

**AGENDA ITEM:**

**REPORT TO EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY**

**22 SEPTEMBER 2009**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**COUNCIL DECISION**

**Corporate Management and Finance: Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Laing**

**QUARTER 1 – PERFORMANCE AND FINANCE REPORT  
APRIL - JUNE 2009**

1. Summary

This report outlines the Council's financial and service performance for the first quarter of the 2009/10 year from 1 April 2009 to 30 June 2009 highlighting achievements, areas for improvement, consultation activity undertaken, complaints, commendations and comments received.

2. Recommendations

1. That the overall report is noted.
2. The revised MTFP be approved (paragraph 4)
3. The level of working balances be approved and retained at £8.4 million.
4. The re-profiled Capital Programme is approved (paragraph 12)
5. The annual Treasury Management report be approved.

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 (**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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**SUMMARY**

This report outlines the Council's service performance for the first quarter of the 2009/10 year from 1 April 2009 to 30 June 2009 highlighting achievements, areas for improvement, consultation activity undertaken, complaints, commendations and comments received and outturn against revenue and capital budgets.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the overall report is noted.
2. The revised MTFP be approved (paragraph 4)
3. The level of working balances be approved and retained at £8.4 million.
4. The re-profiled Capital Programme is approved (paragraph 12)
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**FINANCIAL POSITION**

**Projected Outturn**

1. The position for 2009/10 is structured around three "ring-fenced" financial areas:
  - General Fund
  - Housing Revenue Account
  - Capital
2. Paragraphs 4 to 17 summarise the Council's position, with regard to these funds.

**General Fund**

3. The following table details the current MTFP position of each service. Recent reports have identified the difficult financial position facing the Council and officers are considering carefully expenditure in all areas. Although there are a number of emerging issues, this proactive approach means that it is currently anticipated that expenditure will be in line with original plans. It is however very early into the year and these matters will be monitored closely. As such there are no significant changes to the MTFP.

**Children, Education and Social Care**

4. Members will recall the budget report identified potential service demand pressures in social care. There are emerging issues associated with increased demands for:

- o Direct Payments and the Personalisation Agenda
- o Adaptation equipment
- o Agency Social Workers
- o Legal costs associated with Child Protection

Current indicators show however that the service is anticipating efficiencies and there are potential savings in Community Care, Learning Disabilities and establishing ISAs, and therefore current indications are that the demand pressures can be consumed within the current medium term financial plan.

#### MTFP (MS / MC) – 2009/10 PROJECTED OUTTURN

Service Reserves (MS)/MC	Approved Position at 31/03/2009 (MS) / MC's £'000's	Projected Outturn Position at 31/03/2010 (MS) / MC's £'000's	Projected Outturn Position at 31/03/2011 (MS) / MC's £'000's	Projected Outturn Position at 31/03/2012 (MS) / MC's £'000's	Projected Outturn Position at 31/03/2013 (MS) / MC's £'000's
CESC	(861)	(861)	(576)	(290)	0
D & NS	(504)	(520)	(354)	(21)	0
RESOURCES	0	(60)	(60)	(60)	(60)
TES	0	0	0	0	0
LAW & DEMOCRACY	(120)	(82)	(55)	(34)	(1)
POLICY & COMMUNICATIONS	(270)	(272)	(200)	(171)	(132)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(1,755)</b>	<b>(1,795)</b>	<b>(1,245)</b>	<b>(576)</b>	<b>(193)</b>

#### Development & Neighbourhood Services

5. The economic climate is continuing to have a direct affect on the Council and there are potential issues being identified.
  - o Potential shortfall in Planning applications and associated income
  - o Market for recyclable materials is extremely uncertain and this could impact on anticipated income
  - o Reduced number of clients in Stockton Business Centre
  - o Developer contributions for adoption of highways

Given we are early in the year, the impact of the above is difficult to project, however, Officers are currently evaluating these issues and considering mitigating action.

A new commercial bus operator has also just commenced within the Borough on a 'new route' and is claiming reimbursement for concessionary fares. This is over and above the current concessionary fares contract and the establishment of such routes is outside of Council control and as such this will be a potential pressure.

6. Members will recall that the 2009/10 budget report included a requirement for turnover savings of 1% and also a freeze in the majority of supplies and services budgets. Current indications are that the Services are on target to achieve these savings.

## General Fund Balances and Earmarked Reserves

7. The Council's current policy is to hold 3% of General Fund expenditure as balances (equates to £7.9 million at 1st April 2010). It is anticipated that the General Fund balance will stand at £8.4 million at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010, which will exceed the 3% level by £500k.
8. The following table details the change in the General Fund balance.

