

EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

AGENDA ITEM:

REPORT TO EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY

24th March 2009

REPORT OF CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

CABINET DECISION

Corporate Management and Finance: Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Laing

QUARTER 3 – PERFORMANCE REPORT OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2008

1. Summary

This report outlines the Council's service performance to 31 December 2008 highlighting achievements and areas for improvement.

2. Recommendations

1. That the overall report is noted.
2. Note performance at quarter 3

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision

This report highlights progress against our key Council performance measures and raises any related financial and risk issues.

4. 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 (**paragraphs 10 and 11 of the code of conduct**).

A Member with a prejudicial interest in any matter must withdraw from the room where the meeting considering the business is being held -

- in a case where the Member is attending a meeting (including a meeting of a select committee) but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under statutory right or otherwise, immediately after making representations, answering questions or giving evidence as the case may be;
- in any other case, whenever it becomes apparent that the business is being considered at the meeting;

And must 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 (unless the interest arises solely from the Member's membership of, or position of control or management on any other body to which the Member was appointed or nominated by the Council, or on any other body exercising functions of a public nature, when the interest only needs to be declared if and when the Member speaks on the matter), and if their interest is prejudicial, they must also leave the meeting room, subject to and in accordance with the provisions referred to above.

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PERFORMANCE POSITION AT 31TH DECEMBER 2008

4. In October 2006, the local government white paper, "strong and prosperous communities" highlighted some changes to the way that Government would assess and monitor the performance of councils and their partners. These changes were included in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and included the replacement of Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI) with a smaller National Indicator Set (NIS).
5. The national indicator set of 198 statutory measures includes a number of new measures, never before collected. Work continues with the Council and its partners to develop systems to collect this new data with work underway to test the data collection systems to ensure that they are robust. There are still some delays at a national level as government departments continue to struggle to develop clear and robust definitions for some measures resulting in some National Indicators not being introduced until 2009/10. The NIS also includes measures which are dependent on perception data collected through the Place Survey (adults) and Tell Us survey (children). The Place Survey

results are due for publication in February 2009. The Tell Us survey results have just been published in December 2008 with some national comparative data is still awaiting publication.

6. Developing and testing systems to collect the new nationally required data is a big task and one which will take most of 2008/09. This also means that during 2008/09 the reporting of performance to members will not be as complete as in previous years but has progressed further between the quarter 2 report and this report for quarter 3. This will continue to improve over the next quarter leading up to financial year end. Robust performance management systems remain in place across the council and the Corporate Management Team retains its focus on service performance as well as monitoring progress in implementing this new performance framework.

Overall Performance

7. The Corporate Basket currently monitors 218 measures to provide an overview of our progress towards achieving the themes and actions identified within the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council Plan. Of these measures 90 are due for reporting and are available at quarter 3.
8. As many of these measures are new for 2008/9, the first year of data collection is being used to determine a baseline from which future targets can be set. As a result of this for 20 of the measures collected at quarter 3 we have data but can not show progress against a target. For the remaining 70 measures, 49 are on track or have achieved the targets set with 21 currently indicating that the target will be missed. This equates to 70% of targets on track or already having achieved target. This is a similar trend to overall achievement of targets at the same period in previous years. This report utilises the information available at Quarter 3 to provide members with as clear a picture as possible of the council's performance against the Corporate Basket.
9. The report also includes information on consultation activity and complaints and commendations received within the last quarter. Details of the performance against the corporate basket measures, available for collection at Quarter 3 are available on the Council's website at: www.stockton.gov.uk/yourcouncil/performance/qtrperfmonitor. Where available the performance against target is shown with a green star indicating that performance is predicted to be on track to achieve or exceed the target by year end, an amber circle shows that performance will be less than the target set but is within an agreed tolerance of the target. A red square indicates that performance is predicted to miss the target set.

