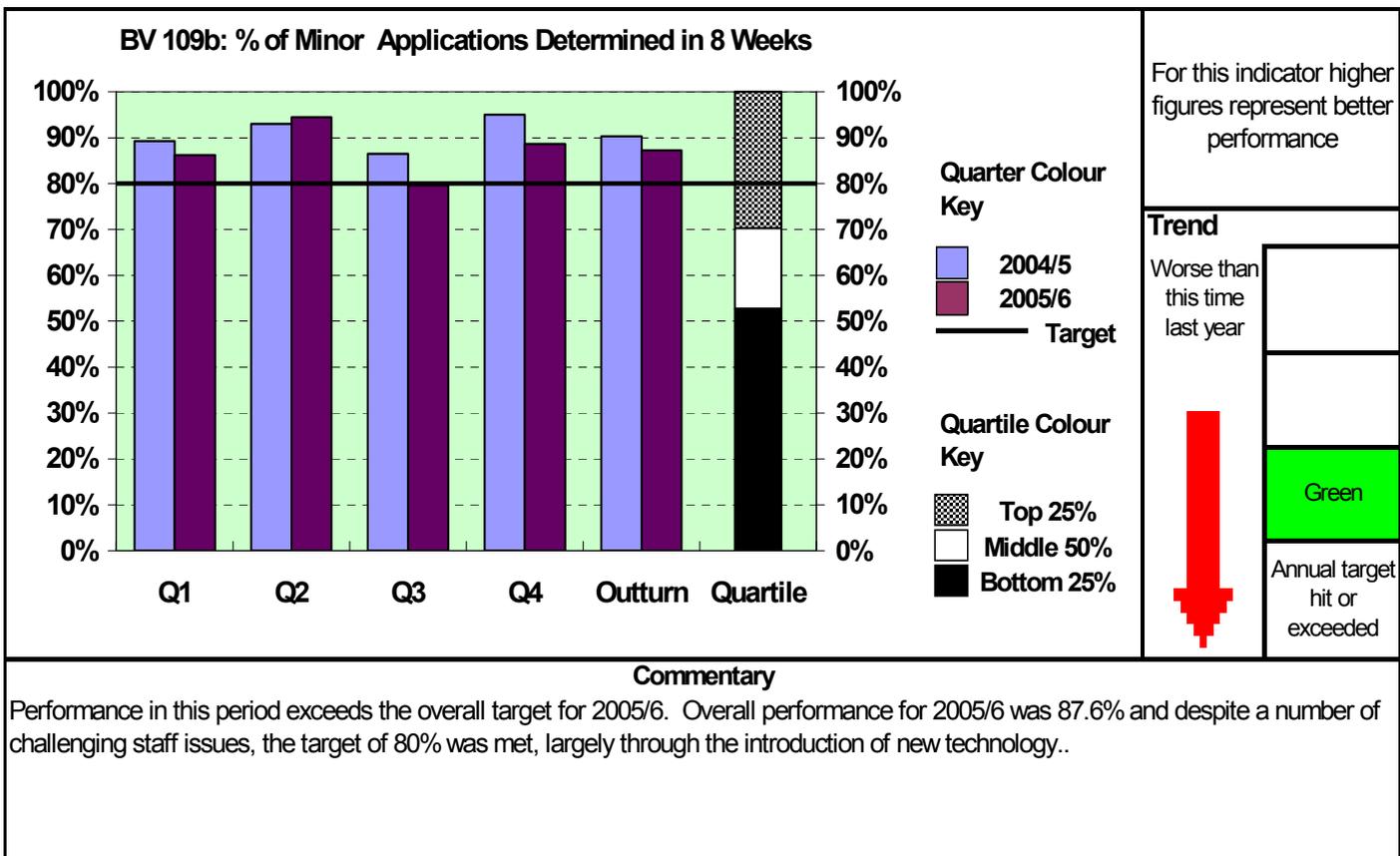
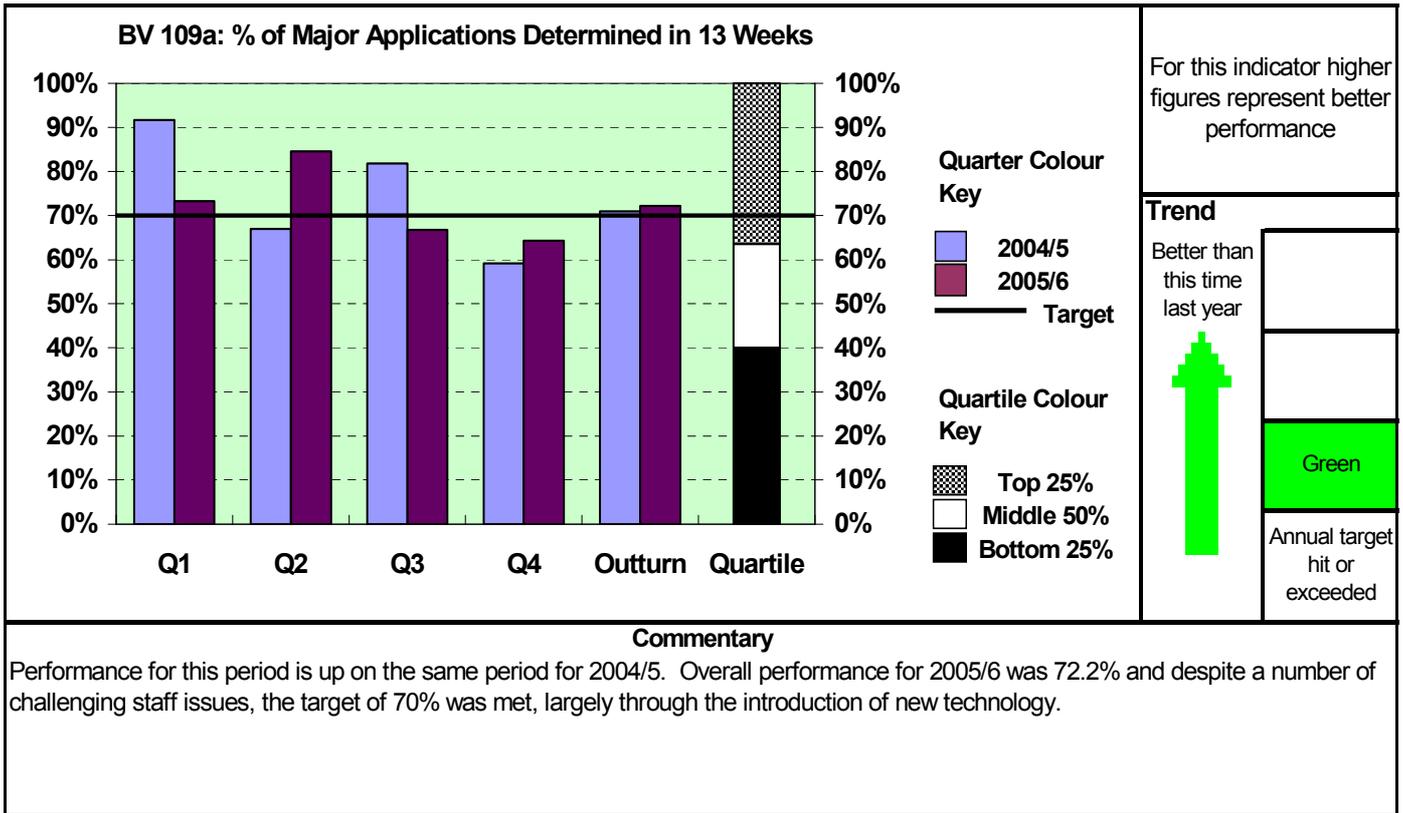
**APPENDIX ONE – PROGRESS AGAINST KEY OBJECTIVES/ MILESTONES
Planning & Environmental Health**

