



AGENDA ITEM: 5

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

2 September 2010

COUNCIL PERFORMANCE: QUARTER ONE 2010/2011

ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To provide an overview of the Council's performance at Quarter One 2010/2011.

BACKGROUND

2. The 2010/2011 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 Quarter One 2010/2011. A detailed progress update is provided in the Quarter One 2010/2011 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 the end of quarter one 2010/2011, performance information was available for 93% of indicators. Targets had not been set for 13% of indicators, where baselines or reliable trends were not available. Of those indicators where performance could be measured against target, 51% were on target at the end of Quarter One 2010/2011. This is down from 54% at the end of 2009/2010.

Table 1: Performance against the Middlesbrough LAA 2008-2011, at Quarter One 2010/2011.

Theme	Total	On target	Not on target	Not yet known	Target not set
Creating stronger communities	4	0	0	0	4
Creating safer communities	9	4	4	0	1
Supporting children and young people	21	7	11	2	1
Promoting adult health and well-being	11	4	4	2	1
Enhancing the local economy	8	3	5	0	0
Securing environmental sustainability	6	4	1	0	1
Overall total*	59	24 (41%)	23 (39%)	4 (7%)	8 (13%)
Total (performance against target)	47	24 (51%)	23 (49%)		

* 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, have not performed to national target levels. Provisional attainment results for academic year 2009/2010 are released in August 2010 and will be included in the Quarter Two progress update.
6. The LAA sets out priority improvement areas for the town, many of which relate to economic issues. Many of the national economy-related indicators used in the LAA are subject to a considerable data-lag (i.e. the data is between one and two years old when published). For this reason, the recent global recession and its aftermath will continue to affect the LAA economy-related measures as data emerges. At the end of Quarter One 2010/2011 over 60% of these indicators were not achieving targets (set pre-recession). However, the housing market indicators (e.g. net additional homes) have shown a considerable improvement reflecting the increased levels of new build underway in the town.
7. The main change from the end of 2009/2010 related to the performance of the community safety indicators in Quarter One. There were slight deteriorations in performance against the violent crime indicators from the 2009/2010 figures and against the 2010/2011 target profile, but this is against a background of significantly increased crime overall. Serious acquisitive crime rates continued to reduce significantly.

Current progress against the National Indicator Set and local targets

8. The coalition government has indicated that it intends to reduce the burden of audit and inspection on local authorities and accordingly has moved quickly to amend the current national performance framework:
 - Comprehensive Area Assessment was abolished with immediate effect in June 2010 and no information will be published in respect of the CAA Year 2 work, which was underway at that time. No replacement for CAA is anticipated.
 - The 2010 Place Survey was postponed, and the 13 National Indicators measured via the survey will not be reported in 2010/2011. The future of the Place Survey will be reviewed.
 - In addition, the national TellUs Survey for children and young people was deleted, together with its five NIs.
9. Following these deletions, Middlesbrough is now reporting against 200 measures of performance overall. Clarification on the long-term future of Local Area Agreements

and the National Indicator Set is expected with the publication of the Spending Review in October 2010.

10. The Council's overall performance level (across the National Indicator Set and locally retained indicators) is similar to that reported for the LAA. At Quarter One 2010/2011, performance information was available for 98% of all indicators. However, targets had not been set for 21% of indicators, where baselines or reliable trends were not available, or where partners had not set a target ¹. 52% of those indicators for which a target had been set were demonstrating on target performance at the end of the quarter. Details on the key performance issues reported in Quarter One are set out below.

Table 2: Performance against all indicators used by the Council at Quarter One 2010/2011.

