

**AGENDA
NO:**

**REPORT TO
EXECUTIVE
SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

16th OCTOBER 2007.

**REPORT OF
CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT
TEAM**

**Corporate and Social Inclusion: Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor
Laing**

**PERFORMANCE REPORT – Q1, 2007/8
Quarter Ended April – June 2007**

SUMMARY

This report outlines the Council's performance for the period Quarter 1 – April – June 2007, providing details of performance against targets and improvement trends. This report includes the linkages between finance, performance and corresponding risks. This report includes performance against Corporate Basket of key performance indicators, Gershon Efficiency Savings, complaints and commendations, research and consultation, sharing of good practice, undertaken during Quarter 1.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the report is noted.
2. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

To ensure Executive Scrutiny are aware of the council's performance against key measures at the end of 2006/07.

3. Members Interests

Members (including co-opted members with voting rights) should consider whether they have a personal interest in the item as

defined in the Council's code of conduct (paragraph 8) and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with paragraph 9 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest in the item, he/she must then consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest (paragraph 10 of the code of conduct).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting is being held, whilst the matter is being considered; not exercise executive functions in relation to the matter and not seek improperly to influence the decision about the matter (paragraph 12 of the Code).

Further to the above, it should be noted that any Member attending a meeting of Cabinet, Select Committee etc.; whether or not they are a member of the Cabinet or Select Committee concerned, must declare any personal interest which they have in the business being considered at the meeting, and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room during consideration of the relevant item.

AGENDA ITEM:

**REPORT TO EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY
16TH OCTOBER 2007**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**Corporate and Social Inclusion: Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor
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**PERFORMANCE FINANCE AND RISK REPORT – Q1, 2007/8
Quarter Ended April – June 2007**

SUMMARY

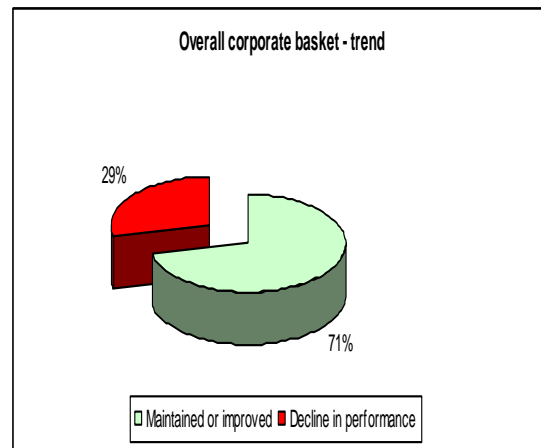
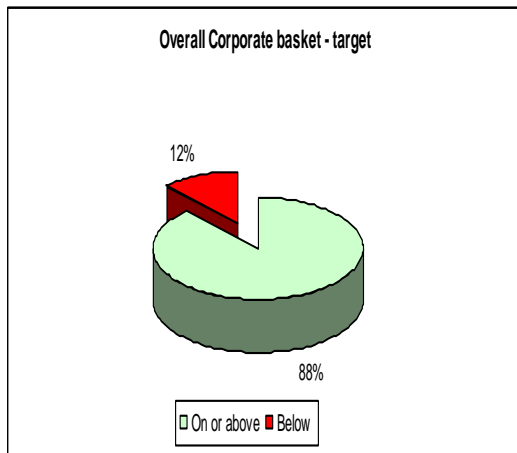
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RECOMMENDATION

That the report is noted.

OVERALL CORPORATE BASKET POSITION

1. The Corporate Basket for 2007/08 holds 95 of the council's key measures including Best Value Performance indicators, Performance Assessment Framework measures (PAF) and local indicators. Performance against 50 of these indicators is due to be reported at Quarter 1. The results show good progress to the start of the year. Of the 50 reported at Quarter 1, targets are predicted to be achieved for 88% of the measures with 71% showing an improvement trend from the same period last year.
2. The charts below show the Council's performance against the targets set for 2007/08 and the improvement trend from Quarter 1 2006/07 to Quarter 1 2007/08.



