

<b>Committee:</b>	PERFORMANCE SELECT COMMITTEE	<b>Agenda Item</b>
<b>Date:</b>	28 July 2009	<b>6</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>2009/10 QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT</b>	
<b>Author:</b>	Tülay Norton, Business Improvement & Performance Officer, Ext 569	Item for information and decision

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### Summary

- 1 This report presents a summary of performance data for 2009/10 Quarter 1 (Apr - Jun) for the Corporate, National and Service Indicators.
- 2 Performance data is reported for all of the Corporate, National and Service Indicators as requested by Strategic Management Board.
- 3 It should be noted that the data for 1 Corporate Indicator (Planning Appeals Allowed) is draft and needs to be verified by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 4 All of the Quarter 1 figures have been extracted from Covalent. This data has been loaded onto the system by officers that have direct responsibility for the performance management and reporting of relevant indicator(s).
- 5 For all indicators where the performance is below target, explanatory notes have been collected from relevant officers and included in the 'Comments' column of the spreadsheets.

### Recommendations

- 6 That the Committee discusses 2009/10 Quarter 1 performance analysis, notes the views of Strategic Management Board (SMB), and, with regard to point 17 below, approves:
  - The tolerance level rising from 5% to 10% in line with many other councils and
  - that only red status indicators for National and Service indicators be brought to PSC for formal review.

### Background Papers

- 7 Business Improvement & Performance Team internal files 2008 and 2009.
- 8 National Indicators for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships: Handbook of Definitions

### Impact

Communication/Consultation	Communication on performance is carried out via Utterings, Uttlesford Life, Members' Bulletin and specific service briefings
Community Safety	None beyond service improvement on the Community Safety performance indicators. Awaiting comment from Essex Police
Equalities	None beyond service improvement on the equality and diversity performance indicators
Finance	Performance Improvement Plans cover any additional funding associated with recovery of performance
Human Rights	None
Legal implications	The Audit Commission's focus on data quality, will require consideration and quality assurance controls
Sustainability	No direct impact resulting from report findings

## Situation

- 9 The Council collects a number of indicators to monitor performance and these form part of the performance management framework. They include:
- National Performance Indicators specified by the Government
  - Local Performance (Corporate and Service) Indicators determined by the Council, which the Government expects to reflect local priorities.
- 10 As part of the ongoing review and improvement of corporate performance management at Uttlesford District Council, performance indicators are reported directly to the Performance Select Committee.

## Strategic Management Board Commentary

- 11 SMB has reviewed the Q1 performance data. Whilst there are concerns about some areas of performance, SMB is satisfied that the report heralds no big surprises and, indeed, action is already being taken to address the more serious levels of under-performance.
- 12 There are clear links between the standard of performance and the fact that many services at Uttlesford lack resilience. In a relatively small district council there is a heavy reliance on small units to deliver key services. There tends to be no 'slack' to deal with issues such as sickness, staff shortages and national trends such as the economic downturn, and the consequent increase in enquiries/applications. This is a problem faced by an increasing number of local

authorities (particularly district councils) and has led to the move towards shared services and partnership working.

- 13 Planning (NI 157b and 157c) is an example of a key service area that is currently suffering from that lack of resilience. In terms of the planning service, we are in the process of implementing changes following a comprehensive review by the Business Improvement Team. The service has also suffered from problems of long term sickness and staff shortages. These issues are being addressed and SMB is also looking at the merits of partnership working.
- 14 Another such area is benefits (NI 180 and 181). Performance has dipped in the face of the impact of the economic downturn. Capacity has been increased to some extent, but not sufficiently at this stage to materially improve performance on a consistent basis. This service is a typical area where partnership working has been shown to be beneficial and the Council is actively pursuing this option.
- 15 It is interesting to note that a number of local authorities use a variation of 10% against target as the trigger for 'special report', as opposed to the more demanding 5% currently used by Uttlesford. Whilst tight monitoring of targets is commendable, SMB questions whether the figure of 5% is really useful in terms of the resources used at all levels of the organisation to seek out explanations, monitor and manage the process. For example, some of the PIs reported as 'significantly below target' are above 5% but below 10% of targets.
- 16 SMB has introduced additional measures to monitor and manage performance. Individual HoDs report to SMB on a rotational basis (one per week). They are required to explain progress against both their divisional plan actions and service performance.
- 17 The committee is therefore invited to consider increasing the 'tolerance threshold' (red status) from 5% to 10% for the remainder of 2009/10. This approach could then be reviewed at the end of the financial year. In addition it is proposed that only red status indicators for National and Service indicators be brought to PSC for formal review.

### **SMB Summary**




- 18 Whilst performance in some areas deteriorated in Quarter 1, compared to 2008/09, SMB remains confident that the measures already taken, as well as those proposed, will help to improve the situation.
- 19 The committee is recommended to increase the 'tolerance threshold' from 5% to 10%, as indicated above (as of Q2 reporting) and focus it's attention on those indicators that have a red status only.

