



AGENDA ITEM: 6

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

30 June 2009

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE: YEAR-END 2008/2009

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To summarise the Council's performance at the end of 2008/2009 and to identify potential issues and implications for the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme.

BACKGROUND

2. The 2008/2009 Strategic Plan sets out the Council's key performance targets (including the key improvement priorities for Middlesbrough identified in the Local Area Agreement 2008-2011) and the actions it planned to take to contribute to the achievement of these targets during the year.
3. This report summaries the Council's performance against its key performance targets and planned improvement actions, and its management of key risks at the end of 2008/2009. Full details of progress are supplied in the full 2008/2009 year-end performance report (available in the Members' library) for further consideration where required, with the thematic summary tables below signposting to additional information on key issues.

OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

Progress against Middlesbrough's Local Area Agreement 2008-2011

4. Middlesbrough's Local Area Agreement (LAA) 2008-2011 comprises 35 designated targets, 16 statutory targets relating to attainment (from the National Indicator Set) and a number of locally-determined measures relating to priority areas. At the end of 2008/2009, performance information was available for 53 indicators (80%), with 13 (20%) not yet known. Of the 40 indicators where a target has been set, 16 (40%) were on target.

Table 1: Performance against the LAA at the end of 2008/2009

Theme	Total	On target	Not on target	Not yet known	Target not set
Creating Stronger Communities	5	0	0	0	5
Creating Safer Communities	10	4	1	4	1
Supporting Children and Young People	25	3	15	6	1
Promoting Adult Health and Well-Being	11	4	4	2	1
Enhancing the Local Economy	9	1	3	1	4
Securing Environmental Sustainability	6	4	1	0	1
Total	66	16 (24%)	24 (36%)	13 (20%)	13 (20%)

5. The main under-performing theme is 'Supporting Children and Young People', where the majority of indicators relating to educational attainment, whilst (in general) improving year-on-year, are not performing to target.
6. Many indicators within the LAA relate to economic issues, and it is inevitable that the current global financial situation will begin to impact on related indicators, and the overall performance of the LAA, as data becomes available. Indicators relating to the provision of new housing in the town are already well behind target.
7. Many of the actions in the Strategic Plan will contribute to the LAA targets, but in the longer-term, so the impact is not reflected in current performance. Further work has been undertaken in the development of the 2009/2010 Strategic Plan to ensure that the actions taken by the Council to contribute to LAA targets are both plausible and specific about the time frame for impact.

Progress against the National Indicator Set

8. 2008/2009 was the first year of the new National Indicator Set (NIS) for local government and its partners. Implementation of the NIS has been challenging for all local authorities, with delays both in the clarification of definitions and in the publication of baseline data for a significant proportion of the indicators. For this reason, some indicators do not yet have baselines or future targets.
9. At the end of 2008/2009, the Council had gathered performance information for 164 (76%) of the National Indicator measures. Of the 106 indicators with targets set, 57 (26%) were on target and 49 (23%) not on target. 52 (24%) measures did not have data available. The Government has now issued a document setting out a timetable for the publication of outstanding data.

Table 2: Performance against the National Indicator Set at the end of 2008/2009

Theme	Total	On target	Not on target	Not yet known	Target not set
Creating Stronger Communities	13	1	0	0	12
Creating Safer Communities	41	12	4	6	19
Supporting Children and Young People	74	17	26	15	16
Promoting Adult Health and Well-Being	34	6	12	12	4
Enhancing the Local Economy	36	13	4	15	4
Securing Environmental Sustainability	18	8	3	4	3
Total	216	57 (26%)	49 (23%)	52 (24%)	58 (27%)

Progress against planned actions 2008/2009

10. In its 2008/2009 Strategic Plan, the Council identified 193 actions to progress its contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Community Strategy themes and strategic priorities.
11. Given the requirement to be ambitious in action planning, and the inevitability of unforeseen events causing delays, a high level of performance was achieved at the year-end, with 86% of actions completed.