PROGRESS BY THEME

Economic Regeneration and Transport

10. Indications are that the Council is continuing to deliver on economic regeneration and transport issues but that as time progresses the national economic picture is impacting negatively on performance in some areas. For many of the National Indicators relating to Economic Regeneration, particularly employment data, there is a time lag on the availability of data to

meet the statutory definition, the latest data available being May 08. This data has been used in this report, however other measures relating to employment and benefits are available and show that Stockton is being affected as detailed below. It is expected that this position will be reflected in the national measures in due course. Work continues to minimise the impact of the current economic climate on the borough and ensuring that we are well positioned when an economic upturn begins.

11. There are 9 measures for which data is available at Quarter 3. Five are on target, three are set to miss the target and for one measure there is no target set. With the exception of employment related performance due to the national picture, indications are that we are continuing to perform well against this theme. There has been good progress in reducing casualties from road traffic accidents / collisions; repairing street lighting faults and making safe dangerous damage to roads and pavements within 24 hours.
12. The latest unofficial unemployment figures for the Borough show that there has been a significant increase in recent months, from 3.1% in June 2008 to 3.8% in November 2008. The increase in Stockton's unemployment rate is broadly in line with the results reported for the same period for the Tees Valley (increased from 3.7% to 4.5%) and the North East region as a whole (increased from 3.1% to 3.9%). This will continue to be monitored closely with impact minimised wherever possible.

ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING

13. Overall the council is performing well in this area though it should be recognised that some of the measures relating to housing continue to be affected by the changing economic climate.
14. There are 24 measures with data available for reporting at quarter 3, 16 are on track or have achieved the target set, with five measures predicted to miss targets . For three measures the current year is a baseline year.
15. Good progress is being made in the areas of processing planning applications, benefit claims, adapting to climate change and reducing Co2 emissions. All waste and environmental cleanliness measures are performing exceptionally well with the exception of levels of detritus, where poor weather in the summer months lead to higher than normal levels of weed growth and graffiti where current surveys indicate a slight increase in graffiti incidents. Following changes to procedures in re-lets, one in one out, performance of re - let times for local authority dwellings has improved. It is anticipated that the target of 26 days will be exceeded.
16. The target of 2 weeks for the average length of stay in Bed and Breakfast accommodation is likely to slip to 4 weeks by the end of the financial year. This is due to the increase in homeless applications as a result of the current financial climate. There has been a sharp rise in the use of bed and breakfast accommodation, from 17 case in 2007/08 to 73 cases to date in 2008/09. This has been due to a marked increase in the demand for temporary accommodation from families due to mortgage repossessions and other

housing affordability issues as well as those who are homeless due to domestic violence.

17. To meet this sudden increase in demand, six Council-owned properties are now being used as “satellite” homes to temporarily house homeless families rather than using bed and breakfast accommodation. This initiative, along with the introduction of a rent deposit guarantee scheme, should have a positive impact on future performance against this indicator. We are also working closely with the Registered Social Landlords (RSL) and on average about half the properties that become empty in the RSL sector are occupied via our nominations.
18. The financial climate is also affecting the number of affordable homes delivered where it is anticipated that current target of 68 will not be achieved with current performance running at 18.

SAFER COMMUNITIES

19. The Council and its partners are performing well in this area. There are 13 measures available for monitoring at Quarter 3 with 10 measures on track or already achieved targets, 2 predicted to miss targets and one awaiting a target to be set. There has been good performances in the reduction of arson incidents and other fire related measures, levels of first time entrants into the Youth justice system, compliance with food establishments meeting hygiene regulations and sustained improvements in performance in the education, training and employment of young offenders.
20. The area of most concern in this theme is re-offending rates – recidivism is a priority area within the national YJB performance framework, with a new monitoring system being introduced through regional government. A letter expressing concern is to be sent on behalf of the Youth Offending Service Board to the Regional Youth Justice Board Lead, as the new arrangements are based on monitoring progress towards targets from a baseline year of 2005, which happened to be a particularly good year (i.e. a very low re-offending rate for Stockton-on-Tees YOS of 0.83 – i.e. 154 re-offences from a cohort of 185 – compared to a rate for the N.E. region of 1.3). As a result it will prove extremely difficult to achieve improvement from such a low baseline level. Performance to Q2 was 0.63 and this project to an estimated year end out-turn of 1.15.
21. The recording of serious knife crime is also higher than expected with 65 incidents being recorded against a target of 44.