Theme	Total	On target	Not on target	Not yet known	Target not set
Creating stronger communities	5	1	2	0	2
Creating safer communities	13	3	7	0	3
Supporting children and young people	74	30	29	1	14
Promoting adult health and well-being	35	13	12	1	9
Enhancing the local economy	37	15	12	2	8
Securing environmental sustainability	17	7	5	1	4
Fit for purpose	19	10	7	0	2
Overall total	200	79 (40%)	74(37%)	5(2%)	42 (21%)
Total (performance against target)	153	79 (52%)	74 (48%)		

Quarter One 2010/2011: progress against planned actions and key indicators

11. In the recent 2010/2011 Strategic Plan, the Council identified 194 actions to progress its contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Community Strategy themes and strategic priorities. The corporate floor target is to achieve at least 85% of these actions during the year.
12. The actions were specified prior to the new government's in-year grant reductions and other policy initiatives, which will clearly result in the deletion of some actions and delays in, or the failure to achieve, others during the year. This report will be used to track the impact of budget reductions on planned performance levels across the year, as issues emerge. However, at the Quarter One stage a high level of performance was maintained, with 89% of actions either completed or on target.

¹ There appear to be three reasons for this: (1) The majority of the indicators report based on very small numbers, and so are subject to significant percentage variations; consequently it is not possible to set robust annual targets. (2) The indicators may not be used within the performance frameworks of local partners, so there is no process to set targets for them. (3) No one partner is responsible for the indicators, so there is no process to set targets for them. These issues are an acknowledged difficulty posed by the current National Indicator Set and will be addressed in the ongoing review, should the government decide to retain the NIS.

Table 3: Performance against planned actions at Quarter One 2010/2011.

Theme	Total	Completed	On target	Not on target
Creating Stronger Communities	18	1	15	2
Creating Safer Communities	6	1	5	0
Supporting Children and Young People	50	9	37	4
Promoting Adult Health and Well-Being	34	0	25	9
Enhancing the Local Economy	37	1	33	3
Securing Environmental Sustainability	14	2	10	2
Fit for Purpose	35	3	31	1
Overall total	194	17 (9%)	156 (80%)	21 (11%)

13. The following sections set out key performance issues at the end of Quarter One 2010/2011, by Sustainable Community Strategy theme.

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

Quarter One 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 support for the Voluntary and Community Sector.
15. Following the postponement of the 2010 Place Survey, there are now only five National Indicators under this theme (a reduction of ten indicators). Performance under this theme is largely determined by the perceptions of local people, and work is going to determine how overall progress can be measured should all national surveys be discontinued.
16. The two indicators currently off target relate to the Active People Survey (library usage and engagement in the arts), for which the next dataset will be published in December 2010. Of 18 planned actions, just two were off target at the Quarter One stage, suggesting a high level of performance will be maintained under this theme.

Key points of progress

17. The Community Regeneration service has maintained a high level of delivery in respect of community involvement and cohesion initiatives. Over 100 local forums have been facilitated and supported, 21 town-wide opportunities for involvement in practical projects have been facilitated and work continues with residents and services to refresh Neighbourhood Plans. However, this area is largely grant-funded, and is likely to be affected by the recently announced cuts. A review of service provision is ongoing.
18. Arts and cultural events programmes continue to perform well, with visitors to museums and galleries demonstrating further increases, and the recent Middlesbrough Music Live and Middlesbrough Mela events attracting record numbers.

Key areas for improvement

19. The Environment Department's Money Skills programme failed to achieve its quarterly milestone of one course per quarter, but two events will now be held in Quarter Two to compensate for this. The department has reported a significant increase in demand for financial advice from local residents, reflecting the current economic conditions.
20. Following the failure to hit the 2009/2010 libraries visitors target, Quarter One saw numbers fall by 5,000 on the same quarter in 2009/2010. This is reflective of both a gradual decline in library usage (as evidenced by the national Active People Survey) and an increase in the use of transactional services (e.g. renewals) via the Internet. The review of libraries is ongoing.

For further information, see pages 3-4 and 26-28 of the Quarter One 2010/2011 performance report (Members' library).

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

Quarter One evaluation

21. 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 via the Safer Middlesbrough Partnership.
22. Good progress was made in respect of planned actions for this theme in Quarter One, with 100% completed or on target, but overall performance against National Indicators was down, with over 50% off target. However, this is against a background of total crime in Middlesbrough reducing for several consecutive years.