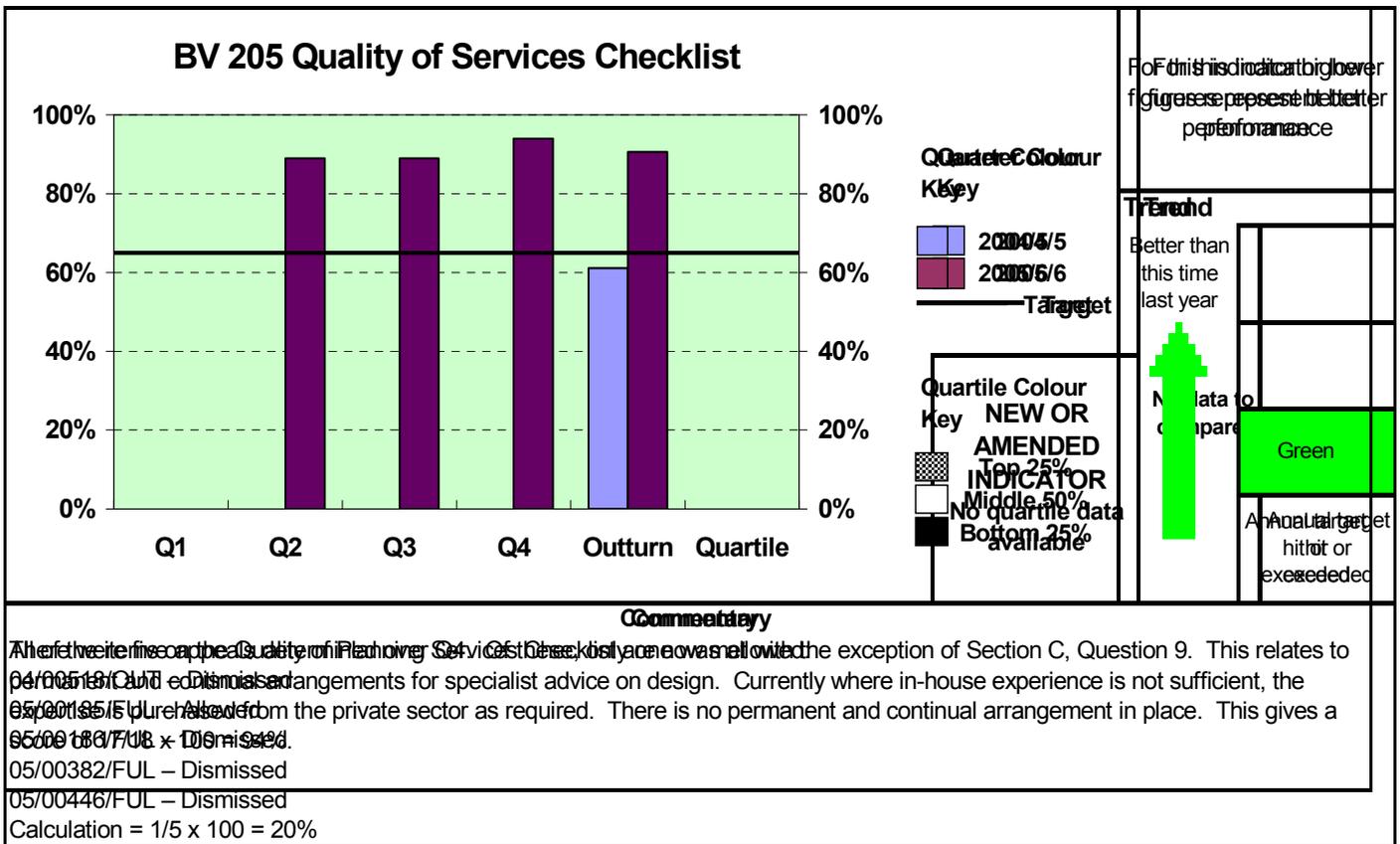
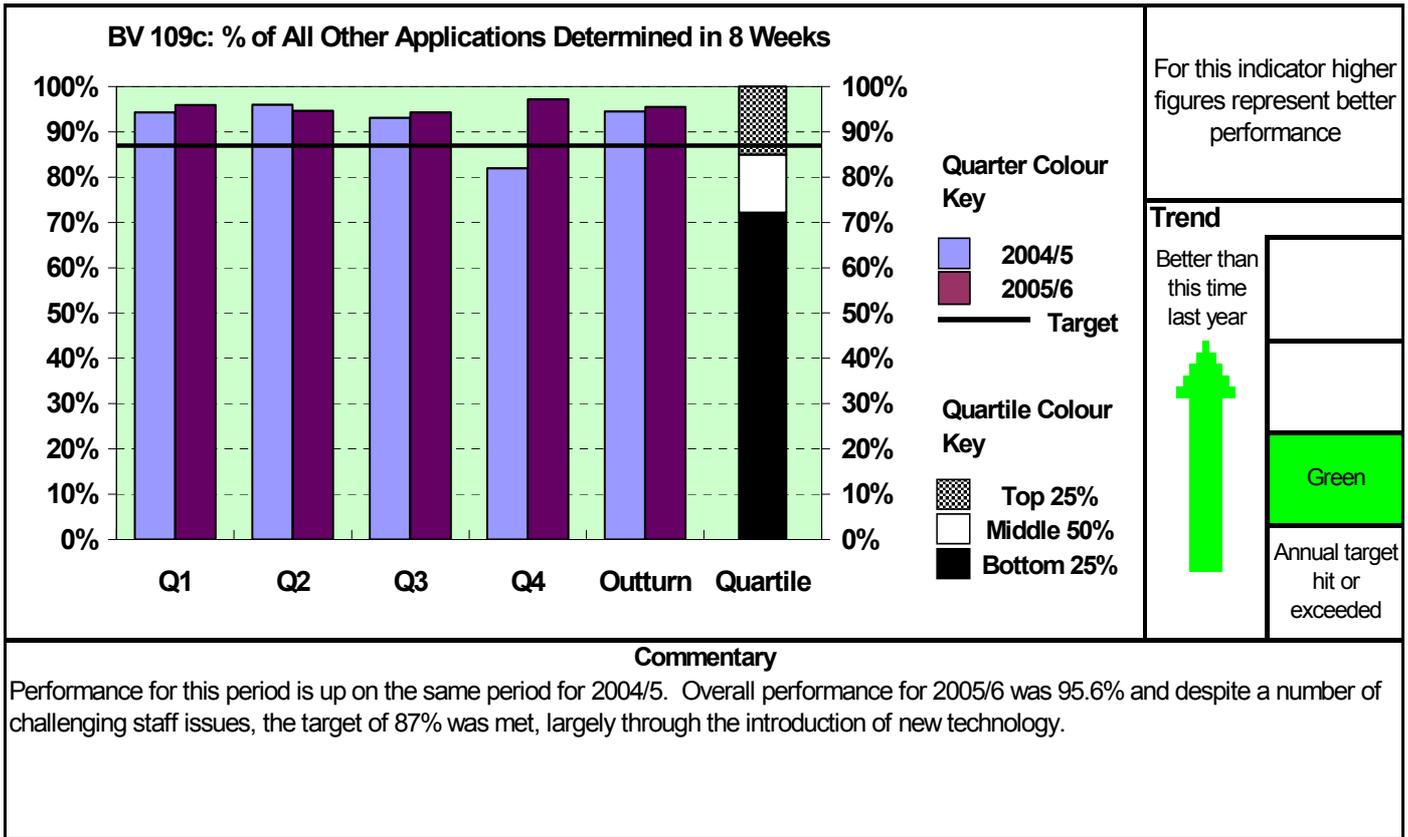
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2005/06 Key Milestone	Progress	Commentary
EH05	Undertake annual review and assessment of air quality in line with requirements laid out in the national guidance and report findings to DEFRA	Annual review complete and returns made to DEFRA by 31 st May 2005.		Annual Review completed and review and assessment for 2005-2006 on target for submission 30 th April 2006.
EH06	Continue to implement the Strategy for Inspection of Contaminated Land and finalise the characterisation of the district and the assessments for prioritising the land packages identified as potentially contaminated	Continuation of programme of detailed inspection and quantitative risk assessment underway. Projects of remediation being drafted.		Good progress has been made in the on-going implementation of the Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy. Key work has been completed in the areas of site identification and prioritisation and steady progress has been made with the investigation and assessment of major sites.