	<b>£m</b>
<b>Outturn Position</b>	9.80
Utilised in MTFP budget setting	(0.40)
	<u>9.40</u>
<b>Less:</b>	
Additional approvals:	
Stockton Town Centre & Riverside	(0.15)
Integrated Health & Social Care Facility - Billingham	(0.27)
Referenda & Elections	(0.30)
	<u>(0.72)</u>
Minor variations in year	(0.28)
	<u>(0.28)</u>
<b>General Fund Balance</b>	<b><u>8.40</u></b>

9. At present, the overall position on balances can be summarised below:

	<b>£m</b>	<b>% of General Fund</b>
	<b>Expected Position at 31 March 2010</b>	
Corporate Working Capital (General Fund Balance)	(8.4)	(3.2)
Net (MS)/MC	(1.8)	(0.7)
<b>Net Working Balances</b>	<u>(10.2)</u>	<u>(4.1)</u>

10. The position for the medium term is uncertain in its scope but what is certain is that it will be difficult and challenging. Since the MTFP for 2009/10 was agreed in February the Budget Speech has exposed the scale of public sector borrowing and announced reductions in overall public sector expenditure. There are no details on the actual impact for Local Government services. There is however general agreement that from 2011/12 it will be facing negative grant settlements, the only question being how large these cuts will be. The Council has started planning a course of action to ensure it is able to respond positively to the current climate. The Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation Programme that has already been initiated will undoubtedly contribute to the solution. In addition service challenges, as outlined earlier, have commenced. One such challenge has resulted in £150,000 per annum being saved from changing to online recruitment practice. Despite this, it would appear the size of the challenge is such that additional action needs to be taken. Options are currently being modelled prior to consideration at Cabinet/Council in the autumn. Given these concerns it is recommended that, at this time balances are not utilised. This position will be kept under review on a quarterly basis as part of the updates on the Medium Term Financial Plan.

## Housing Revenue Account

11. The projected position is in line with the budgeted surplus of £1.3 million at 31 March 2010.

## Capital

12. There have been a number of revisions to the original budget following outturn and an assessment of capital schemes. There are no funding implications associated with any of the changes. At budget setting the capital programme was reported to be £68.5 million, however the housing element was over inflated by £5.4 million (including an element of £6 million rather than £0.6 million). This has been rectified in the figures below:

The Capital budget for 2009/10 is outlined in the following table:

	Original Budget £000's	Revised Budget £000's	Projected Outturn £000's	Variance £000's
Children, Education and Social Care	13,031	15,754	15,754	0
Development & Neighbourhood Services	53,519	44,048	42,687	(1,361)
Resources	1,970	1,938	1,958	20
Total Programme	68,520	61,740	60,399	(1,341)

There are no funding implications for the variances and the reasons are as follows:

Development & Neighbourhood Services	£000's
Energy Efficiency - these are revenue schemes which will result in a reduced Revenue Contribution to Capital	(286)
Developer Agreements – a number of schemes have been put on hold by Developers due to the downturn in the economic market	(1,120)

## Treasury Management Annual Report

13. As part of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management activity, there is a requirement for the Treasury Management Annual Report to be presented to Council for approval. A copy of the report is detailed as **Appendix 1 and is available on E Genda.**

## PERFORMANCE UPDATE

14. This report provides members with a picture of the Council's performance against the National Indicator set as well as details of resident feedback and consultation activity. A series of appendices have been prepared to the report to provide members with a full picture of performance. These are available on E Genda.

Appendix 2	National Indicator Set - Data available at Qtr1. (LAA indicators are identified)
Appendix 3	National Indicator Set – Measures where information is not available at Qtr 1 with an update on progress and explanation/ expected date for availability
Appendix 4	Complaints, Compliments and Commendations and Comments

## OVERALL PERFORMANCE

15. Of the National Indicator measures where information is available at the end of quarter 1, 83 % (72 indicators) across all themes are predicted to achieve targets or are within the agreed tolerance set. For the remaining measures remedial action is being taken to address areas of slippage. Details of achievements and areas of slippage are included in the thematic sections of the report.

## LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

16. The current Local Area Agreement (LAA) is now in year two of the three-year agreement with Central Government. Good progress has been made against some stretching targets in year one and this continues into year two with some of the measures within the LAA being reported at quarter one. The full Local Area Agreement measures will be monitored and report at quarter 2. All indicators within the LAA are being closely tracked particularly those impacted by the current economic conditions. This is to ensure that we are best placed to understand our current position leading into the annual review and refresh of the LAA, which will commence in October of this year. This will provide the Council and its partners with an opportunity to review current performance and renegotiate where appropriate, measures and targets leading into the final year the LAA, upon which the performance reward elements are calculated.

## COUNCIL PLAN

17. Service Groups are progressing well against the priorities and objects set out within the Council Plan with current monitoring of indicators and projects showing good progress. The quarter two report will provide a detailed update of all measures and objectives within the 2009 – 2012 Plan.

## PROGRESS BY COUNCIL PLAN THEME

### ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND TRANSPORT

18. Monitoring of the impact of the economic climate continues across all areas of service provision. There is a time lag on nationally validated data for many of the measures within this theme in particular employment and business related data. However local knowledge and unvalidated data and intelligence allow us to continue to track performance in these areas. Areas of good performance are detailed below:

- **Planning applications determined** - all categories of planning applications have achieved their individual targets (**NI 157**)(LAA), with 100% of major applications (73% target), 88% of minor applications (78% target) and 92% of other applications (85% target) determined within timescale.
- **Planning appeals allowed** – the target of having less than 30% of planning appeals allowed has been achieved for the year to date. Of the 25 appeals decided during Q1,

19 were dismissed, 5 were allowed and 1 was partially allowed, meaning that 24% of appeals were allowed or partially allowed. Four of the six appeals allowed or partially allowed (67%) were cases, which were determined against officer recommendations.

- **Street lighting repairs** – the time taken to repair street lights has reduced to an average of 1.45 days (against a target of 2.50 days) for those repairs undertaken by the local authority's contractor. For those repairs where the responsibility lies with a Distribution Network Operator, the time taken to repair is 14.28 days (against a target of 30 days). Both these results are the best ever reported on these indicators in the borough.
- **People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents** – 30 people have been killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents in the borough during the period January – June 2009, two less than the same period last year. If performance is maintained at targeted levels for the rest of 2009, the rolling three-year target of a 6.3% reduction will be achieved.

19. Areas of slippage against the targets are detailed below:

- **Overall working age employment rate (NI 151) (LAA)** – the latest available working age employment figures are for December 2008, showing an employment rate of 70.3% against an LAA target for 2009/10 of 73.6%. It is unlikely that that LAA target can be achieved given that the latest figures for the numbers of claimants in receipt of Jobseekers' Allowance (JSA) for June 2009, show Stockton as having 5.2% of working age people in receipt of JSA, against a national average of 4.1% and a North East average of 5.4%. For the same period last year, Stockton had 3.0% in receipt of JSA, against a national average of 2.2% and a North East average of 3.1%. This demonstrates over time, a clearly increasing trend of unemployment both regionally and nationally, with Stockton's increase being broadly in line with those trends, however current performance remains static.

## ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING

20. Overall the Council is performing well in this area. The economic climate has yet to show an impact on some measures that contribute to this theme with both net additional homes and number of affordable homes still on track to deliver both the targets set. Areas of good progress are detailed below:

- **Street and environmental cleanliness** – the first (of three) surveys undertaken to determine the levels of street and environmental cleanliness throughout the borough (**NI 195) (LAA)** was undertaken during Q1 2009-10. The survey measures the percentage of different land areas where the levels of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting are below defined acceptable standards. The results were extremely positive showing the improvement targets being achieved for all four parts of the indicator:
  - **litter** – 0% below acceptable standards (against 4% target);
  - **detritus** – 2% below acceptable standards (6% target);
  - **graffiti** – 1% below acceptable standards (1% target);
  - **fly-posting** - 0% below acceptable standards (1% target).
- **Adapting to climate change** – NI 188 is the National Indicator used to measure the progress that local authorities are making in tackling the issue of climate change. Progress is measured by way of a detailed self-assessment, completion of which places an authority at a Level 0 – 4, where:
  - Level 0 - baseline;



- Level 1 - public commitment and prioritised risk-based assessment;
- Level 2 - comprehensive risk-based assessment and prioritised action in some areas;
- Level 3 - comprehensive action plan and prioritised action in all priority areas; and
- Level 4 - implementation, monitoring and continuous review.

21. Stockton has self-assessed at Level 3 for 2008-09 on this indicator and been advised by Defra that the self assessment shows a “solid Level 3 organisation” with some examples of best practice. Defra have also advised that Stockton is one of only two authorities in the country to achieve Level 3 (City of London being the other), with no local authority at Level 4.

