



AGENDA ITEM: 7

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

09 MARCH 2010

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE: QUARTER THREE 2009/2010

KAREN ROBINSON, ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To provide an overview of the Council's performance at Quarter Three 2009/2010 and to identify potential issues and implications for the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

BACKGROUND

2. The 2009/2010 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 plans to take during the year to contribute to the achievement of these targets.
3. This report summarises the Council's performance against its key targets and planned improvement actions at the end of Quarter Three 2009/2010. Full details of progress are supplied in the full Quarter Three 2009/2010 performance report (available in the Members' library) for further consideration where required, with the thematic summary sections below signposting to additional information on key issues provided in the full report.

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, ten statutory targets relating to attainment (from the National Indicator Set) and a number of locally-determined measures relating to priority areas. At Quarter Three 2009/2010, performance information was available for 77% of indicators. Targets are not set for 6% of indicators, where baselines or reliable trends are not currently available. Of those indicators where performance could be measured against target, 46% were on target at Quarter Three 2009/2010.

Table 1: Performance against the LAA at Quarter Three 2009/2010

Theme	Total	On target	Not on target	Not yet known	Target not set
Creating Stronger Communities	4	0	0	4	0
Creating Safer Communities	9	3	4	1	1
Supporting Children and Young People	21	6	12	3	0
Promoting Adult Health and Well-Being	11	3	4	2	2
Enhancing the Local Economy	10	3	3	4	0
Securing Environmental Sustainability	6	5	0	0	1
Overall total*	61	20 (33%)	23 (38%)	14 (23%)	4 (6%)
Total (performance against target)	43	20 (46%)	23 (54%)		

* Excludes MAA indicators for corporate reporting.

5. The main under-performing theme remains '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. The increase in child protection and looked after children activity has continued to have a marked effect upon the majority of safeguarding indicators (NI 59 – NI 68) in the third quarter. Under -18 conceptions have continued to reduce and current data puts the rate of reduction at double the regional average.
6. Many indicators within the LAA relate to economic issues and it is estimated that the recession will impact negatively on around one fifth of National Indicators and the overall performance of the LAA. The current global financial situation continues to impact on related indicators in particular out of work benefits, with the gap between Middlesbrough and the North East increasing. However, other measures (such as overall unemployment rates) indicate that Middlesbrough has to date been affected less severely than Tees Valley neighbours.
7. Many of the Council's actions will contribute to the LAA targets, but in the longer term, so the impact is not yet reflected in current performance, particularly where there is a lag in the publication of recent data. Work continues 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.
8. The Local Area Agreement has now been reviewed and refreshed for 2010/2011 and future reporting will reflect the agreed changes.

Progress against the National Indicator Set and local targets

9. In terms of the Council's performance against all performance indicators, the position is more positive. At Quarter Three 2009/2010, performance information was available for 87% of all indicators. Targets are not set for 25% of indicators, where baselines or reliable trends are not currently available. Of those indicators where performance could be measured against target, 55% were on target at Quarter Three.

Table 2: Performance against all indicators at Quarter Three 2009/2010

Theme	Total	On target	Not on target	Not yet known	Target not set
Creating Stronger Communities	11	3	1	6	1
Creating Safer Communities	25	6	6	7	6
Supporting Children and Young People	77	21	33	4	19
Promoting Adult Health and Well-Being	33	11	9	4	9
Enhancing the Local Economy	45	16	7	8	14
Securing Environmental Sustainability	19	9	2	0	8
Fit for Purpose	22	12	6	2	2
Overall total	232	78 (34%)	64 (28%)	31 (13%)	59 (25%)
Total (performance against target)	142	78 (55%)	64 (45%)		

Progress against planned actions Quarter Three 2009/2010

10. In the 2009/2010 Strategic Plan, the Council identified 225 actions to progress its contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Community Strategy themes and strategic priorities. The corporate target is to achieve at least 85% of these actions during the year.
11. A high level of performance was evident at Quarter Three, with 68 (30%) actions completed and 138 (61%) on target – 91% completed or on target in total.
12. 19 actions were reported as not on target at the Quarter Three stage. Departments have been asked to identify which off target actions will be completed by the year-end. Based on this, the forecasted completion rate for planned actions for 2009/2010 is 93%. This exceeds the 2008/2009 achievement of 86%. Reasons provided for non-completion largely relate to internal capacity issues and the impact of the current economic climate.