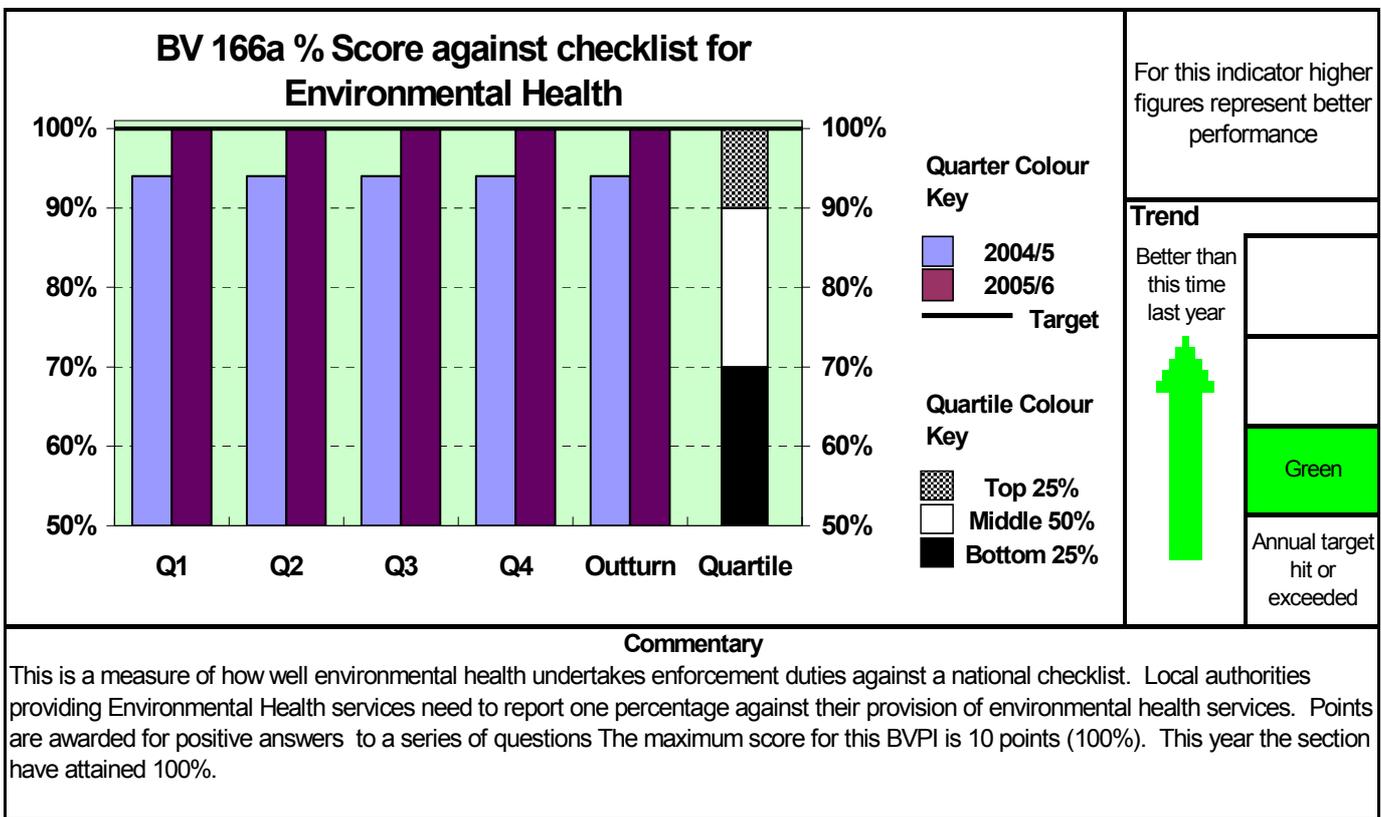
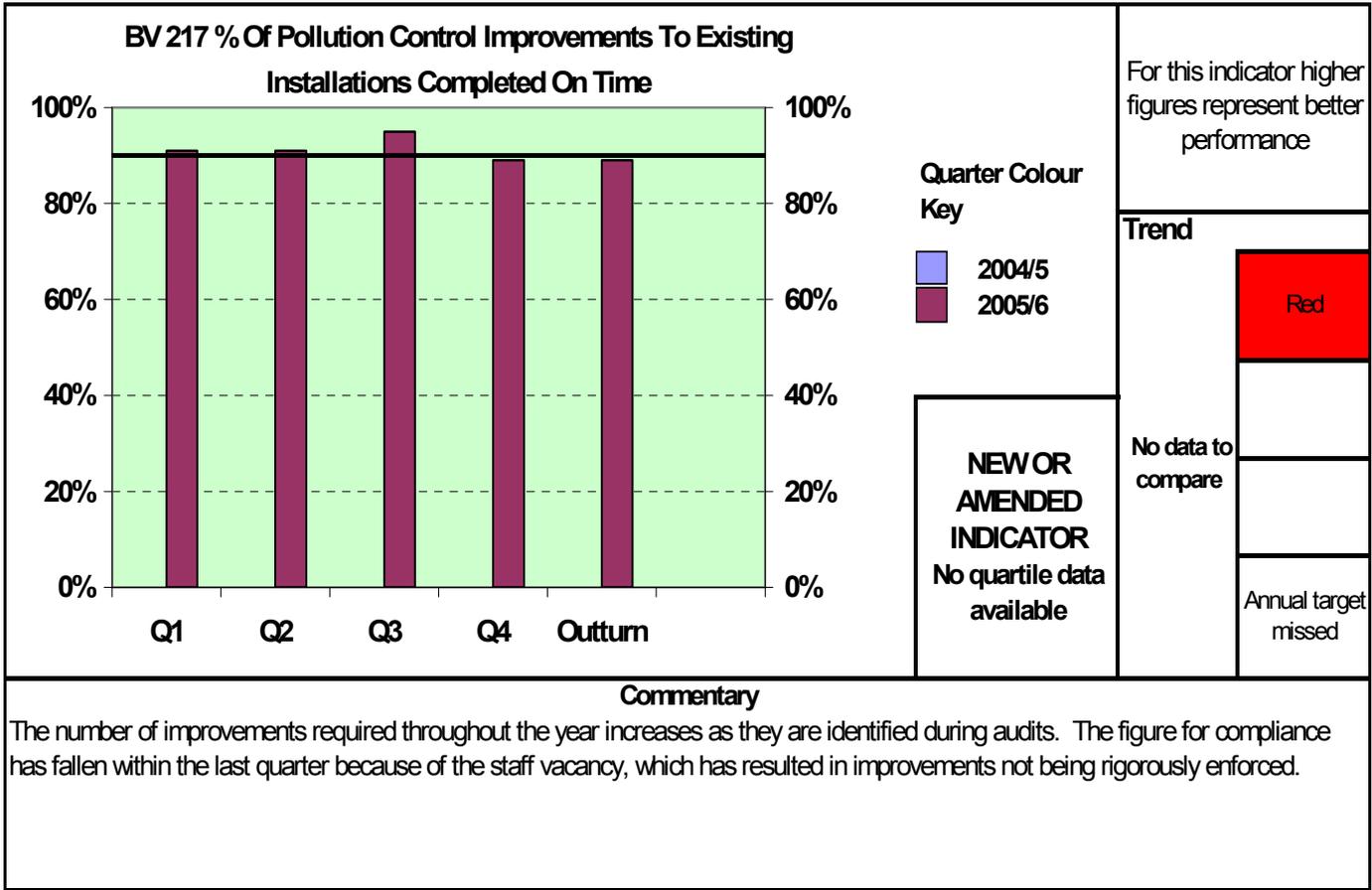
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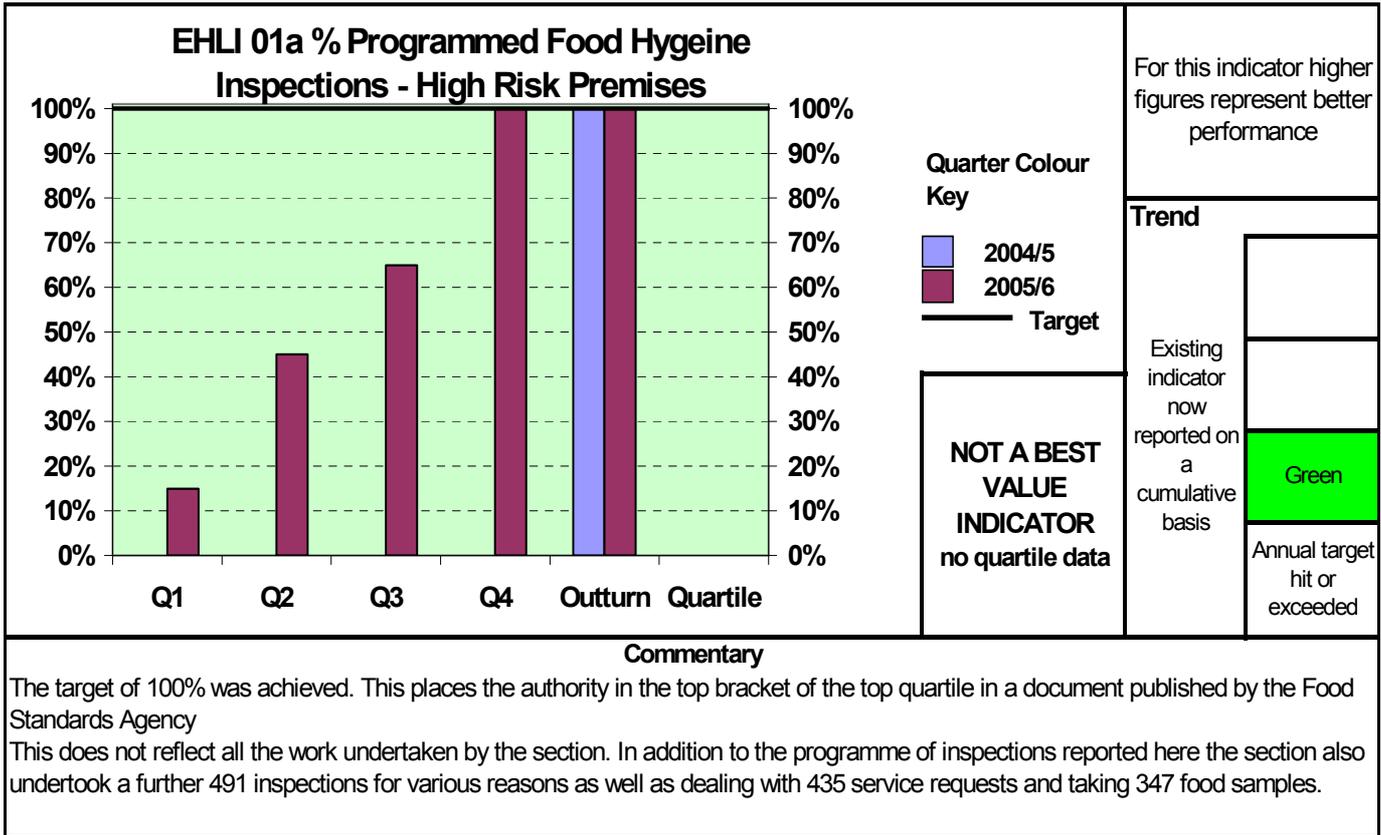
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2005/06 Key Milestone	Progress	Commentary
Planning				
PL04	Local Development Framework – Annual Monitoring Report.	Completed by March 2006.		Completed and submitted to GONW. Confirmed received by GONW 23 rd December 2005. Next AMR due for submission December 2006.
PL06	Annual Housing & Employment monitoring reports (new house building including “Brownfield” sites).	Completed by September 2005.		Complete. Baseline data reports for housing and employment land produced in August 2005. The next set of reports will be issued in August 2006.
Environmental Health				
EH03	To work towards application for the Charter Mark award by the Food and Health and Safety Unit with a target for application.	Preliminary application. By end of April 2006.		Draft application for end April.
EH04	To work towards the Roy Castle Clean Air Awards for businesses in Halton.	Partnership with the PCT to secure funding for co-ordinator. By end of May 2006.		In place.