STRONGER COMMUNITIES

22. There is very limited information available at this point on which to judge how the council is performing in this area. From Council Plan monitoring and the recent IPSOS Mori results (as reported at quarter 2) it is clear that progress is being made but a fuller picture will be available at the end of the year when Place Survey results will be published.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

23. The Council continues to perform well in this area. There are 26 measures available for reporting this quarter, 11 are on track or have achieved target, 9 are awaiting targets to be set and 6 are predicted to miss targets. The measures within the children and young people theme include the results from the annual Tell Us survey.
24. There is good performance in the areas of both short term and longer term placements for children looked after, although the targets remain challenging. Performance indicators relating to child protection processes are maintaining good levels of performance. No child protection plans are lasting for more than two years, the proportion of children becoming the subject of a child protection plan for a second time continues to be at the good levels of performance of the previous year and 100% of case reviews continue to be carried out within timescales. Performance remains on target for the proportion of children's referrals although there will be considerable pressure in sustaining this performance in the light of a considerable increase in the volume of referrals experienced in recent months. (28% higher than the same period last year).
25. Indicators resulting from the Tell Us survey, which is based on a representative sample of pupils in school years 6, 8 and 10, show that:
- The emotional health of children at 65% this is better than the national average of 63.3%, (emotional health is defined as children who enjoy good relationships with their family and friends. The responses to the following 4 questions are combined to determine a score for emotional health.
 - I have one or more good friends,
 - When I am worried about something I can talk to my mum or dad.
 - When I am worried about something I can talk to my friends,
 - When I am worried about something I can talk to another adult other than my mum or dad.)
 - Children who have experienced bullying is 47% compared to a national average of 48%,
 - Young people's participation in positive activities is 65% compared to the England average of 69.5% and
 - Substance misuse by young people is 14%, compared to the national average of 10.9%.

These and other results from the Tell Us survey are being captured to ensure that relevant issues are addressed in service planning.

26. Within the children and young people theme the following areas continue to be key risk areas:

27. Under-18 conceptions. A draft report has been received from the joint Audit Commission / National Support Team review which took place in December. The report is subject to further discussions prior to being finalised when it will help to inform future delivery of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy.
- Breastfeeding prevalence. Whilst progress has been made in improving the systems for recording of the relevant data, the current position indicates that the target will be very stretching. Initiatives to improve performance in this area are being led by the PCT and through integrated services.
 - Obesity in primary aged children – Data from the latest child measurement programme indicates that obesity levels in both Reception and Year 6 children remains above the target set. The obesity strategy is delivering a number of schemes to target healthier and more active lifestyles, for example an Active Health Scheme, Healthy Walks programme, support of a Community Dietician
 - Proportion of 16-18 yr olds Not in Education, Employment or Training, (NEETs). Current data (provisional – final 08-09 position to be confirmed later in February) shows that the NEET rate has increased for the first time since the current baseline and 2010 targets were set in 2004-05 in line with the national PSA target. Data as at the end of December shows a rate of 10.7%, significantly higher than the level (9.3%) at this time last year. Despite having a larger residency cohort this year, due to a net export of nearly 1000 learners our “in learning” cohort has decreased. However, the NEET rate has also increased using the residency measure, from 8.9% to 9.4% over the comparable period. The actual number of NEETS has increased from 542 to 615. There are significant numbers of 17 and 18 year olds within this cohort. The increase is not unique to this area, and the economic climate will be a significant contributory factor.
 - The proportion of looked after children being adopted – this was identified as an area for development in the 2008 APA, because performance had dipped in 07-08 (to 6.9%, i.e. 10 adoptions from a cohort of 175) following many years of consistently high levels of performance (within the top banded performance rating in inspections). In 08-09, whilst the number of adoptions has returned to similar levels of the years prior to 07-08, the significant increase in the number of LAC means that the proportion is still relatively low (currently 6.9% i.e. 13 adoptions from a cohort of 189). This indicator was part of the APA dataset for Children’s Services but is not within the National Indicator Set; however, we have kept the indicator within our local Children’s performance framework in order to monitor progress following the APA findings and to inform the CAA