- **Green Flag Awards** - A Green Flag Award has been awarded to Charlton’s Pond during Q1, bringing the total of Green Flag awards held to six throughout the borough.
- **Net Additional Homes (NI 154(LAA) and affordable homes delivered. NI 155** - Despite economic conditions both these measures are expected to achieve year end targets.

22. Good progress has been made, in the following two areas, against some challenging targets, despite an increase in demand for these services:

- **Housing and Council Tax Benefits** - the average time taken to process Housing and Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events (**NI 181**) was 15 calendar days during Q1 2009-10 against a stretching annual target of 11.8 days. Outturn performance in 08/09 was 12.2 days. There has been an increase in demand for the service, with 5.4% more claims and changes of circumstances received in Q1 compared to the same period last year (increasing from 6,954 to 7,331). Steps have been put in place to address the speed of processing, with customer services staff being trained to undertake assessment work and through the use of overtime working and experienced agency staff.
- **Number of households living in temporary accommodation (NI 156)** – at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009, there were 46 households living in temporary accommodation in Stockton, against a target of 41 by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010. Although behind the annual target, this is a significant reduction from the position at the end of the last quarter when 60 households were living in temporary accommodation. Given the plans in place to tackle this issue and the reducing trend, the service is projecting that the year-end target of 41 will be achieved.

## SAFER COMMUNITIES

23. The Council and its partners continue to perform well in this area with most indicators on track to achieve the year end targets. Stockton is still the safest place to live in the Tees Valley, with reductions in:

- Acquisitive crime – down 72 on the same period last year
- The number of deliberate primary and secondary fires
- Hospital admissions due to alcohol related harm.

24. Despite having the largest population of Tees Valley authorities, the trend on crime in Stockton down by around 30% from the levels recorded in 2004/05

25. Good progress is detailed below:

- **Young offenders’ engagement in suitable education, employment or training (EET) (NI 45)**. Considerable partnership investment has led to a substantial

improvement in engagement, currently at 84.2% for quarter 1. All cases are assessed on an individual basis and exit strategies include Connexions undertaking post-order destination follow up checks to ensure provisions are sustainable.

- **Number of serious acquisitive crimes** – 463 have been reported during qtr 1 which is a reduction of 72 on the same period last year.

26. Despite good progress being made the annual targets may be difficult to achieve in the following areas:

- **NI 19: Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders aged 10-17.** The baseline year is not representative of normal performance and places us at an immediate disadvantage (2008/09 shows performance is still better than that the YOS 'family group' average). However, estimates for 2009/10 put us at 1.19 (well above the 0.83 baseline). The YOS Management Board is reviewing options to manage this situation and a considerable amount of resource has been invested in recidivism research including analysis of management information, to identify those offending behaviour interventions, which are most effective (e.g. improvements in exit strategies as a result of Integrated Youth Support Service support should help to reduce re-offending).
- **NI 40: Number of drug users recorded as being in effective treatment (LAA).** Latest validated figure available for is to January 2009 (1238). Provisional DAT figures for February 2009 suggest this will increase to 1241, although this puts us 8 short of the target.

## **STRONGER COMMUNITIES**

27. There is limited performance indicator information available against this theme, however there have been many activities undertaken within the last quarter that contribute to building stronger communities. Some key projects include;

- A successful bid for Migration Impact monies awarded.
- Community Cohesion Strategy re-launched.
- Diversity Officer Training held with HR Senior officers
- Celebration Generation set up which is a group bringing old and young together to break down some of the barriers that currently exist.

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

28. Increasing demand on social care services, and associated levels of activity within integrated service teams, has been a key feature of the past year and has continued into quarter 1 2009/10, particularly in Children and Young People services:

- Referrals for quarter 1 were over 90% higher than quarter 1 of 2007/08. The pattern of referrals has continued to reflect high numbers of referrals from the Police (in quarter 1 2008/09 we had 328 Police referrals (36% of all referrals for the quarter) compared with 131 in quarter 1 2007/08 (27% of all referrals for the quarter).
- The volume of Initial and core assessments completed has remained fairly static since last year, partly reflecting issues we are currently facing with the RAISE system, but also the work of the First Contact Team in providing effective screening of referrals.

- Reflecting the increases in referrals and assessments, the numbers of children in need (currently 1,723), in care (250), or with a child protection plan (234), have continued to increase to the highest levels for a number of years.