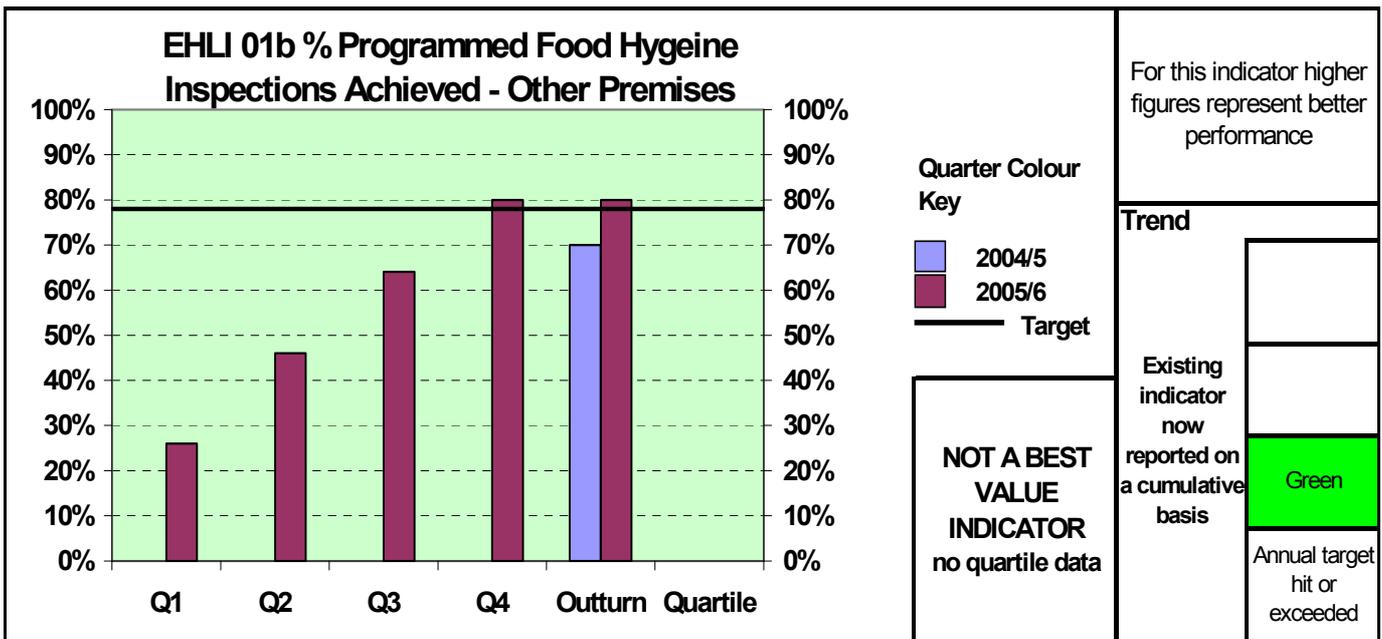
**APPENDIX TWO – PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER OBJECTIVES/ MILESTONES
Planning & Environmental Health**