Table 3: Performance against the planned actions at the end of 2008/2009

Theme	Total	Completed		Not completed
		By deadline	After deadline	
Creating Stronger Communities	8	4	0	4
Creating Safer Communities	33	26	1	6
Supporting Children and Young People	48	41	0	7
Promoting Adult Health and Well-Being	23	16	3	4
Enhancing the Local Economy	45	40	2	3
Securing Environmental Sustainability	36	29	4	3
Total	193	156 (81%)	10 (5%)	26 (14%)

KEY PERFORMANCE ISSUES BY THEME

12. The following tables set out key performance issues at the end of 2008/2009 by Strategic Plan theme.

Theme:	Creating stronger communities
Relevant Scrutiny Panel(s):	Community Safety and Leisure; Adult Social Care

Year-end evaluation

13. It is difficult to present an overall picture of progress against this theme, as the majority of indicators have only recently been baselined, so there is no reliable trend information to set targets. The five LAA targets are all survey based and targets will be set using 2008/2009 baselines.
14. The Council's contribution to this theme is through major regeneration activity (with a specific focus on culture), neighbourhood renewal, neighbourhood engagement and community cohesion initiatives, and supporting the Voluntary and Community Sector.
15. Performance in planned actions in relation to community cohesion continues to be variable; in particular attendance at Community Councils has not been increased to target. Nevertheless at local level a wide range of related activities have been maintained which have continued to ensure community engagement and involvement.

Key points of progress

16. The recently-published results from the National Place Survey has suggested that Middlesbrough remains amongst the top performing areas nationally for residents who consider themselves to have an input into local decision-making (NI4). The national survey of the voluntary and community sector (NI7) suggests Middlesbrough makes an above average contribution to the sector.

Key areas for improvement

17. Conversely, the initial Place Survey results suggest that Middlesbrough will remain bottom quartile for people who believe that different backgrounds get on well together in the area (NI1). Community cohesion activities therefore assume a greater significance.

For further information, see pages 3-5 and 36-37 of the 2008/2009 year-end performance report (Members' library).

Theme:	Creating safer communities
Relevant Scrutiny Panel(s):	Community Safety and Leisure

Year-end evaluation

18. The Council's contribution to this theme is through CCTV, licensing, environmental management, neighbourhood working and working with young people to divert and protect them from crime and anti-social behaviour. This work is undertaken as part of the overall approach determined by the Safer Middlesbrough Partnership.

19. Good progress was made during 2008/2009, with 27 (82%) of planned actions achieved, and four of the five LAA indicators with targets set achieved.

Key points of progress

20. Performance on crime reduction has improved, with violent and acquisitive crime falling in the year. The rate arson incidents in Middlesbrough declined by around one third during 2008/2009. The Place Survey has suggested significant reductions in the perceptions of anti-social behaviour as a problem locally, reflecting continued focus in this area.

Key areas for improvement

21. Middlesbrough remains a relatively 'high crime' area so the focus on crime reduction must be maintained. The action to merge the SMP Hate Crime Theme Group and the Community Cohesion Partnership has did not progress. Addressing of this issue is of particular importance given comments in paragraph 17.

For further information, see pages 5-9 and 38-43 of the 2008/2009 year-end performance report (Members' library).

Theme:	Supporting children and young people
Relevant Scrutiny Panel(s):	Children and Young People

Year-end evaluation

22. This theme focuses on the priorities for local children and young people identified by the Children's Trust and set out in the Children and Young People's Plan. This is a priority theme for the Council, with the majority of indicators relating to educational attainment, whilst (in general) improving year-on-year, not performing to target and declining performance on several safeguarding indicators.

Key points of progress

23. GCSE performance continues to improve and secondary school absence reduced considerably during the year.

24. Completion of child protection case reviews within timescale has improved from 97.7% to 100%.

Key areas for improvement

25. Performance in relation to the key indicators around children's health such as childhood obesity and teenage conceptions is off-target. The number of first time entrants into the Youth Justice System has increased (NI111).

26. Performance on safeguarding indicators has deteriorated, and a number of actions in this area were not completed. The number of children with a child protection plan has continued to rise (CF 11), which reflects similar rises nationally in the light of the Baby Peter case. Completion of initial assessment for social care in 7 days (NI 59) has declined from 82.2% to 78.1% and completion of looked after children case reviews within timescale has fallen from 94% to 79.1%. A safeguarding review is underway and an action plan has been developed.

For further information, see pages 10-21 and 44-52 of the 2008/2009 year-end performance report (Members' library).