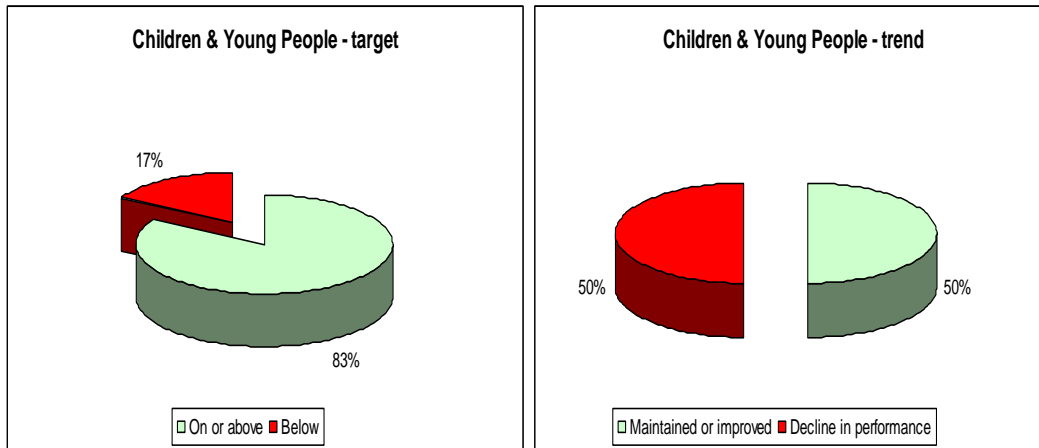
3. Full details of each performance measure in the basket are available at www.stockton.gov.uk/your_council/performance/qtrperfmmonitor.

PROGRESS BY THEME

4. Key priorities for our community are detailed within the 5 themes of the Community Strategy. The Council Plan has an additional theme for organisational development, named Corporate Health. This report identifies performance, financial and risk related issues against each of the Community Strategy themes of:
- Children and young People
 - Healthier communities and Adults
 - Safer Communities
 - Liveability
 - Economic Regeneration and Transport.

Children and Young People

5. Good progress has been made towards meeting the targets of the Corporate Basket within the Children and Young People’s theme. Within the Corporate Basket there are 28 indicators which relate to the Children and Young People Theme, 6 of which are reported at Quarter 1 (this is due to a more focused approach to reporting frequency within the revised corporate basket, particularly for school year related indicators). Of the 6 reported 5 (83%) are predicted to achieve the target set and 3 (50%) show a maintained or improved trend from the same Quarter last year. The low numbers of indicators reported in this quarter mean that the overall picture for the quarter may not be representative of later quarters.



Achievements

6. Of particular note in terms of achievement are:

- The Youth Offending Service has sustained its top Level 5 rating.
- Based on provisional results for 2007, good progress has been made in pupil achievement, particularly at the Key Stage 4 Level 2 threshold (5+ A*-C GCSEs or equivalent), with a significant narrowing of the gap between local and national results.
- Key projects are progressing well in line with project timescales for example the Integration of Children's Services at a locality level, and the Complex Needs Review findings agreed by the Children's Trust Board