29. Nevertheless, good progress has been made against this theme with achievements in the following areas worthy of note:

- Take up of school lunches (NI 52). Final 2008/09 outturns were published in early July, and show very strong performance for the primary schools (49.3%) in relation to the North East and England averages (53.8% and 35.4% respectively).
- NI 62: Stability of placements of looked after children: number of placements. Current performance is 10% against a target of 10%. There were only 2 children with more than 3 placements in quarter 1, although there are another 6 who have had 2 placements in the year and a number of these are anticipated to move again before the year end for a range of reasons. This will continue to be closely monitored.
- NI 63: Stability of placements of looked after children: length of placements. Current performance at quarter 1 suggests the indicator is on track to achieve the 2009/10 target by year end and on track to achieve the LAA target.
- Number of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17 (NI 111). Previous performance against this National Indicator has been a major area of focus for the Youth Offending Service and Children's Services. The quarter 1 outturn performance of 433 per 100,000 provides a strong indication that this improvement will continue against the annual target of 2330 per 100,000 people.

30. The following areas remain a key risk for the Children and Young People theme:

- NI 59: Percentage of initial assessments for children's social care carried out within 7 working days of referral. To quarter 1, we have seen a significant rise in the number of referrals into First Contact (over 900 compared to just under 500 the same time last year) with just under 75% of initial assessment completed in timescales. Stockton now has a fully staffed Duty Team in place to receive and complete all referrals requiring initial assessments and is being closely monitored at the Children's monthly Operation Managers' Group.
- NI 60: Percentage of core assessments for children's social care that were carried out within 35 working days of their commencement. Quarter 1 is currently recording a drop in the number of completed core assessments being closed within the 35 working days (72.2%). One of the main reasons for this fall in outturn has been a system problem in the latest version (v4) of the children's client management system RAISE. These are being addressed in house and direct with the supplier where required, and will be worked through to ensure it accurately reflects operational performance.
- NI 113: Prevalence of Chlamydia in under 25 year olds. Performance is 0.506% at April against a target of 1.665% (out of the 438 people targeted to be screened in April, only 133 were actually recorded as being screened). The year end prediction has not been validated by the Primary Care Trust.
- NI 117: 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (LAA). The outturn for learning for those not in education, employment or training (NEET) to the end of June 2009 is 11.8% against an annual target of 9%. Disparity between the

achievements for those based on residency and in learning continues to have a negative impact for Stockton.

## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

31. Progress within this thematic area is detailed below:

- NI 123 Stopping smoking (per 100,000) (LAA) - the quarter 1 figure is for April and May 2009, and is above the target of 226. An increased publicity drive was launched in quarter 4 of 2008/09 to boost quitter numbers. Smokers are encouraged to use the new pharmacy services now set up across the Stockton.
- NI 130 LAA - Social care clients receiving Self Directed Support – (target 15%) (Direct Payments and Individual Budgets) - quarter 1 outturn is based on Direct Payment numbers only (6.8%), as self directed support and deployment of the RAS is not scheduled to go live until October 2009. Good progress with Direct Payments has been sustained from the previous quarter and provides a solid base for meeting the 09/10 target which is based on the new definition which includes the self directed support.

32. Areas requiring more detailed focus are highlighted below;

- Timeliness of social care packages following assessment (NI 133) Target 90.1% current performance is 73.2%. The requirement to deliver services within 28 days has been subject of a CESC Adults Performance Clinic in July 2009. A number of options have been agreed which, if implemented effectively, will begin to impact on performance in quarters 2 and 3.
- NI 135: Carers receiving needs assessment or review and a specific carer's service, or advice and information (LAA). Q1 performance of 5.3% suggests we may fall short of the 24% LAA target. Investigation through teams and with partners will help identify areas of concern to be addressed as part of the Adult Performance Clinic cycle in Q2.

## **OLDER ADULTS**

33. Good performance has been achieved in supporting vulnerable people to live independently and for offenders under probation living in settled accommodation.

- NI 142 (LAA): Percentage of vulnerable people who are supported to maintain independent living - the full outturn for 2008/09 has been updated at 98.21%, exceeding the LAA target and representing the best outturn for this indicator to date. Quarter 1 results will be available in September 2009 and will be reported in quarter

34. Areas requiring a more detailed focus are highlighted below:

- NI 125 Achieving independence for older people through rehabilitation / intermediate care – A new measure for 2009/10, collections for this measure will begin in July to December 2009. Once comparator information is available to benchmark performance against and understand best practice consideration can be given to what improvements Stockton can make to delivery of in care services.
- NI 144 Offenders under probation supervision in employment at the end of their order or licence - Indicative data for April to June (from Teesside Probation Service) shows Stockton having 18.4% of offenders under probation supervision in employment

(Teesside average 23.8%). The target for this indicator has been set nationally by the Cabinet Office and the Probation Service.