Theme:	Promoting adult health and wellbeing, tackling exclusion and promoting equality
Relevant Scrutiny Panel(s):	Health; Adult Social Care

Year-end evaluation

27. The Council's contribution to this theme is through the work of the Social Care Department, along with health and probation partners. The "Putting People First" national concordat sets the strategic direction for Social Care services, and no changes are envisaged in the medium term. Good progress has been made in this theme with 19 (83%) of planned actions being achieved and 4 out of the 8 LAA targets with targets set being achieved.

Key points of progress

28. Performance on key social care indicators such as Direct Payments and people supported to live independently (NI136) continues to improve significantly. Performance against the LAA target to reduce the waiting times for major adaptations has improved significantly to 16.5 weeks against a target of 25.6 weeks. The Council was awarded Beacon Status for supporting independent living in 2008/2009.

Key areas for improvement

29. Performance against key indicators on public health (early death from circulatory disease and cancers) is off-target. Participation in smoking cessation programmes looks set to decline (NI123). These are long-term, but key issues for the town, and the Healthy Towns Programme will look to improve performance against core health indicators.

30. The current economic climate is impacting upon key targets to increase the employment rate for those with disabilities (NI149/150) and may also cause difficulties for provider partners. The situation has also caused difficulties for plans to deliver extra-care housing in the town, but a revised approach has now been developed.

For further information, see pages 22-26 and 53-56 of the 2008/2009 year-end performance report (Members' library).

Theme:	Enhancing the local economy
Relevant Scrutiny Panel(s):	Economic Regeneration and Transport

Year-end evaluation

31. The Council's contribution to this theme is through spatial planning, economic development and worklessness initiatives, cultural activity and the Housing and Transport Plans. Excellent progress has been achieved on the completion of planned actions, but performance against key indicators is variable and is likely to decline as more data becomes available, as a result of global financial climate. Actions that are more directly within the Council's control have continued to be progressed. This will ensure that the Council is as well placed and well prepared as possible to deliver when the economic situation improves by providing the clearest and most robust framework for development as possible.

Key points of progress

32. Performance against homelessness indicators and the processing of planning applications has improved in the year. Data on the majority of key economic indicators is still awaited.

Key areas for improvement

33. Inevitably, the current recession is impacting on delivery of this theme, and the impact on business and business areas has been clearly felt. Performance against indicators relating to employment and benefits is expected to decline, as information becomes

available. In addition, the impact on the housing market is demonstrated in negative performance against the LAA net additional homes provided indicator (NI154).

For further information, see pages 27-31 and 57-63 of the 2008/2009 year-end performance report (Members' library).

Theme:	Securing environmental sustainability
Relevant Scrutiny Panel(s):	Environment

Year-end evaluation

34. The Council's contribution to this theme is through street cleanliness, public open space, waste management and recycling, the reduction of carbon emissions and the promotion of sustainable development. This theme continues to demonstrate the strongest progress overall, with high levels of achievement against key indicators and planned actions.

Key points of progress

35. Performance on waste collection and recycling continued to improve during in the year, but remains some way behind national average rates. Performance on key street cleansing indicators continues to improve significantly. The national Place Survey results suggest that local satisfaction with parks and open spaces remains high. The Council continues to demonstrate best practice in its approach to carbon reduction and sustainability, in line with its national Beacon Status.

Key areas for improvement

36. Performance against the fly tipping indicator (NI196) has deteriorated.

For further information, see pages 32-34 and 64-69 of the 2008/2009 year-end performance report (Members' library).

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

37. The LAA is fundamentally linked to the delivery of the vision for Middlesbrough, so off-target performance in this area is concerning. Work has been undertaken during the preparation of the 2009/2010 Strategic Plan to prioritise actions impacting on LAA targets in the short to medium term. A Reward Grant of circa £1m is attached to the LAA. Failure to deliver the targets will impact on the receipt accrued.

38. Comprehensive Area Assessment will focus on local partners' capacity to improve performance against priority indicators. Where performance is low and plans to improve are not robust, a red flag may be raised in the Middlesbrough Area Assessment, to be published in November 2008.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Overview and Scrutiny Board notes the content of the report and identifies any issues for further investigation and/or for inclusion on the work programme.

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