Emerging Issues

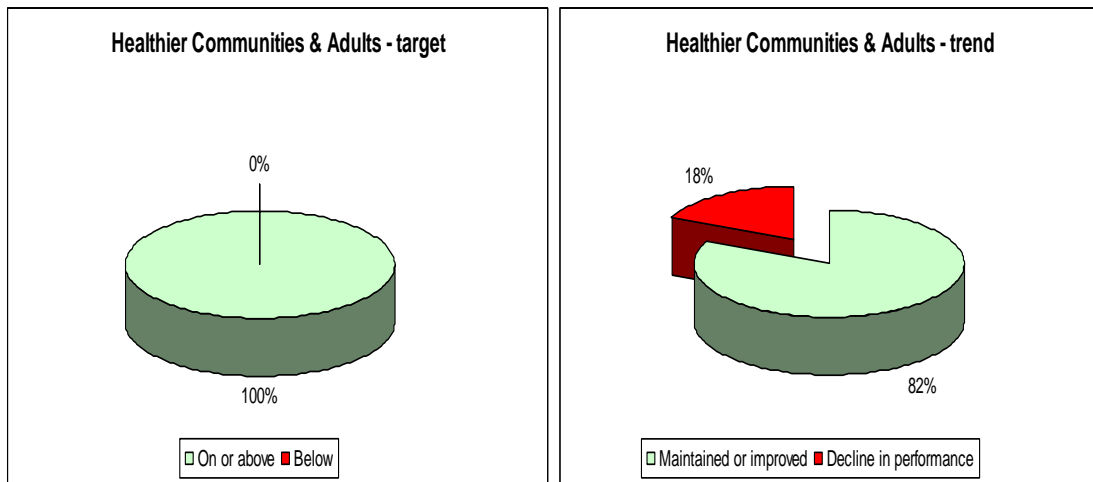
7. Emerging issues to note are:

- The performance indicator which measures the stability of the placements of children in care has been set an ambitious target of 70%, in line with the national PSA target, but is unlikely to be achieved. However, the current projection for the year end outturn is anticipated to be an improvement on 2006/07.
- There are resource pressures arising from the increased use of independent fostering placements for young people with complex needs, although these are being met from within budget at the present time as a result of the budget adjustments made for 2007/08 through the Medium Term Financial Planning (MTFP) process.

Healthier Communities and Adults

8. Excellent progress against the corporate basket for the Healthier Communities and Adults Theme. Within the Corporate Basket there are 18 indicators which relate to the Healthier Communities and Adults Theme, 12 of which are reported at Quarter 1. Of the 12 reported 100% predict to

achieve the target set and 82% also show a maintained or improved trend from the same Quarter last year.



Achievements

9. Of particular note in terms of achievement are:

- Performance has continued to remain in the top band for the number of older people helped to live at home.
- Performance in the timeliness of assessments and provision of care packages, (high priority areas for improvement) are higher than the same period last year putting us on track to achieve targets.
- The performance measure for older people aged 65+ admitted to supported permanent residential / nursing care indicates we are on track to improve in line with, or beyond, the target set.
- Early indications show that the Stockton Riverside Event was particularly successful with high levels of participation and satisfaction.
- The number of visits to and usage of museums has increased in Quarter 1 due to improved visitor numbers to Preston Hall and attendance at Community Outreach presentations. Training has been delivered and a best practice toolkit has been completed in relation to Mental Capacity Act due to come into force in October 2007.
- Consultation is complete on the draft Older People strategy which will be ready for final approval in the autumn.

Emerging issues

10. Emerging issues for Healthier Communities and Adults include:

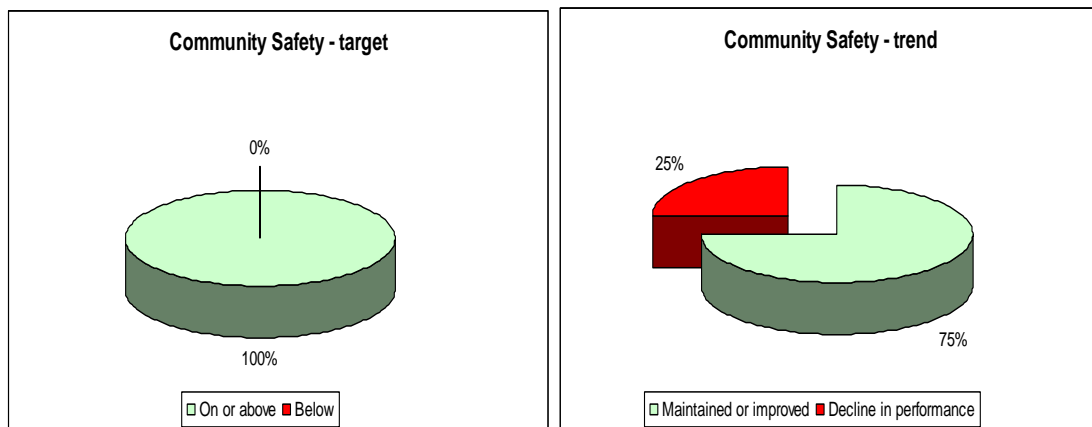
- Data on Adults with Mental Health problems helped to live at home indicates that the Quarter 1 performance is lower than at the same period last year. A plan of work has been agreed through the Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Trust Performance Governance Group to better

harmonise client recording systems; as a result it is expected that future activity levels will be in line with the predicted target for the year.