**Summary Data Analysis**




**Quarter 1 Performance Data**

20 The performance management spreadsheet details the Quarter 1 performance data that has been collected and analysed for 14 Corporate, 5 National and 33 Service Indicators.




**Corporate Indicators** (based on **14** indicators)

5% or more off target	Up to 5% off target	On or above target
		
3	2	9
<b>21%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>64%</b>

**National Indicators** (based on **5** indicators)




5% or more off Target	Up to 5% off target	On or above target
		
4	0	1
<b>80%</b>	<b>0 %</b>	<b>20%</b>

**Service Indicators** (based on **33** indicators in total)




5% or more off Target	Up to 5% off target	On or above target
		
8	2	23
<b>24%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>70%</b>

21 **Short Term Trend (comparing Quarter 1 performance to Quarter 4)**




**Corporate Indicators** (based on 14 indicators in total)

Performance against Q4 2008/09		
	Improved	2 (14%)
	Worsened	5 (36%)
	Unchanged	1 (7%)
N/A	New indicator	6 (43%)

**National Indicators** (based on 5 indicators in total)




Performance against Q4 2008/09		
	Improved	0 (0%)
	Worsened	5 (100%)
	Unchanged	0 (0%)

**Service Indicators** (based on 33 indicators in total)




Performance against Q4 2008/09		
	Improved	9 (28%)
	Worsened	10 (30%)
	Unchanged	4 (12%)
N/A	New indicator	10 (30%)

22 **Long Term Trend (comparing Quarter 1 performance to the average of the data over the last four quarters)**




**Corporate Indicators** (based on 14 indicators in total)

Comparison against average performance over the last 4 quarters		
	Improved	4 (29%)
	Worsened	3 (21%)
	Unchanged	0 (0%)
N/A	New indicator/collected cumulatively	7 (50%)

**National Indicators** (based on 5 indicators in total)




Comparison against average performance over the last 4 quarters		
	Improved	0 (0%)
	Worsened	4 (80%)
	Unchanged	0 (0%)
N/A	New indicator/collected cumulatively	1 (20%)

**Service Indicators** (based on 33 indicators in total)




<b>Comparison against average performance over the last 4 quarters</b>		
	<b>Improved</b>	<b>7 (21%)</b>
	<b>Worsened</b>	<b>13 (39%)</b>
	<b>Unchanged</b>	<b>3 (10%)</b>
<b>N/A</b>	<b>New indicator/collected cumulatively</b>	<b>10 (30%)</b>

23 **Quarter 1 09/10 performance compared to Quarter 1 08/09 performance**

**Corporate Indicators** (based on 14 indicators in total)

<b>Performance against Q1 2008/09</b>		
	<b>Improved</b>	<b>3 (21%)</b>
	<b>Worsened</b>	<b>4 (29%)</b>
	<b>Unchanged</b>	<b>1 (7%)</b>
<b>N/A</b>	<b>New indicator</b>	<b>6 (43%)</b>

**National Indicators** (based on 5 indicators in total)

<b>Performance against Q1 2008/09</b>		
	<b>Improved</b>	<b>2 (40%)</b>
	<b>Worsened</b>	<b>3 (60%)</b>
	<b>Unchanged</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>

**Service Indicators** (based on 33 indicators in total)

<b>Performance against Q1 2008/09</b>		
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	<b>Improved</b>	<b>8 (24%)</b>
	<b>Worsened</b>	<b>12 (36%)</b>
	<b>Unchanged</b>	<b>3 (10%)</b>
<b>N/A</b>	<b>New indicator</b>	<b>10 (30%)</b>



**24 Notes on Quarter 1 2009/10 Performance for PI's that have not performed to target (where notes have been provided by the collection officer)**