## **ARTS, LEISURE AND CULTURE**

35. Indications are that the Council is on track to deliver its objectives under this theme. There are limited indicators for this theme many of which are new from 2008/09. The four national indicator measures in this theme (including the LAA measure for engagement in the arts) are based on new definitions and methods of collection from the national Active People Survey, so no comparative data is yet available to enable benchmarking of performance. Further analysis of these indicators will be undertaken alongside the new Place Survey findings and the most recent Ipsos MORI survey results, to evaluate fully the implications, to set baseline estimates of performance and to agree future targets.

Progress at quarter 1 is as follows:

- NI 9: Use of Public Libraries. The quarter 1 figure of 48.2%( Target 51.3%) is based on the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) June statistical release and is un- validated data. We will be in a better position to determine if the year end target will be met once final data is released in Qtr 3.
- Similar reasoning applies to in the case of NI 10 (Visits to Museums or Galleries) and NI 11 (Engagement in the Arts), where the quarter 1 results of 47.4% and 37.7% respectively are also based on the DCMS June statistical release. Targets for both measures will be reviewed at quarter 3.

## **ORGANISATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

36. There are limited measures within the National Indicator set that contribute to this theme. Good progress has been made to deliver the objectives identified under this theme in the following areas:

- The Council was awarded 'silver' status following the Investors In People re-accreditation review. The Council was also assessed under new Health and Well being standards and were 'commended' for our commitment to employee well being as a result of the workforce Health and Wellbeing Strategy (which assessors described as the best Health and Wellbeing Strategy they had ever seen). Stockton is the first local authority in the North East to apply for accreditation at the higher levels of the new Investors In People framework and also the first local authority in the UK to be assessed against the new Health & Wellbeing at work standards.
- Outturn figures show that Sickness Absence levels continue to improve, with 2.18 days lost per Full Time Employee (FTE) during quarter one. It is currently projected that this will reach 9.18 days per FTE for the full year, which is within the target of 9.64 days. The Tees Valley average for 2007/8 was 10.3 days.
- The Thornaby Customer Services Centre was officially opened jointly with Thornaby Library on 12 May. During quarter 1 there has been major progress on the technical element of Access to Services
- The Customer Services team has also achieved ISO9001: 2008 re-certification for another 3 years. The initial submission for corporate achievement of the Customer Service Excellence Standard has been submitted. A programme of assessments for

all Council services has also been submitted to the assessing body and the Council has a target for achievement of the standard by all services by August 2010.

- The re-designed website was launched on schedule in May and a Phase 1 records management work package has been agreed with all Council services.
- The level of on-contract spend for corporate contracts has continued to improve in quarter one, with performance of 99.45% well above the target of 97.50% for 2009/10.
- Performance of payment of invoices has improved significantly from 65.25% in 2008/09 to 90.3% for the first quarter of 2009/10; however this figure is subject to verification.

37. Slippage has occurred in the following areas:

- The implementation of pilot projects, including Human Resources and Integrated Service Area (ISA) pilots, as part of the Workwise project has been delayed. Due to delays with the ISA programme, the pilots will now commence in September, rather than June as originally planned.
- The need for planning approval means that the new ICT Data Centre will not be completed by the target date (September 2009). Planning has been granted and the project started in July 2009, with a revised target of December 2009.

## **COUNCIL CONSULTATION**

38. 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. Detailed below is a summary of consultation undertaken in the first quarter of 2009/10:

### **Adult Library Groups**

- A consultation event with a variety of established adult library groups who attend the libraries to take part in group activities was held, involving approximately 170 people. The attendees were asked what benefits they receive and what do they like about attending the organised library groups. Users expressed that they find using community libraries a great benefit as it is within easy reach of homes in particular to older people and those without car transport. Many attendees mentioned that they were retired and that attending the groups helped to keep their minds active and gave them time to relax and socialise. When the group was asked what they would like to see offered in their local library, the most popular requests were for author sessions, speakers, cultural visits, meeting other groups, murder mystery evenings and occasional trips. Following this event, the group sessions were deemed worthwhile to the local communities and recommendations have been made for all libraries to review and to further enhance their own offer in their individual communities.