- There are resource implications associated with the increasing focus on supporting independent living for older people e.g. on the one hand, increasing costs arising from more direct payments and more complex home care packages; on the other hand a levelling off of resources for residential care. These changes have been planned for through the MTFP process and at the Q1 stage are being managed within budget.

Safer Communities

11. Excellent progress has been made against the corporate basket for the Safer Communities Theme. Within the Corporate Basket there are 10 indicators which relate to the Safer Communities Theme, 4 of which are reported at Quarter 1. Of the 4 reported 100% predict to achieve the target set and 75% also show a maintained or improved trend from the same Quarter last year.



Achievements

12. Of particular note in terms of achievement are:

- Strong performance levels are being achieved for domestic burglaries, robberies and vehicle crimes, all of which are likely to achieve the annual target set.
- Domestic burglaries have seen a reduction from 2.9 per 1,000 households in Quarter 1 2006/07 to 2.8 per 1000 households in 2007/08. The year end prediction of 11.2 is well below the year end target of 16.
- Current year end prediction estimates 0.8 robberies per year per 1000 population falling from a target of 1.1
- Vehicle Crimes has seen a reduction from Quarter 1, 2.6 per 1000 population in 2006/07 to 1.6 per 1000 population in 2007/08

- 121 assisted arrests arising from CCTV were achieved in Quarter 1, well ahead of the target to achieve 181 assisted arrests by March 2008.

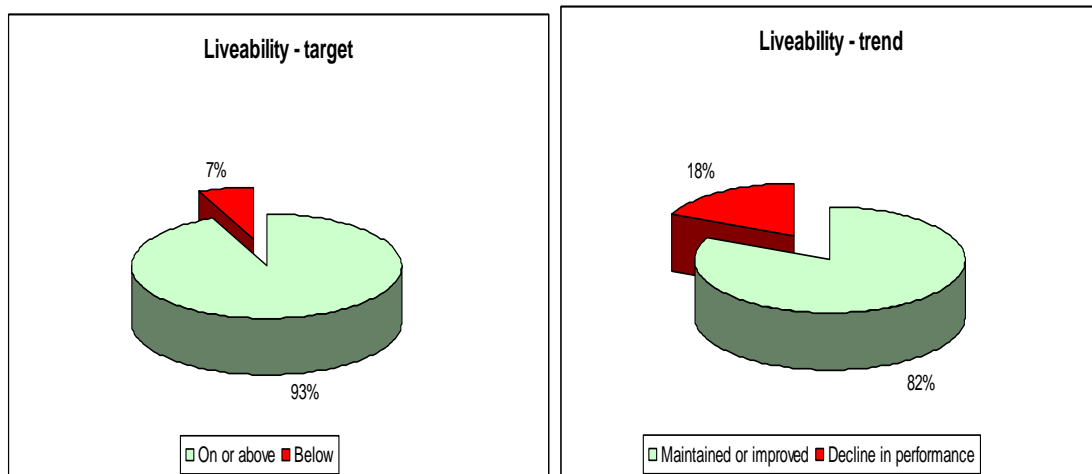
Emerging issues

13. The main emerging issues for the Safer Communities theme is:

- Violent crimes per 1,000 population have increased from 4.94 in Quarter 1 of 2006/07 to 5.49 in Quarter 1 in 2007/08. This is slightly above the quarterly level required to achieve the annual target of 18.9, but it is currently projected that this annual target will still be achieved. Close monitoring of the levels of violent crimes is ongoing to determine whether this increase is a temporary issue or mirroring a national increase in these crimes.
- Concerns exist around the uncertainty of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding beyond March 2008. Details will be known following the Comprehensive Spending Review in October however performance in a number of areas such as enforcement and recycling could be affected if funding is reduced.