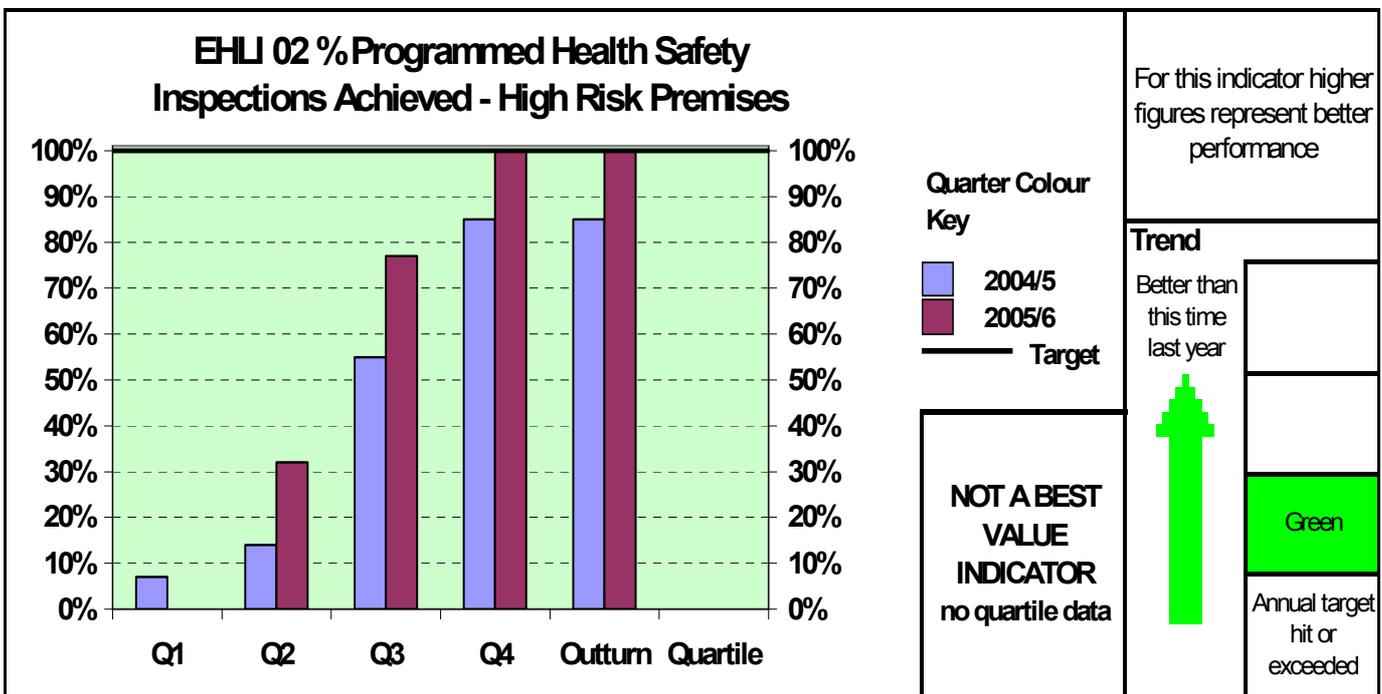






Commentary

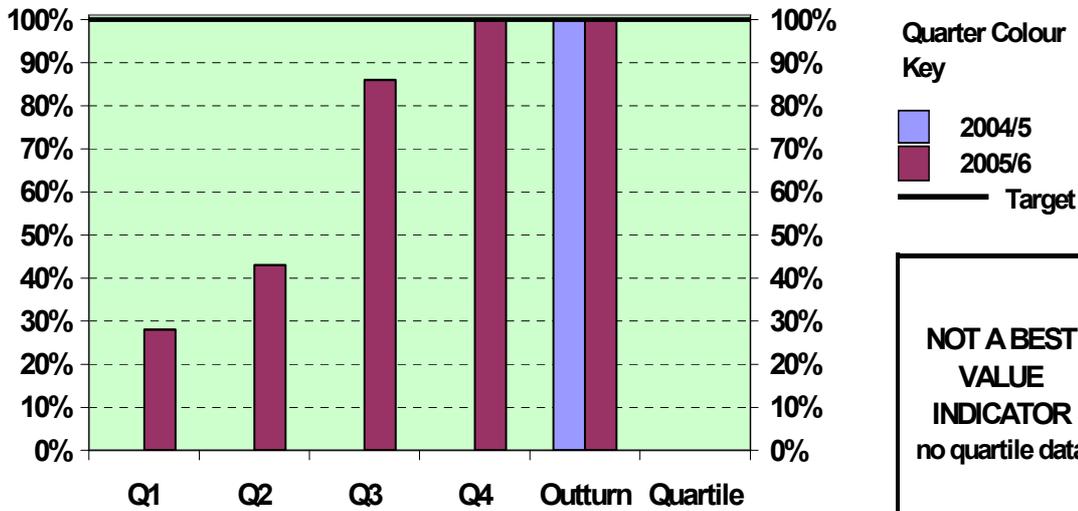
This is an annual local target, which is derived from a risk assessment of premises to produce a work programme of monthly inspections or audits. These vary from month to month and the quarterly percentage figures are cumulative and it is only at year-end that the final performance is reported. This programme forms part of the food safety enforcement plan required by the food standards agency. This is the core activity of the food hygiene inspections service which also includes handling complaints about food content from the public, project work often initiated by the Food Standards Agency and dealing with national food alerts.