Table 3: Performance against the planned actions at Quarter Three 2009/2010

Theme	Total	Completed	On target	Not on target	Not yet due to start
Creating Stronger Communities	13	2	11	0	0
Creating Safer Communities	21	4	16	1	0
Supporting Children and Young People	49	14	33	2	0
Promoting Adult Health and Well-Being	42	8	30	4	0
Enhancing the Local Economy	50	13	28	9	0
Securing Environmental Sustainability	17	9	7	1	0
Fit for Purpose	33	18	13	2	0
Overall total	225	68 (30%)	138 (61%)	19 (9%)	0 (0%)

KEY PERFORMANCE ISSUES BY THEME

13. The following sections set out key performance issues at the end of Quarter Three 2009/2010 by theme.

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

Quarter Three evaluation

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 against planned actions at Quarter Three was excellent overall, with 100% of actions on target.

Key points of progress

16. Good progress continues to be made in delivering planned actions by the reshaped Community Regeneration Service. A total of 44 projects to provide residents with a means of engaging with agencies and influencing decision-making were completed at Quarter Three, against a target of 24. In addition, new approaches are being introduced, particularly the new CLG Connecting Communities Programme in Thorntree.

17. A notable achievement under this theme in the last quarter included the early achievement of the annual target for attendances at arts, activities, events and programmes. The most recent data from the Active People Survey was released in Quarter Three, suggesting increased usage of museums and galleries.

18. The LSP's Stronger Communities Group is progressing the development of a strategy to improve local participation in volunteering (NI 6), in light of the town's comparatively low performance in this area.

Key areas for improvement

19. The recent Active People Survey results suggest an apparent decline in library usage. However, local data suggest that visitor numbers have increased. Furthermore, Library User Survey results have been published and indicate high satisfaction rates with the service (94%). Phase One of the library review was implemented in February 2010, to be followed by Phase Two during 2010/11.

For further information, see pages 3-5 and 43-45 of the Quarter Three 2009/2010 performance report (Members' library).

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

Quarter Three evaluation

20. 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.

21. Good progress was made during Quarter Three, with 95% of planned actions under this theme completed or on target to be achieved, and 50% of National Indicators on or around targeted levels. Three LAA indicators with targets agreed are on target.

Key points of progress

22. Quarter Three saw continued improvement in relation to serious acquisitive crime, arson incidents and primary fires, which are forecast to achieve year-end targets. However, due to a fatality in the first quarter, the total number of fatalities due to primary fires (NI 49ii) will not achieve the year-end target of zero.

23. The Families Intervention Project is now operational and working with anti-social behaviour and child poverty referral cases. New referral criteria has been developed for Intensive Intervention Programme (IIP) to ensure intensive support is offered to the most appropriate/ at risk young people.

Key areas for improvement

24. Whilst year-on-year improvement is likely to be achieved, targets around serious violent crime, assault with injury and adult re-offending remained marginally off-target at Quarter Three.

25. Diverting young people away from crime and anti-social behaviour continues to be a high priority, with actions to achieve this target primarily being delivered through the Youth Crime Action Plan (YCAP). Good progress was reported at Quarter Three, however operation ‘Stay Safe’, a coordinated initiative to protect vulnerable young people has been temporarily suspended to allow the scope of the scheme to be discussed.

For further information, see pages 6-13 and 46-53 of the Quarter Three 2009/2010 performance report (Members’ library).

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

Quarter Three evaluation

26. The most significant performance issues locally remain within the safeguarding and attainment areas, with the majority of National Indicators off-target. Excellent progress is being made on planned actions, with 96% on target.

Key points of progress

27. The National Strategies team has highlighted good performance points around rates of progress in the Foundation stages and no schools presented concerns under the World Class Primary initiative at the recent GONE strategic engagement meeting.

28. Following a recent inspection, the Council’s adoption and fostering services emerged with a rating of ‘good’ for their overall quality.

29. The *Making a Positive Contribution* priority is performing well, with work on target for the implementation of the new integrated youth support service from April 2010. National Indicators are now displaying positive performance, although remain slightly behind target. The rate of reduction in under-18 conceptions (NI 112) improved to -23.3% (2008 data), double the regional average performance.