Liveability

14. Excellent progress has been made against the measures in the corporate basket for the Liveability Theme. There are 22 indicators within the Corporate Basket which relate to the Liveability Theme, 15 of which are reported at Quarter 1. Of the 15 reported 93% predict to achieve the target set and 82% also show a maintained or improved trend from the same Quarter last year.



Achievements

15. Of particular note in terms of achievement are:

- Strong performance levels are being achieved in Housing and Council Tax Benefits where the average time taken to process a new claim is down to 24.1 calendar day, the best quarterly result ever reported in Stockton. This is a great improvement from 60 days reported in 2005/06.
- The percentage of cases where the calculation of the benefit is found to be correct has also shown improvements with a first quarter result of 97.6 % of claims being accurately completed. This is a significant improvement on previous years.
- The average time taken to repair a street light is on schedule to achieve a 2.5 day target and represents a significant reduction of the 4+ days reported in 2005/06.
- The May 2007 elections were successfully delivered with a review undertaken and improved practices and procedures adopted for future elections.
- The Green Flag standard has been awarded in four of our parks, with a fifth Green Flag award on schedule to be achieved by March 2009.

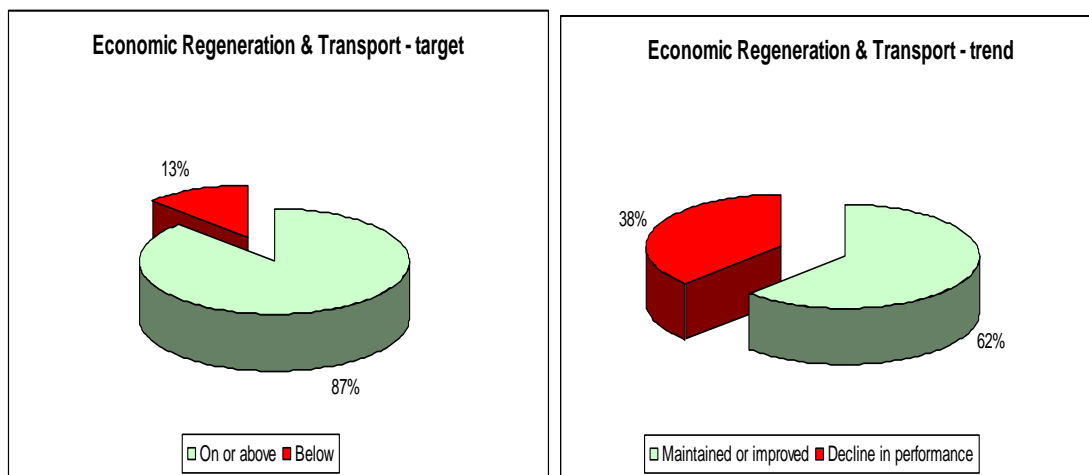
Emerging issues

16. Emerging issues within the Liveability Theme are:

- Current targets are not being met for homeless families. The average length of stay of homeless families in hostel accommodation is currently an average of 13 weeks against a target of 8. However the number of families involved is low (only four families during Q1). It should be noted that no families are housed in bed and breakfast accommodation.
- An emerging pressure has arisen in Housing Benefits amounting to £200,000 in 2008/09 and £500,000 by 2010/11. This is due to the Department of Works and Pensions decision to cut the Administration Grant by 5% year on year. This will have an effect on staffing levels and subsequently performance levels within the service.

Economic Regeneration and Transport

18. Excellent progress has been made against the measures contributing to the Economic Regeneration and Transport theme. Within the Corporate Basket there are 8 indicators which relate to the Economic Regeneration and Transport Theme, all of which are reported at Quarter 1. Of the 8 reported 87% predict to achieve the target set and 62% also show a maintained or improved trend from the same Quarter last year.