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

28. The Council is on track to deliver improvements in this area. There are 7 measures available for collection at this quarter, 3 are on track or have achieved the target set, 2 are awaiting targets to be set and 2 predict to miss the target set.

29. Levels of performance for adults social care assessments and for provision of direct payments to support self directed care are set to exceed the targets set. Improving performance for carers receiving services, advice or information suggests that the year end target will be achieved.
30. Smoking cessation continues to be challenging with current performance at the end of November 2008 falling well short of the target set. However December and the first few months of the new year should see the number of smoking quitters increase. Data based on a 3 year rolling average from 2004 - 2006, for the all age all cause mortality rate is still falling short of the target for both the male and female population.

OLDER ADULTS

31. Indications are that performance for the Older Adults theme is on track however, there is little performance data to report at this stage. Monitoring of the Council Plan for this theme, based around the Older People Strategy, and reported at quarter 2 indicates that the majority of activity is on track, helping to embed the strategy across Council and partner services. There are three measures that can be reported at quarter 3, one is on track to achieve target, one is predicted to miss the target and the remaining measure is awaiting a target to be set.
32. The proportion of vulnerable adults achieving independent living (through the Supporting People programme) is exceeding the baseline of 65% with current performance levels of 76.19%. Mortality rates from circulatory diseases at under 75 continues to performance below target but current performance is slightly better than the 2006 baseline. Based on the latest data available (the 2005- 2007 rolling average), mortality rates from all cancers at ages under 75 is performing well above target but still slightly under the level of performance of the 2007/8 baseline.

ARTS, LEISURE AND CULTURE

33. There are 3 measures to report on for this theme all of which are reported as a result of the Active People Survey undertaken by Sport England between the months of April – October 2008. The results of this survey are being used nationally as a baseline from which to measure future improvements.
34. The survey measures Use of Public Libraries where results for Stockton show a 48.3% usage, with a confidence interval of +/- 2.2%. This compares to 45.9% (confidence interval of 0.8%) for the North East and 48.5% England average (0.2% confidence interval.) This means that library usage in Stockton is higher than the regional average and around the national average.
35. The survey also measures visits to museums and Galleries and shows Stockton at 47.7% (confidence interval +/- 2.2%) against a North East performance of 52.1% (confidence interval 0.8%) and England average of 53.8% (confidence interval +/- 0.2 %). This means that fewer residents visit museums and galleries than the regional and national averages.

36. For Engagement in the Arts, results for Stockton are 38% (+/- confidence interval of 2.1%) against North East performance of 39.0% (+/- 1.2% confidence interval) and an England average of 45.2% (confidence interval +/- 0.2%). Though our performance is close to the regional average it is lower than nationally.
37. Although some similar data to the above has been collected before, each of the above measures have new definitions and as such further analysis against national and local comparators needs to be undertaken before future targets are set.

ORGANISATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS.