### **Parks and Green Spaces - Young People's Consultation**

- A consultation event was held to capture children and young people's views of local parks and green spaces. The event gave detailed information on how children and young people use these areas and the barriers which discourage use. The results will be used to inform the development of the Action Plan which will accompany the Borough's new Green Infrastructure Strategy, as well as helping to shape plans for

individual parks and play areas which are to be improved through the Spaces for Play Programme

### **Your Local Green Spaces**

- Questionnaires were completed by approximately 200 people in a series of drop in sessions held at community venues in the Borough. The information gained from this consultation has given an indication of the public's preferences for improvements to existing green spaces and aspirations for new facilities/features. The results from the questionnaires show that the highest priorities were improvements to existing footpaths and play areas and provision of new play areas. People were also invited to use maps to indicate where new facilities and features could be located. These results will also inform the development of the Action Plan, which will accompany the Borough's new Green Infrastructure Strategy, as well as helping to shape plans for individual sites and local projects.

### **COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS & COMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS**

39. Following the work undertaken by officers across the Council, new procedures and recording templates have been introduced from April 2009 to provide a more robust approach to the collection, monitoring and reporting of complaints and commendations. Compliments are now included for the first time in recognition of the standard of service provided that would, however much appreciated, be an expected part of the individual or teams' normal duties and responsibilities. Similarly, comments are also included for the first time to record customers' feedback on the service they have received from the Council, in most cases by completing a comments card. Across all areas, a series of standard categories has been developed to allow a better focus on areas of customer feedback. Detail is being requested and analysed on the 6 diversity strands the templates are reviewed regularly to take account of feedback from service groups and to implement any improvements.

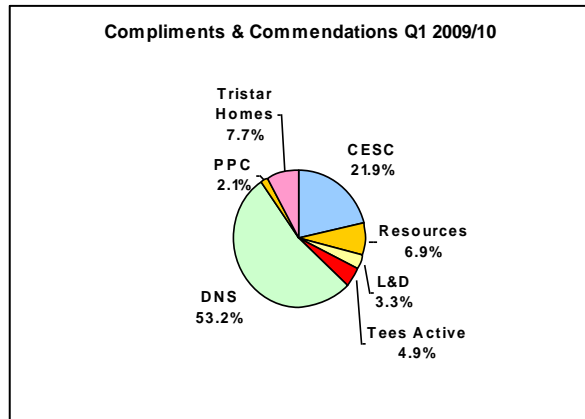
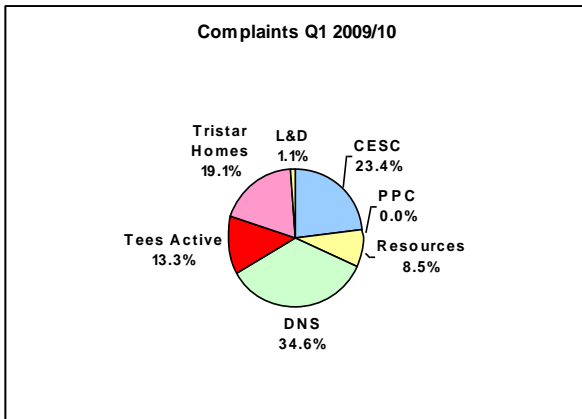
#### **Complaints**

40. In total, the Council received 188 complaints for the three months ended 30 June 2009. This compares to 213 complaints received in the same three month period last year. Of the 188 complaints, 13 are at Stages 2 and 3 and of the Stage 1 complaints, 84.8% (145) overall were responded to within timescales.

#### **Compliments and Commendations**

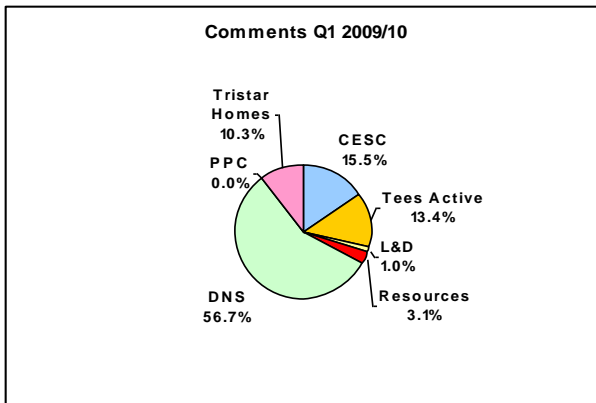
41. A total of 389 compliments and commendations were received in the three month period to 30 June 2009, representing 262 compliments and 127 commendations. This compares to 351 commendations in the same three month period last year.

The pie charts below show a breakdown of complaints and compliments and commendations by service group.