Achievements

19. Of particular note in terms of achievements are:

- The numbers slightly injured in road traffic collisions shows an improvement in quarter 1 this year compared to the same quarter last year. A number of measures and schemes are in place and planned for 2007/8, to reduce all categories of road casualties.
- The Planning Service has expanded in staff numbers to cope with the increase in the number of planning applications the authority has received. The increased staff costs have been funded by an increase in the amounts received in fees and also the increased Planning Delivery Grant. The Planning Delivery Grant is linked to the levels of performance, the higher the performance the increase the greater the grant received. As a result of improved working methods, monitoring and performance management, all 3 planning indicators on the determination of applications within a timescale are meeting targets.
- Land charges best value performance indicator for completion of local land charges searches has been maintained at 100%.
- Regeneration of Hardwick, Parkfield and Mandale continues to make good progress, with negotiations with homeowners and residents commenced with a view to starting the decant process.

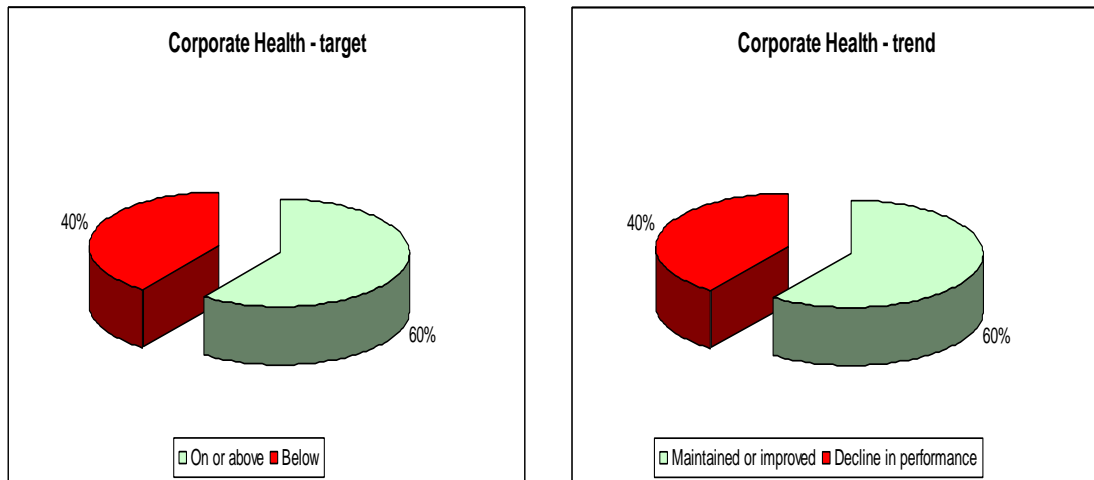
Emerging Issues

20. There are no emerging issues within the Economic Regeneration and Transport theme to report in Quarter 1.

Corporate Health

21. Progress is being made against the measures within the Corporate Basket for the Corporate Health Theme. Within the Corporate Basket there are 9 indicators which relate to the Corporate Health Theme, 5 of which are reported at Quarter 1. Of the 5 reported 60% predict to achieve the target

set and 60% show a maintained or improved trend from the same Quarter last year.



Achievements

22. Of particular note in terms of achievements are:

- Customer First Stage 2 has been launched with additional progress being made with the recruitment of the Customer Services Management in place and recruitment for the contact centre underway.
- A Gateway Review of the Stockton and Darlington Partnership has been undertaken with a progress report to cabinet planned for October 2007.
- Job Evaluation Phase 2 has been completed and pay modelling started. Consultation is underway with the Unions regarding a Single Status Agreement.
- The revised appraisal scheme linked to the competency framework has been rolled out.
- The ICT Strategy is due to be presented to Cabinet in September 2007.
- Preparation is well underway for the Corporate Assessment and JAR with good progress made on the completion of the Self Assessments and evidence gathering
- Equality Impact Assessment Training has been provided to staff across the Council with the undertaking of Equality Impact Assessments being rolled out across all services areas.
- Positive progress has been made in adopting the new code of conduct for local authority members and providing advice, guidance and training regarding the code.
- Significant progress has been made on the implementation of the Revised Member Learning and Development Strategy. External funding from the North East Improvement and Development Agency which has many member development programmes.
- The first Annual Scrutiny Report was produced in May, which details the positive achievements delivered through scrutiny in 2006/07. ICT improvements have further strengthened support for Scrutiny members.