Key areas for improvement

30. Twelve primary schools have been identified as being below floor targets for English and Maths at KS2. Performance issues for improvement are being investigated with senior advisors to improve outcomes for all children but focussing on the achievement of boys at Levels 4 and 5.

31. School meal take up in secondary schools (NI 52) has continued to fall, with total meals served down 45% year-on-year. However, primary schools demonstrate an overall increase of 2.5% year on year, with free meal numbers up 14%. This reflects the two-stage price increase introduced during the year.

32. Safeguarding caseload remains very high, with consequential performance issues and significant budgetary pressure. An unannounced inspection by Ofsted in December 2009 identified no areas for priority action, but set out some areas for development including local use of the integrated Children’s System (ICS), the recording of case information and use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). An action plan is now in place to address these and other internally identified issues, however year-end targets will in most cases not be met. The Deputy Director for Safeguarding will attend the meeting to discuss progress.

For further information, see pages 14-26 and 54-61 of the Quarter Three 2009/2010 performance report (Members’ library).

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

Quarter Three evaluation

33. The Council’s contribution to this theme is through the work of the Social Care Department, along with health and probation partners. Overall, performance in Quarter Three remained strong, with the majority of actions and targets on course to be achieved.

34. It must be noted, however, that greater evidence has emerged during Quarter Three on the impact of the recession on some targets, notably in securing employment for people with substance misuse problems, where fewer opportunities are available. Nevertheless, positive progress has been achieved during the economic downturn and work continues to explore all options to support and enable vulnerable people into work.

35. The impact of the flu pandemic, proved to be minimal from a social care perspective, but winter pressures, coupled with severely adverse weather conditions, saw demand for social care services increase significantly towards the end of Quarter Three. The full impact on performance will not emerge until Quarter Four, but if demand continues at the current rate, there could be negative consequences for targets around the timeliness of assessments and the provision of care packages. Every effort will be made to improve performance, and the additional short term funding agreed by the Council to increase

capacity to undertake reviews of care plans will free up capacity for assessments and care planning for new clients.

Key points of progress

- 36. Performance on self-directed support and independent living (including the provision of major adaptations and equipment) remains excellent.
- 37. Progress has been made to ensure young people in transition from children’s to adult services will have a better quality of life, with self-directed support. A transition team is now in place focussing on the implementation of person-centred plans.
- 38. Addressing health inequalities remains a significant challenge for the PCT and the Council; however, latest figures show significant improvements in local mortality rates. Targets around smoking cessation and alcohol-related hospital admissions are expected to achieve year-end targets. The Health Town programme includes a range of actions to address physical health needs, in addition the Alcohol Treatment Plan and Smoking Cessation Strategy will have a direct impact on improving health in the long term.

Key areas for improvement

- 39. Performance in respect of the timeliness of assessments and provision of care packages has slipped, for the reasons set out in paragraph 37. This issue is being investigated and may require a diversion of resources from the Assessment function if no additional short term funding can be resourced. If this were to happen there would be an adverse impact on performance in this area.
- 40. Latest data for drug users in effective treatment (NI 40) suggests performance has declined, but this is primarily due to data cleansing within services that commenced earlier in the year. It is still expected that the year-end target will be achieved.
- 41. The recent Active People Survey results suggested that participation in sports and physical exercise (18.5%) has declined, in line with the regional position. While disappointing, given the current focus on this area through Healthy Towns and the Active Middlesbrough Strategy, due to the small numbers surveyed for this indicator, the decline is not viewed as statistically significant.

For further information, see pages 27-32 and 62-71 of the Quarter Three 2009/2010 performance report (Members’ library).

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

Quarter Three evaluation

- 42. The Council’s contribution to this theme is through spatial planning, economic development and worklessness initiatives, cultural activity and the Housing and Transport Plans.
- 43. Progress on actions for this theme was generally positive at Quarter Three, however the impact of the recent economic recession is now increasingly evident in performance against National Indicators and has caused some actions to slip.

Key points of progress

- 44. Progress against most actions remained positive at Quarter Three, particularly those around encouraging business formation and growth, creating jobs and assisting residents to access jobs. Notable successes include the engagement of 557 (cumulative) businesses against a milestone target of 400, despite the deepening economic recession.
- 45. Private sector house building completions collapsed in the period April to September 2009, with only 49 starts and 75 completions. However, in Quarter Three alone there were 37 new starts and 78 completions. This trend should continue with 11 private sector housing starts in January 2010 and work commencing on two sites.
- 46. The HCA National Affordable Housing programme bid has been successful with a grant of £1.14m being awarded for the construction of 20 apartments for older people.