38. A total of 4 performance indicators are available to measure performance against this theme. Two are on track to achieve performance and two will miss the targets set.
39. On contract spend will exceed the target set with excellent performance across all areas of the council. NI 179, the value for money efficiency gains, predicts an increase of an additional £423,000 efficiency savings, mainly in the area of procurement.
40. Performance against the payment of invoices within 30 days has slipped since quarter 2 with the year end target now not attainable.
41. Sickness Absence has increased beyond projected levels and is not likely to meet the outturn target. The year end projection is 11.04 days lost per FTE against a target of 10.43 days lost per FTE. A detailed analysis reveals:
42. Short, medium and long term sickness levels rates have increased in the 3rd quarter from the 2nd quarter – 23%, 34% and 55% respectively.
43. The number of days lost in each quarter for 2008/9, reveal a significant increase in days lost per FTE between Qtr 2 and 3 in:
 - CESC (43%) 2.63 days per FTE compared to 3.75 days per FTE,
 - Schools (218%) 0.98 days per FTE compared to 3.12 days per FTE
 - Resources (34%) 2.27 days per FTE compared to 3.03 days per FTE.
 - DNS increased by only 4% 2.89 days per FTE compared to 3.01 days per FTE
 - Xentrall by 8% 3.51 days per FTE compared to 3.79 days per FTE.
 - Sickness fell in both L&D and PPC.
 - Overall the increase is 69% 1.92 days per FTE compared to 3.24 days per FTE.
44. The comparison from quarter 3 last year 07/08 is 7.95 days per FTE compared with a lower figure of 7.77 days per FTE in Quarter 3, 08/09.
45. The recent flu/ stomach bug has had an impact on sickness absence and communication with neighbouring authorities suggests they are seeing similar patterns. A comparison of days lost due to chest/ respiratory

problems and infections between quarter 2 and 3 indicates a massive 155% increase for non-schools and an even bigger 762% increase in schools. We are still investigating why a large service group like DNS has not suffered as badly as both CESC and schools. A number of actions have been put in place to reduce sickness absence.

46. Level 3 of the Equality Standard was achieved during December of last year.

Xentrall Shared Services – Performance Update

47. In November 2007 Members gave approval for the establishment of the Stockton and Darlington Shared Services Partnership. Xentrall Shared Services went live on 1st May 2008.
48. Since going live in May the Partnership has delivered a number of major milestones:
49. Co-location was the main issue for the Partnership. Finance team co-located in June 2008, followed by ICT in August 2008, Design and Print in September 2008 and finally HR in November 2008. Prior to co-location managers had that additional pressures of managing staff across split sites, delivering different services to each Council. Following co-location the teams have been proactively looking at how they work to improve the efficiency and performance of the services.
50. We have been working very closely with the staff throughout all of this change to minimise the impact as much as possible. Regular email communications supplemented by regular face to briefings ensured that staff were engaged throughout. A good working relationship has been established with the unions and monthly meetings take place to ensure changes are implemented smoothly.
51. Xentrall is currently a pilot for the new flexible working arrangements being considered by Stockton Borough Council. The scheme was successfully introduced in October 2008 and is highly regarded by all employees. The benefits of the scheme are being monitored.
52. Customer communication has improved significantly over this time. There were some initial teething problems when the teams co-located because they all moved to different locations (except for Design and Print at Stockton). We now have Customer Charters in place for all our services with clear contact details and these are now on both Councils Intranets. Customer surveys have been undertaken and regular feedback on the ICT service is received through the ICT help desk system.
53. The ICT service retained its ISO27001 security certification in June and in September this was extended to include all the Xentrall ICT service which includes the Darlington element of the service.