- Joint working across the five Tees Valley Legal Teams is progressing well and strengthens our capacity to deliver.

Emerging Issues

23. Emerging Issues within the Corporate Health Theme are:

- Payment of invoices within 30 days. A target of 85% has been set with year end prediction looking only to achieve 82%. This is due to a number of problems including delays in implementing new software which will help reduce invoice numbers, staff absences in Payments and slow approval and goods receipting of invoices in service groups.
- For sickness absence we anticipate a year end outturn of 12.63 days per FTE against a target of 10.4 days. This is the first quarter's figures reported under the new absence reporting system. The new system is now capturing more sickness than the previous systems so we have seen a rise in the sickness levels to what we now believe is the true level. Although there is an increase in sickness levels, the element for short term sickness (absence up to 20 days) has decreased between Quarter 1 in 2006/07 to Quarter 1 in 2007/08 (excluding schools). Also the average time absent has decreased, demonstrating that the new procedures are certainly having an effect in this area.

Gershon Efficiency Savings

24. The authority is expected to make efficiency savings of 2.5% annually. There are 2 elements within the Gershon Efficiency Savings, financial efficiency gains and performance measures that are required to maintain or improve performance levels.
25. For 2007/08 the authority put forward an overall efficiency saving of 8,288,000. The current position after Quarter 1 is a projected efficiency saving of £8,279,000, which well exceeds our 2.5% annual requirement. However, these efficiency savings can only be claimed if performance measures show improved or maintained performance since the 2004/05 baseline position.

Financial Variances

26. Of the 13 categories detailed within the annual efficiency statement, three areas predict a slight shortfall in savings. The main category is the Children's Services where a shortfall of £35,000 is anticipated.

Performance Variances

27. Only one of the performance measures is a potential area for concern which is the number of council buildings suitable for and accessible to disabled people. This indicates a dip in performance from the 2004/05

baseline figure. This measure is being monitored closely and a programme of improvement work is underway throughout 2007/8 to bring more buildings up to the required standard.

28. Appendix 1 shows the detail.

LEARNING

Consultation Activity

29. Consultation activity during Quarter 1 was reduced in comparison to other Quarters due to the local elections.

30. Children were involved in a Children's Trust Board Event to inform the Children and Young People's Plan. Children were consulted on where and how the event took place and were asked to give their views on how life could be improved for young people in the areas where they live. A series of events across the Borough are planned, the first of which took place in July at Billingham Community Centre. The event was a success and the results along with feed back from the remaining events will inform future plans for children's services.

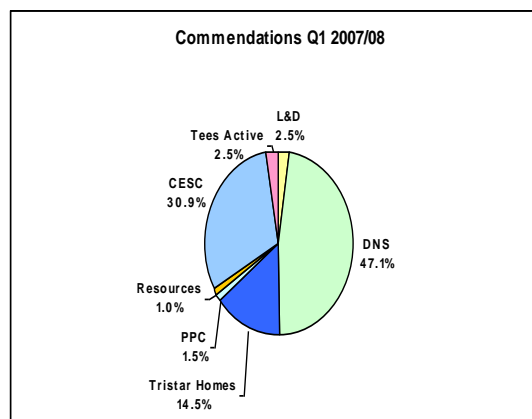
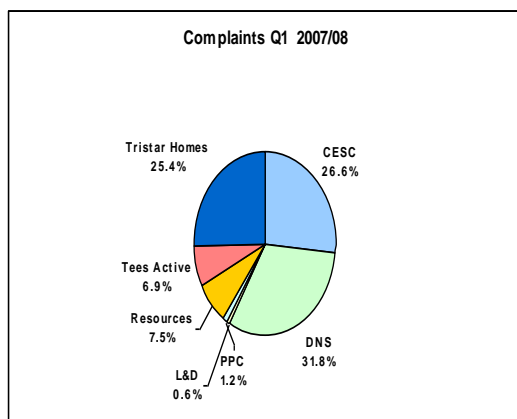
31. The Stockton Town Centre Manager led a stakeholder consultation involving partnership groups, retail boards, investors and agents to discuss a proposed 15 year Town Centre Action Plan. The findings from the event were reported to Cabinet on the 30th August 2007.