Commentary

The target has been achieved. This does not fully reflect all the work undertaken by the section. In addition to the programme of inspections reported here the section also undertook a further 205 inspections for various reasons as well as dealing with 100 service requests, investigating 117 accidents at work including a fatality which resulted in a time consuming investigation culminating in a report for the coroner. The section also carried out 67 project related inspections and in the year 60 formal notices were served including 32 prohibition notices.

EHLI 03a % Of Due Food Standards Inspections Carried Out in High Risk Premises



For this indicator higher figures represent better performance

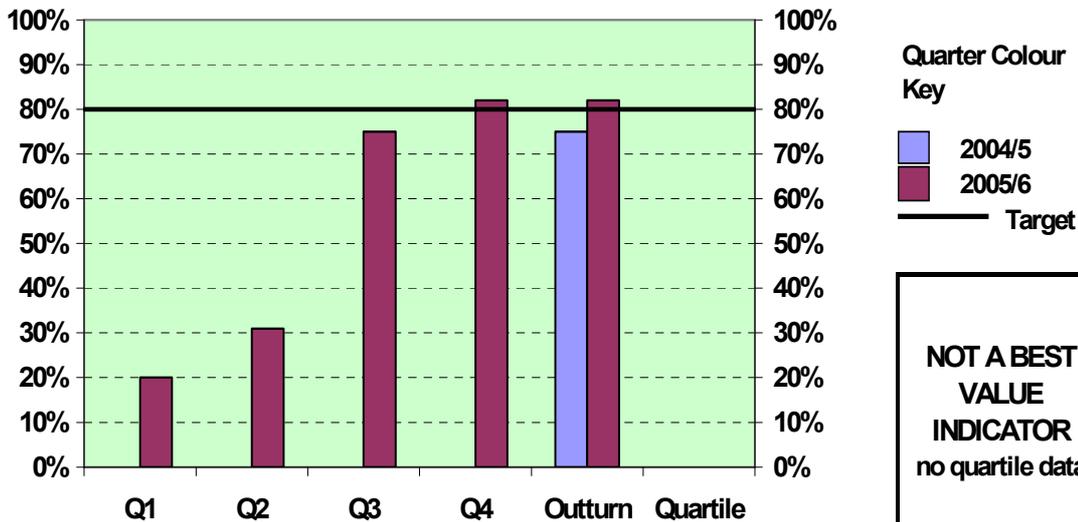
Trend	
New indicator no data to compare	Green
	Annual target hit or exceeded

NOT A BEST VALUE INDICATOR
no quartile data

Commentary

This is an annual local target, which is derived from a risk assessment of premises to produce a work programme of monthly inspections or audits. These vary from month to month and the quarterly percentage figures are cumulative and it is only at year-end that the final performance is reported. This programme forms part of the food safety enforcement plan required by the food standards agency. This the core activity of the food hygiene inspections service which also includes handling complaints about food content from the public, project work often initiated by the Food Standards Agency and dealing with national food alerts

EHLI 03b % Of Due Food Standards Inspections Carried Out in Medium Risk Premises



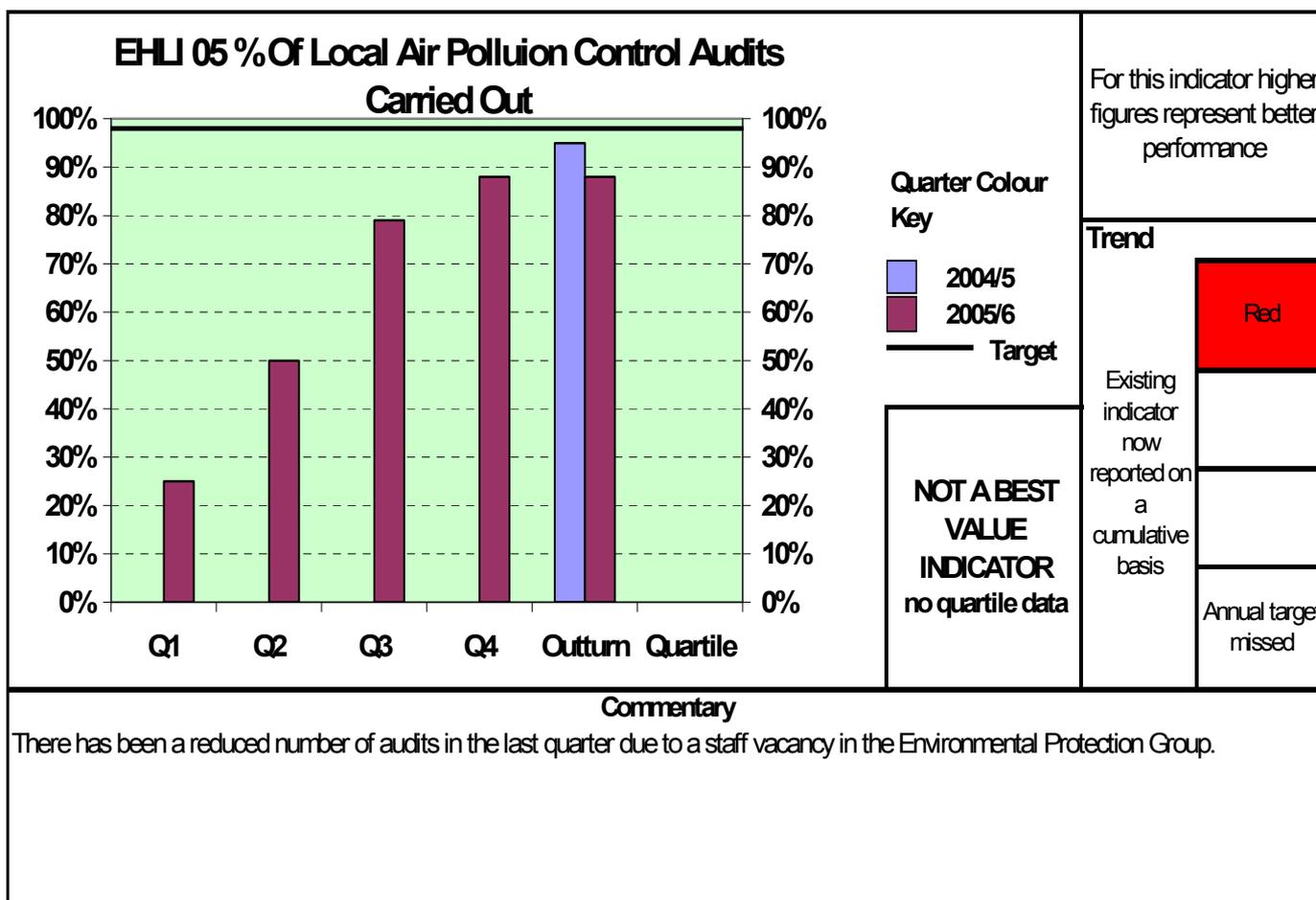
For this indicator higher figures represent better performance