Key points of progress

23. Improvement was maintained in Quarter One in relation to serious acquisitive crime (NI16), which with a projected year-end rate of 16.38 per 1,000 population would be well over 1,000 incidents less than the LAA target.
24. Early data on hospital admissions for alcohol-related harm suggests continued improvement and that the LAA target will be comfortably achieved. However, alcohol misuse remains an ongoing issue for Middlesbrough.
25. The Council launched an action plan to reduce local perceptions of anti-social behaviour in Quarter One. Response to fly tips, graffiti and needles within agreed timescales was between 98-100%.

Key areas for improvement

26. Serious violent crime and assaults with injury (the alcohol-related violence proxy) rates were off target at Quarter One. The serious violent crime figure equates to

around 100 incidents (projected) and so a very small increase in incidents can result in off target performance. The Council is continuing work with partners to address alcohol-related anti-social behaviour.

27. Repeat incidents of domestic violence improved by over 3% from the 2009/2010 year-end figure but was short of the 44% target at 48% at Quarter One. The Social Care Department is currently overseeing the implementation of the national Violence against Women and Girls Strategy within Middlesbrough, but grant cuts and other funding constraints may affect future progress in this area.

For further information, see pages 5-6 and 24-26 of the Quarter One 2010/2011 performance report (Members' library).

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

Quarter One evaluation

28. The Council's contribution to this theme is through the work of the Children, Families and Learning Department with partners in the Middlesbrough Children's Trust.
29. This theme has by far the most National Indicators ascribed to it and many of these, particularly in relation to educational performance, are subject to national target setting. Performance at Quarter One remained variable, with only 51% of indicators for which a target was set on target. 92% of planned actions were completed or on target at the end of the quarter, however, many actions in this area are grant-funded, and are likely to be affected by the recently announced cuts.
30. The most significant performance issues locally remain within the safeguarding and attainment areas, as set out below.

Key points of progress

31. Performance against the majority of safeguarding issues has demonstrated improvement in Quarter One 2010/2011, as set out below.

Indicator	2009/2010 Actual	2010/2011 Target	2010/2011 Q1	Improved?	On target?
NI59 Initial assessments within 7 days	73.6%	83%	83.4%	Yes	Yes
NI60 Core assessments within 35 days	82%	85%	53%	No	No
NI61 Children adopted within 12 months of decision	70%	100%	100%	Yes	Yes
NI62 LAC with 3 or more placements in year	10.2%	11.5%	1.2%	Yes	Yes
NI63 LAC <16 with stable placements of 2 yrs+	56%	65%	64.4%	Yes	No
NI64 CPPs lasting 2 years or more	9.9%	0%	12%	No	No
NI65 Children subject to CPP for subsequent time	15.7%	15%	29.7%	No	No
NI66 LAC reviewed within timescales	72.2%	95%	91.8%	Yes	No
NI67 CP cases reviewed within timescales	98%	100%	100%	Yes	Yes
NI68 Referrals going to initial assessment	78%	70%	49%	Yes	Yes

- 32. The very significant rate of increase in caseload experienced in recent years (with LAC up 19% in 2009/2010 and child protection plans up by 67% over the past 18 months) slowed in Quarter One, although levels remain very high.
- 33. There has been a significant decrease in referrals proceeding to initial assessment and a corresponding rise in the timeliness of initial assessments. However, the timeliness of core assessments has dropped significantly. Indicators dealing with the stability of Looked After Children have improved significantly, but performance on Child Protection Plans has deteriorated. In addition, hospitalisations for accidental/deliberate injury have increased slightly and this indicator is off target.
- 34. Teenage pregnancy rates maintained improvement levels at Quarter One (23% below the baseline year) while remaining short of the stretching national target (55% below).