## Comments

42. A total of 97 comments from customers were received in the three month period to 30 June 2009. As this is the first period of reporting, there are no comparable figures for the same quarter in the previous year.



43. For complaints, compliments and commendations and comments, Appendix 3 provides a detailed analysis of the numbers received in each service area and complaints' response times. The Appendix also shows the main service areas that these relate to and the categories of complaints, compliments and commendations and comments.

44. This report highlights some of the main messages from the analysis.

- The main trend from the three month period identifies that 77% 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 23% of total complaints, with DANS and Tristar receiving approximately 35% and 19% respectively of total complaints.
- Of the total compliments and commendations 75% were received for 2 service areas CESC and DANS, with 53% of these were compliments for DANS.
- Of the total comments received, 85.6% were received for 3 service areas CESC, DANS and Tees Active, with approximately 57% of these were comments for DANS.
- Of the overall 15% of complaints which were not responded to on time the main areas are CESC and Tristar with an approximate failure to respond rate of approximately 47% and 20% respectively. Most of these within CESC are in Health and Social Care.



- Within CESC, Children's Services generated the most complaints and the majority of compliments and commendations are within Library and Information Services and Children's and Adults' Services. Pupil and Student Support received the most comments.
- Within DANS, Housing and Direct Services (refuse collection, highways, street cleansing and recycling areas) received the most complaints and also received the majority of compliments and commendations along with Community Protection. Direct Services received the most comments.
- For Tristar, the responsive repairs service received the majority of complaints, compliments and commendations and comments.

## **Diversity Analysis**

45. Analysis by diversity strand is now being undertaken to try and determine if there are any specific issues for concern with regard to these minority groups. This is the first time this analysis has been undertaken and will continue to be monitored going forward.

### **AGE**

46. While 62% of complainants did not provide information about their age, data available from the remaining 38% of complainants' shows that most complaints received during the first quarter of 2009/10 came from residents aged 55 – 64. The majority of complaints received from those aged 55 – 64 (a total of six) went to Tristar. The lowest number of complaints (a total of one) came from residents aged 75 – 84 and this complaint also came to Tristar. Available data also shows that no complaints were received from residents aged under 18; 85 – 94; and, 95+.

### **GENDER**

47. 53% of all complainants did not provide details of their gender. Of the 47% that did, exactly 50% were female and 50% male. Available data shows that: the majority of male complainants (a total of 10 or 35% of male complainants) had made complaints to Tristar and that the lowest number of complaints made by male residents (a total of one) came to Law and Democracy.

The majority of female complainants (a total of seven) had made complaints against Resources and the lowest number of complaints made by female residents (a total of one) came to Law and Democracy.

### **DISABILITY**

48. 68% of all complainants did not provide information about whether they had a disability or not. Of those that did:

- The majority of complainants had a physical disability.
- The fewest number of complaints received during the period from residents with disabilities came from residents with a learning disability.
- No complaints were received from residents with the following types of disability: visual impairment; and, frailty with elderly.
- The majority of complaints made came to Tristar. This amounted to a total of 11 complaints, which is equal to 9% of all complaints received by the Council during the period and 31% of all complaints made to Tristar specifically during the period.

### **RACE**

49. 64% of complainants during the period did not provide information about their race. Of those that did:

- The majority (a total of 42 equal to 34% of all complainants) stated that they were White. Of these complaints in particular, 48% were made to Tristar.
- The smallest number of complaints were made by residents who are either Asian or Black. This amounted to a total of one complaint being made by one Asian resident in relation to DNS and one complaint being made by one Black resident in relation to Tristar.

## **FAITH AND BELIEF**

50. 78% of all complainants during the period did not provide information about their faith and belief. Of those that did, the majority (16%) of complainants were Christian and the majority of (a total of seven) complaints made by those residents were made to Tristar. This amounts to 19% of all complaints made to Tristar and 6% of all complaints made to the Council as a whole during the period,

## **SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

51. Only one complainant provided information about their sexual orientation.

## **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

52. To update the MTFP and outline the outturn position as at the 30 June 2009 on the General Fund, Capital and the Housing Revenue Account and comply with the requirements of the accounts and audit regulations 2003.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

53. The review of the MTFP and projected 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**

54. The report supports the Sustainable Community Strategy.

## **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

55. The report was not subject to an Equality Impact Assessment. The report does not seek approval for a new policy and an assessment was taken on the MTFP report submitted as part of the 2009/10 budget cycle.

## **CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS**

56. Not applicable.

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