Trend	
New indicator no data to compare	Green
	Annual target hit or exceeded

NOT A BEST VALUE INDICATOR
no quartile data

Commentary

This is an annual local target, which is derived from a risk assessment of premises to produce a work programme of monthly inspections or audits. These vary from month to month and the quarterly percentage figures are cumulative and it is only at year-end that the final performance is reported. This programme forms part of the food safety enforcement plan required by the food standards agency. This the core activity of the food hygiene inspections service which also includes handling complaints about food content from the public, project work often initiated by the Food Standards Agency and dealing with national food alerts



BVPI 216a and BVPI 216b (reported annually)

216a Number of sites of potential concern – 283

216b % Of sites with information available to decide if remediation is necessary - 8

Two new environmental Best Value performance indicators, came into effect on 1 April 2005. These are “Identifying contaminated land” – BV216A; and “Information on contaminated land” - BV216B.

The basic idea is simple. BV216A is a total of “sites of potential concern”, which is made up of two types, (a) and (b). Sites turn from type (a) to type (b) as progress is made each year in getting enough information to decide if a site needs remediation. Type (b) – is compared to the total, which provides the percentage required under BV 216B. So, a local authority decides how many “sites of potential concern” it has, at the start of the year. This term is defined, and in essence means sites where remediation may be needed. Type a is where sufficient detailed information is not yet available to decide whether or not remediation is needed, and type b is where there is sufficient detailed information to make this decision.

As 2005-6 is the first year of reporting the new PI this is the year when baseline data is collected .

The figures are intended to be a snapshot of the situation at the year end tracking progress over the year, BV 216a is supposed to be the number of sites of concern at the start of the year (1 April 2005), however the return is based on the figures as of

31 March 2006, as the systems were not yet in place (this issue has been acknowledged in guidance issued by ODPM).

The figures for the sites of potential concern have been identified from the Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy work and from sites brought through the Planning process. It should be noted that further sites of concern will be identified as there is additional refinement of the Inspection Strategy data to be undertaken which will enable it to be reported within the BVPI figures.

The number of sites where sufficiently detailed information has been gathered has been collated entirely from monitoring sites progressing through the planning regime after specific conditions requiring contamination assessments has been applied. A number of sites are currently progressing through the Part IIA regime but none have yet reached the stage where a definitive decision on the need for remediation can be made.

Ref	Indicator	Actual 04/05	Target 05/06	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
Planning						
BVPI 200	Plan-Making, a) development plan	No	Yes	Yes		a) On target.
	b) milestones	Yes	Yes	Yes		b) Some slippage on SPD's, overall scheme on target.
	c) monitoring report (new 2005/06)	N/A	Yes	Yes		c) Complete.
BVPI 106	% of new homes built on previously developed land	61%	40%	N/A		Figure is derived annually in April. Quarterly monitor will be in place from year 06/07. No suggestion at this point that target will be missed.
BVPI 219	Preserving the special character of conservation areas, a) The number of conservation areas b) Character appraisals - % of conservation areas with an up-to-date character appraisal c) Management proposals - % of conservation areas with published management proposals	New	a) N/a b) N/a c) N/a	10 0 0		A programme for targets and approach to appraisals is being developed. Of the 10 appraisals required, we will achieve two per year over a five year period.

**APPENDIX FOUR – PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Planning & Environmental Health**

Ref	Indicator	Actual 04/05	Target 05/06	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
LI 01	Maintaining new dwelling building rate in accordance with Regional Policy Guidance.	513	330	N/A		Now Regional Spatial Strategy figure is derived annually in April. Quarterly monitor will be in place from year 06/07. No suggestion at this point that target will be missed.
LI 02	Number of new homes built on previously developed land	311	135	N/A		Figure is derived annually in April. Quarterly monitor will be in place from year 06/07. No suggestion at this point that target will be missed.
LI 03	Average density of new housing developments approved (dwellings per hectare).	82	32	N/A		Figure is derived annually in April. Quarterly monitor will be in place from year 06/07. No suggestion at this point that target will be missed.
LI 04	No. of advertised departures from Statutory Plan approved by the Authority as a % of total decisions made.	0%	0.5%	0.4%		The Authority approved one departure during this period. This was application No. 05/00903/FUL approved 31 st January 2006. This involved an application for C2 use on a site allocated for B1, B2 and B8. 255 decisions were made.
LI 05	No's of private building regulation applications as a % of all applications.	7%	4.0%	9%		25 applications undertaken by NHBC out of 271 applications for the period.
Environmental Health						
LI 4	Respond to environmental protection complaints within three working days.	98%	98%	96%		The figure reported falls slightly below the target because of a staff vacancy in the group.

**APPENDIX FOUR – PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Planning & Environmental Health**

Application of Traffic Light Symbols

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<u>Green</u>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>objective</u> <u>has been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	Indicates that the annual 05/06 target <u>has been achieved</u> or exceeded.
<u>Red</u>	 <p>Indicates that that the <u>objective</u> <u>has not been achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	Indicates that the annual 05/06 target <u>has not been achieved</u> .