32. In June focus groups were held with members of the Adult Viewpoint panel to gather views on the provision of Adult Education weekend and specialist courses. The sessions were well attended with useful comments and opinions put forward, including support for more taster courses. These comments will be used to inform the Adult Education prospectus for the spring term.

Complaints and Commendations

Complaints

33. In total the Council received 173 complaints in quarter 1. This compares to 190 complaints received in the same period last year. The pie charts below provide a breakdown of both commendations and complaints received by service group.



34. Of the 173, 171 are stage 1/ 2 complaints and 151 were responded to within timescales. Delays in responses being sent are down to a number of factors such as complainants' delay, or failure of complainants to attend meetings to discuss their complaints, complainants changing their minds about a complaint, but failing to notify the authority. All service areas have made exceptional attempts to respond to complaints within timescales, but often due to the complexity of a complaint, this is not always possible.
35. Within Tristar Homes complaints are dealt with daily. A weekly analysis is undertaken by the customer services team. Any recurring issues or trends are forwarded to the relevant manager. Overall there has been a large decrease in complaints – 44 this quarter down from 71 in the previous quarter. All complaints were investigated according to the company's procedures, and managers made aware of issues raised.

Commendations

36. A total of 401 commendations were received in Quarter 1, with 81 for Children's and Adult's Social Care Services, in particular Adults' Services, where the number of commendations received this quarter has risen to 55 (in the whole of 2006/7 there were 108 commendations recorded for Adults' Services.) This increase appears to relate to the Intermediate Care Services within Adults' Services. The Customer Care team are currently seeking to identify reasons for this and will continue to monitor this area to see if further trends/ patterns arise.
37. Commendations in other service areas included: 75 regarding direct services, including street cleaning, refuse collection, recycling, horticultural services and highways; this compares to 506 in the same period last year, of which 193 were in relation to road safety team/ training event, 43 regarding community protection (in particular consumer advice and Trading Standards enforcement) and 581 for Tristar Homes, mainly 'thank you's' to individual members of staff.

38. Full details of complaints and commendations are attached in Appendix 2.

Examples of Good Practice

39. Areas of good practice are shared amongst service groups to encourage improved procedures and practices. Detailed below are some areas of good practices identified during Quarter 1.

- The use of Digi Pens has been piloted in the Learning Disability Service Team and has improved the effectiveness and efficiency of processes for recording information. This method of recording has is now being rolled out within the Occupational Therapy Team.
- Multi-agency work on the development of a Young Persons Homelessness Strategy has led to the authority being designated by CLG as a Centre of Excellence for the North East Region.
- Stockton's e-procurement strategy has delivered improved on line shopping facilities for the ordering of stationery products. This has delivered e-orders and e- invoices which save significant staff time.
- The Guide to Member Roles has been produced by Democratic Services. This has been identified by the North East Centre of Excellence as good practice and is being shared regionally.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

LEGAL

N/A

RISK ASSESSMENT

40. The Quarterly Monitoring Report of the Corporate Basket is categorised as low risk. Existing management systems and routine performance management arrangements are in place to control and reduce risk on performance.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

41. The performance data within this report is set out under each of the five priority improvement themes details In the Community Strategy and the Council Plan, demonstrating how progress is being made towards the achievement of each theme.

- Safer Communities
- Healthier Communities and Adults
- Economic Regeneration and Transport
- Children and Young People
- Liveability

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