54. Design and Print have retained their ISO9001 quality certification. A new digital press has been procured which will enable the Design and Print service to deliver a faster service to its customers and provide a higher quality print service, this was installed in December 2008.
55. The ICT Business Account Managers are already starting to have a positive impact on our customers. They have regular meetings with all the services and through this process are beginning to contribute to service transformation identifying areas where there are opportunities for sharing best practice across both Stockton and Darlington Councils.
56. Performance of the Partnership is monitored on a quarterly basis through the Balanced Scorecard and highlight reports which are subsequently reported through Stockton's quarterly performance processes. A detailed annual report will be produced early in the new financial year setting out all the achievements and overall performance for the year.
57. Through this reporting we have identified three project areas which have slipped and also identified that the creditor payment performance is unsatisfactory.
 - It was originally intended to upgrade Stockton's financial system to the latest version (Agresso 5.5) during the current financial year – target implementation date of 31st March 2009. This will now not take place until March 2010. The Agresso 5.5 system was implemented in Darlington in April 2008 and there have been a number of issues with the product which the team have been working the supplier to correct. It was therefore decided that these issues needed to be resolved before implementation commenced in Stockton. This project will now commence in April 2009.
 - Darlington are currently operating a manual recruitment process. Stockton Borough Council are on an electronic recruitment process supported through the HR system. The improvement plan for 2008/9 anticipated changing Darlington across onto the same system as Stockton. This has not been possible during the year because of co-location and the lack of resources to implement the changes in the system. The Recruitment Team has however been contributing to the development of a North East recruitment portal and are looking into the option of both Councils will migrating to this during 2009/10.
 - Stockton Borough Council needs a new Computer Room and it was agreed that the location for this would be the Town Hall in Darlington. Due to the complexities of the procurement process and the design of the computer room itself, there have been a number of delays. It is anticipated that the cost will be more than expected but will be accommodated within the medium term financial plan. It is expected that the new computer room will be built by August 2009. Migration of all the computer equipment will take place by December 2009.
 - Payment of creditor invoices (previously BVPI8) is not on target. Performance has slipped in November and December and it is anticipated that the out-turn target for 2008/9 will not be achieved.

58. There are a number of reasons why the performance has dipped in November and December. There have been some staffing issues which have now been resolved, including high sickness during December. There are a high percentage of invoices received by Xentrall which are already out of date.

A number of measures have been put in place to deal with these issues:

- Xentrall is working with the support of the procurement team on a department by department basis and one of the departments to review the way the process works and look for improvements
- We are looking at our own internal processes and the way we work to improve our own performance and increase our resilience
- We are liaising with departments through the Finance Officers in each of the departments to get out key messages around best practice
- We are emailing all users with suggestions on how to improve and speed up the payment of invoices and in future we will highlight those sections who consistently don't achieve the targets.

COUNCIL CONSULTATION OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2008

59. The Corporate Consultation Plan is updated by service groups quarterly and monitored by the Consultation Working group. It provides a continuous update of consultation activity undertaken, records outcomes from the consultations and details what improvements will be made to inform future service delivery. Quarter 3 was characterised by two major consultation exercises, the statutory place survey and the latest Viewpoint / Youth Viewpoint questionnaire based consultation as well as the first employee survey for three years.

Place Survey

60. As the local government performance landscape has moved to the new National Indicator Set from Best Value Performance Indicators, The Place Survey has replaced the statutory Best Value surveys. It will be used to inform those National Indicators which are perception based, such as NI 1, the percentage of local people who feel their area is one where people from different backgrounds get on well together.
61. The Council delivered its Place Survey during Quarter 3 of the year to 5000 randomly selected households across the borough sending reminders in both October and November, with a final closing date just before Christmas.
62. In total some 1,750 questionnaires were returned. The results from the survey have been submitted to the Audit Commission and at the time of writing the Council is awaiting the receipt of its weighted and finalised data from the Commission which will be used to support service planning and

delivery as well as providing crucial information for the management of the LAA.

Adult Viewpoint

63. The 24th Adult Viewpoint Questionnaire was delivered to panel members in December and covered the following topics:
- Public transport and Highway Repairs
 - Landlord accreditation scheme
 - Substance Misuse
 - A review of Viewpoint
 - Dignity in Care Services (on behalf of the PCT)
 - Tall Ships 2010 (on behalf of Hartlepool Borough Council)
64. Despite being delivered close to Christmas, the questionnaire still returned a good response rate. The results are currently being collated and will be reported in due course.

Youth Viewpoint

65. A special Youth Viewpoint survey was delivered to panel members in October, focussed on transport. The questionnaire asked a variety of questions in relation to local public transport, primarily the bus service and also the support the Council offers to the services (improvements to shelters etc). The results will be used to help the Council work with local public transport providers to improve services.