Key areas for improvement

- 47. The recession is beginning to display impact upon performance against key economy-related National Indicators and some activity, particularly benefits uptake. Despite this overall employment rate remains positive (based on data currently available) and encouragingly, the median earnings of employees has shown improvement, although interpreting the cause and impact of this is difficult.
- 48. Due to the economic recession, the Middlehaven Partners are reviewing how Middlehaven is to be taken forward. As a result, a number of actions relating to the regeneration of the Middlehaven area are now on hold.

For further information, see pages 33-38 and 72-81 of the Quarter Three 2009/2010 performance report (Members' library).

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

Quarter Three evaluation

- 49. 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 all of which are high on the government agenda. This theme continued to demonstrate strong progress overall, with high levels of achievement against key indicators and planned actions.

Key points of progress

- 50. The Council's Area Care service continues to review and examine service delivery and deploys resources effectively, in order to target specific problem areas. This has resulted in clearly measurable and noticeable improvements in standards of cleanliness throughout all areas of the town, which have again continued at Quarter Three.
- 51. Performance against waste and recycling indicators continues to be generally positive. Significant progress has been made with planning to adopt climate change (NI 188) with Middlesbrough being one of only 6% of councils meeting level 2 in 2009. The Adaptation Strategy document is due for publication in March 2010, enabling the Council to declare Level 3.

Key areas for improvement

52. Two waste indicators (recycling and waste landfill) remain off target. A fire earlier in 2009 at the EFW plant continues to impact on both performance and cost, due to diversions of waste to landfill.
53. Work continues to reduce carbon emissions in the area (NI186). However, the AEA are continuing to investigate data inaccuracies that have resulted in and apparent increase in Middlesbrough's emissions.

For further information, see pages 39-41 and 82-86 of the Quarter Three 2009/2010 performance report (Members' library).

Theme:	Fit for purpose
Relevant Scrutiny Panel(s):	Overview and Scrutiny Board

Quarter Three evaluation

54. The Fit for Purpose theme aims to further strengthen the Council's strategic framework in respect of value for money, information, workforce planning, and policy development and performance management. Performance at Quarter Three remained positive with 94% of actions either completed or on target and all National Indicators for which information was available on target.

Key points of progress

55. A number of key achievements were reported in the quarter, notably:
- £3.12m of Performance Reward Grant (PRG) from the Council's participation in LPSA2 received, and the approach to PRG utilisation agreed.
 - 2008/2009 performance against the Value for Money National Indicator (NI179) confirmed as within the top quartile nationally.
56. All financial indicators reported positive performance at Quarter Three, with Council Tax and NNDR collection rates improving on the same period in 2008/2009 and continuing to exceed internal targets.

Key areas for improvement

57. Performance against some key local indicators remained off-target, notably in respect of workforce diversity and the rate of sickness absence.
58. Work around Positive Steps will impact on performance against those PIs related to the diversity of both the overall and top-paid workforce in the longer-term. In planning for 2010/2011, consideration will be given to new approaches to positive action concerning the diversity of the workforce.
59. The impact of swine flu on the rate of sickness absence has been lower than expected and performance is improving. Whilst marginally off-target at Quarter Three, the 2009/2010 target of 9 days may still be achieved at the year-end.

For further information, see pages 42 and 87-91 of the Quarter Three 2009/2010 performance report (Members' library).

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

60. The LAA is fundamentally linked to the delivery of the vision for Middlesbrough, so off-target performance in this area is concerning. Work was undertaken during the preparation of the 2009/2010 Strategic Plan to prioritise actions impacting on LAA targets in the short to medium term. However, the current economic climate will inevitably impact on the likelihood of some targets being achieved. A Reward Grant of circa £1m is attached to the LAA. Failure to deliver the targets will impact on the receipt accrued.

2010/2011 STRATEGIC PLAN

61. The 2010/2011 Strategic Plan is currently in development, and discussions will be held with Scrutiny Panels in March/April 2010 on targets and actions for the coming year. Following this a draft of the plan will be presented to OSB for comment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

62. 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.

AUTHOR: Paul Stephens, Corporate Performance Team Leader
TEL NO: 729223