Key areas for improvement

- 35. The secondary school persistent absence rate (NI 87) increased to 8.3% from 7.6% in 2009/2010 and the take up of primary school lunches (NI 52a) continued to decline, from 63.1% to 57.9%.
- 36. Two school improvement actions were reported as off target at Quarter One, and the Children, Families and Learning Department has reported that a number of other planned actions are likely to be threatened by grant reductions. The approach to school improvement support is currently under review.
- 37. Due to ongoing funding and implementation problems, the joint Triage Project (CF 33) has been cancelled.

For further information, see pages 7-13 and 29-39 of the Quarter One 2010/2011 performance report (Members' library).

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

Quarter One evaluation

- 38. The Council's contribution to this theme is through the work of the Social Care Department, with health and probation partners.
- 39. Performance at Quarter One was generally positive. While nine actions were reported as off target, this represented minor slippage only in the main, with year-end completion expected for the majority. However, grants cuts and policy changes applied by the new government are likely to affect some targets and actions going forward, as set out below.

Key points of progress

40. Excellent progress is being made on the personalisation agenda, with the 30% target for personal budgets (reflected in NI130) by the year-end likely to be comfortably achieved.
41. Transfer of care, adaptations and timeliness of assessments and care packages indicators are all performing well and were on target at Quarter One. Mobile working through the Staying Put Agency has contributed to a reduction in the waiting time for major adaptations at seven weeks, although this will eventually be affected by future funding reductions.

Key areas for improvement

42. Independent living indicators ((NIs 136 and 141) were both significantly off target at Quarter One). The Social Care Department has reported that grant cuts and future funding changes in respect of the Independent Living Fund and Housing Benefit will put the development of independent living at risk and threaten projected efficiencies from reduced reliance on high-cost residential care.
43. The economic downturn is proving a far greater barrier than anticipated in secure employment for vulnerable adults. Ayresome Industries is struggling to create new product lines and new businesses to employ disabled people and only two additional people with substance misuse problems found employment in Quarter One. The Social Care Department is currently reviewing the future business strategy for Ayresome Industries.
44. Current and forthcoming changes in the health sector are beginning to impact on some partnership actions, with the plan to develop a community stroke rehabilitation service now cancelled and slippage reported in the local implementation of the Regional End of Life Care Strategy.
45. The Healthy Towns programme (EN10) is on the whole on target with one or two minor delays within the milestones, and funding for the remainder of the programme is now confirmed. The Environment Department is currently engaged in discussions to clarify the evaluation requirements for the programme following completion.

For further information, see pages 14-16 and 40-44 of the Quarter One 2010/2011 performance report (Members' library).

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

Quarter One evaluation

46. The Council's contribution to this theme is through spatial planning, economic development and worklessness initiatives, cultural activity and the Housing and Transport Plans.

47. Progress on actions for this theme was generally positive at Quarter One with 92% of actions either completed or on target. However the impact of the recent recession continues to impact on performance nationally and economy-related indicators continue to fluctuate accordingly, as outlined above. Many actions in this area are grant-funded, and are likely to be affected by the recently announced cuts. In addition, a significant proportion of the policy changes of the new government will fall in this theme and may result in the slippage and/or amendment of some planned actions in future quarters.

Key points of progress

48. Performance in respect of encouraging business formation and growth, creating jobs and assisting residents to access jobs remained very positive at Quarter One, with all actions on target. This is very notable performance in the current economic circumstances.
49. Housing market indicators (e.g. NI 154: the number of affordable homes and NI155: net additional homes) continued to improve in line with revised target profiles, and the housing support indicators (homelessness, adaptations) continue to perform well. Additionally the processing of planning applications (NI 157) continues to demonstrate high performance excepting major applications, which is affected by small numbers (with three applications only processed in Quarter One).

Key areas for improvement

50. The Local Employment Strategy (RG22) is currently off target, with the employment rate gap between Middlesbrough and the North East widening to 1.4% on the previous year. Data suggests that benefits claimant numbers have started to increase due, for example, to the Garlands Call Centres closures.
51. The Regeneration Department is developing a local intelligence data set, which will provide more timely information on the Middlesbrough economy and inform planning across the town.
52. Two transport actions were missing target at Quarter One. The programme for 20mph speed limit initiatives (EN27) has been affected by in-year grant reductions and implementation of the recommendations of the taxi rank and vehicle review (EN15) slipped due to obtaining agreements with the trade. A revised approach is being considered for 20mph speed limits and EN15 will complete in Quarter Two.