Staff Survey

66. Quarter three also saw developments in internal consultation with the Council undertaking its first staff survey since 2005. Delivered as a special edition of Keeping You In Touch, with the option of completing electronically, the survey asked employees views on a wide variety of subjects including the support they received, the culture of the organisation, their pride in working for the Council and whether they saw themselves staying with the authority long term.
67. The results are currently being collated and will be used to help HR and managers across the Council to support, appreciate and make the most of our most important resource, our employees. In addition, the Council has entered into a national benchmarking club to compare our performance on the employee survey with other local authorities elsewhere in the UK. Results will be included in the quarter 4 report.

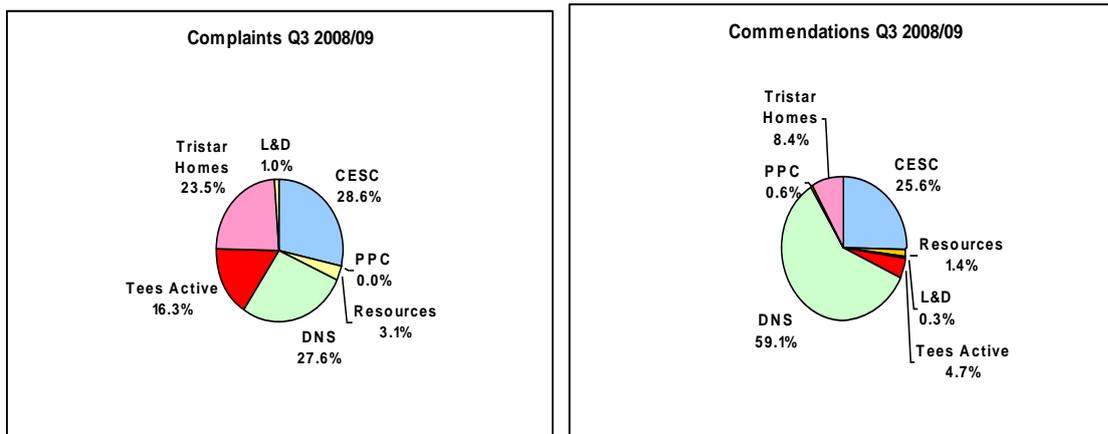
COMMENTS, COMPLAINTS AND COMMENDATIONS OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2008

Complaints

68. In total, the Council received 196 complaints for the three months ended 31 December 2008. This compares to 242 complaints received in the same three month period last year. Of the 196 complaints, 4 are at Stage 3 or 4 and of the Stage 1 and 2 complaints, 89% (170) overall were responded to within timescales.

Commendations

69. A total of 359 commendations were received in the three month period to 31 December. This compares to 434 commendations in the same three month period last year.
70. The pie charts below show a breakdown of complaints and commendations by service group.



71. Details of the complaints and commendations can be found on the web site at www.stockton.gov.uk/yourcouncil/performance/qtrperfmomitor
72. Detailed below are some of the main messages from the analysis.
- The main trend from the three month period identifies that almost 80% of complaints are in relation to the 3 service areas Children, Education and Social Care (CESC), Development and Neighbourhood Services (DANS) and Tristar (Housing), with CESC receiving approximately 29% of total complaints and DANS and Tristar each receiving approximately 28% and 24% respectively of total complaints.
 - Of the total commendations almost 85% were received for 2 service areas CESC and DANS, with 59% of these were compliments for DANS.

- Of the overall 11% of complaints which were not responded to on time the main areas are DANS, CESC and Tristar with an approximate failure to respond rate of 7%, 25% and 2% respectively. Most of those within CESC are in Health and Social Care.
- Within CESC, Children and Young People's Services have generated the most complaints and the majority of compliments are within Adults' Services.
- Within DANS, Housing and Direct Services received the most complaints, and commendations are within the Direct Services area (refuse collection, highways, street cleansing and recycling).
- For Tristar, the main areas of complaints were estate issues, staff, procedures and workmanship. Commendations are to members of staff and teams.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

RISK ASSESSMENT

This review of performance outturn report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS

The report supports the Sustainable Community Strategy.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The report was not subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

Not applicable.

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