For further information, see pages 17-21 and 45-50 of the Quarter One 2010/2011 performance report (Members' library).

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

Quarter One evaluation

53. 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 continued to demonstrate strong progress with only two actions off target at Quarter One.

Key points of progress

54. Overall the standards of cleanliness across Middlesbrough remained high at Quarter One, with only the result for litter (NI195a) reported as slightly off target. Continued litter collections and sweeping operations should improve performance in the next quarter.
55. The new kerbside dry recycling contract service with additional materials (EN 37) was implemented in Quarter One, which should ensure that the Council meets its recycling target at the year-end.

Key areas for improvement

56. Performance levels on waste national indicators were maintained at Quarter One, with the exception of waste diverted to landfill (NI193), which was significantly off target due to breakdowns at the Efw Plant. Discussions are in progress to alleviate the issues, however it is expected that problems will be experienced for the next two years, with the Efw plant planned to be down for 40 weeks in 2011/2012 for upgrades.
57. The Play builder funded programme has been suspended pending discussions with Play England in respect of the grant funding for the project. This puts the final three play areas at risk, including the major play area in the Stewart Park redevelopment.

For further information, see pages 20-21 and 51-53 of the Quarter One 2010/2011 performance report (Members' library).

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

Quarter One evaluation

58. 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.
59. Performance at the end of Quarter One remained positive, with 98% of actions either completed or on target. Three National Indicators have been deleted from this theme

(NI14: avoidable contact, NI140: fair treatment for local services, and NI180: changes to HB/CTB entitlement) and will not be retained by the Council.

Key points of progress

60. Good progress was made against the corporate value for money strategy, with the Council achieving efficiencies of £17.040m for 2009/2010 against a national target of £10.904m (the saving per Band D dwelling was £425 in Middlesbrough, compared with £169 nationally).
61. CMT is leading a transformation programme for the Council, addressing current and anticipated funding reductions in the public sector. Monthly meetings of the corporate transformation board are underway to develop and oversee the programme.
62. Sickness absence was significantly reduced at 1.75 days in Quarter One (with same period in 2009/2010 at 2.43 days), projecting a year-end figure of seven days.

Key areas for improvement

63. Council Tax collection (NI 9) and the speed of processing changes of circumstances claims in HB/CTB (NI 181) were behind target at Quarter One. Council Tax was only marginally short of target and it is anticipated that the recent introduction of three new members of staff will put it back on track at the end of Quarter Two. Changes in circumstances are affected by rent increases actioned in Quarter Four each year and consequently the annual target should be achieved.
64. Indicators on the diversity of the overall and top paid workforce remain volatile due to relatively small numbers of employees involved. Capacity to improve these figures may be limited due to current recruitment constraints, and a new approach to positive action is being considered.

For further information, see pages 22-23 and 54-58 of the Quarter One 2010/2011 performance report (Members' library).

Key programmes and projects

65. The Council is monitoring progress against its key programmes and projects as part of its quarterly performance monitoring arrangements. At the Quarter One stage, only Grove Hill and Business Improvement District reported minor slippage, with risks highlighted against MyPlace and Levick due to funding issues.

Implications for the Council and local communities

66. The Council's Strategic Plan is fundamentally linked to the delivery of the vision for Middlesbrough, so off-target performance is concerning. Work continues to prioritise actions impacting on the Sustainable Community Strategy and associated LAA targets in the short to medium term. However, the current economic climate, and forthcoming reductions in public spending, will inevitably impact on the likelihood of some targets being achieved.

67. The Council's budget setting process has been developed in line with the priorities set out in the Strategic Plan, therefore the financial implications of the work programme described in this report have been fully considered. In-year changes are reflected in the quarterly revenue and capital outturn reports.

RECOMMENDATIONS

68. 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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