<b>Environment – Protecting and enhancing the environment</b>	
<b>Corporate Indicators</b>	
<b>CI 22 (BV204)</b> Planning appeals allowed (Min)	Performance on appeals remains below target. Performance however, turns on a limited number of cases. The difference between the provisional outturn and meeting the target reflects permission being granted on appeal in just four cases. Planning management team have met with the Planning Inspectorate in the past about the high percentage of appeals being allowed. The advice was that the Council should continue to seek to apply development plan policies in a consistent way. Each appeal decision continues to be assessed, and that assessment feeds back into future determination of applications, particularly where trends in interpretation of policies are identified. These figures are draft pending verification by the Planning Inspectorate.
<b>National Indicators</b>	
<b>NI 157b (BV109b)</b> Processing of planning applications: Minor applications (Max)	Performance is down and running below target due to vacancy management decisions to achieve budget savings. There is little resilience in the service, which has suffered from long term sickness in a key post. Action has been taken to restore performance. Cover for one post is now being provided through an agency planner, and recruitment to a vacant Principal Planning Officer post is in progress. Incoming work continues to fluctuate, with a number of complex cases being submitted in June. Performance may not improve until Q3.
<b>NI 157c (BV109c)</b> Processing of planning applications: Other applications (Max)	Performance is down and running below target due to vacancy management decisions to achieve budget savings. There is little resilience in the service, which has suffered from long term sickness in a key post. Action has been taken to restore performance. Cover for one post is now being provided through an agency planner, and recruitment to a vacant Principal Planning Officer post is in progress. Incoming work continues to fluctuate, with a number of complex cases being submitted in June. Performance may not improve until Q3.
<b>Service Indicators</b>	
<b>SI 20</b> Number of days that a property is void (excluding major works) (Min)	Housing Officers have been assigned directly to the management of estates which has included taking over the void processes and working closely with the repairs team to help reduce the number of days that a property remains void. The BI&P team have started examining the void processes to ascertain if this can be streamlined and service improved.
<b>SI 27 (BV156)</b> Buildings Accessible to People with a Disability (Max)	There are 16 properties in use of which 15 are accessible. There are currently 16 properties in our portfolio. 15 of these buildings are accessible to the public, unfortunately the Guildhall in Thaxted, for which we have landlord responsibility is not accessible as it is a medieval building with meeting rooms on the first floor and therefore is not suitable for wheelchair users or those members of the public with mobility impairments. As such we are not able to improve our percentage.

<b>Finance – Effectively managing our finances and operating within budget</b>	
<b>Corporate Indicators</b>	
<b>CI 21</b> (BV66b) Rent collection and arrears recovery: No. LA tenants with >7wks arrears (Min)	<p>The target has not been met due to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The actual number of tenants has been less than expected due to number of voids still increasing.</li> <li>2.. The current economic climate.</li> </ol> <p>The current voids situation is impacting on the indicator and unless the number of properties becoming vacant reduces, it will be difficult to reach the target.</p>
<b>National Indicators</b>	
<b>NI 180</b> The number of changes of circumstances which affect customers' HB/CTB entitlement within the year. (Max)	The workload in the Housing & Council Tax Benefit Section has continued to increase each month as a consequence of the economic downturn. This increase in workload has not been consistently matched by the additional capacity needed to consistently achieve targets. Strategic solutions are currently being pursued.
<b>NI 181</b> Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events (Min)	The workload in the Housing & Council Tax Benefit Section has continued to increase each month as a consequence of the economic downturn. This increase in workload has not been consistently matched by the additional capacity needed to consistently achieve targets. Strategic solutions are currently being pursued.
<b>Service Indicators</b>	
<b>SI 01 (d)</b> % of transactions completed by purchasing card.	Purchasing cards not implemented yet. Awaiting procurement partnership with ECC.
<b>SI 04</b> (BV79a) Accuracy of processing - HB/CTB claims (Max)	The workload in the Housing & Council Tax Benefit Section has continued to increase each month as a consequence of the economic downturn. This increase in workload has not been consistently matched by the additional capacity needed to consistently achieve targets. Strategic solutions are currently being pursued.
<b>SI 18</b> (BV66a) Rent Collection and Arrears Recovery: rent collected as proportion of rents owed on HRA (Max)	<p>There are various factors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The current economic climate has had a major impact over the last 2 quarters (the first 3 quarters of last year were on target) and the rent collected has significantly reduced.</li> <li>2. The restructuring in Housing has not released the expected time for Housing Officers to go out on their patches chasing arrears.</li> </ol> <p><b>How to improve:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Once the economy improves this will slowly filter through to tenants rent accounts.</li> <li>2. A further review of Housing Officer duties is needed to free them up to chase arrears.</li> </ol> <p><b>Expected improvement timescale:</b></p> <p>Depending on the above factors it would be expected that the target will be met by the end of the financial year.</p>

<b>SI 32</b> (CG6) % of planned audits completed (Max)	<p>Qtr 1 includes residual 2008-09 audit work where in addition to that planned for, there has been further audit time spent on unplanned extra work requested by Chief Auditees. Commencement of the planned Qtr 1 audits from the 2009-10 plan has also been delayed due to unplanned additional audit work.</p>
<b>Partnerships – Working to deliver effective and co-ordinated services with partners</b>	
<b>Service Indicators</b>	
<b>CI 12</b> Cost per visit to Leisure Centres (per head) (Min)	<p>For information, the contract Unitary Charge increases annually in line with RPIX (Retail Price Index). The monthly calculations vary due to the performance of the contract i.e. if they complete all aspects in the monthly report they are paid the full amount but if they fail in any areas deductions are made.</p>
<b>People – Consulting and engaging with staff and customers</b>	
<b>Corporate Indicators</b>	
<b>CI 05</b> Average number of sickness days per employee per annum (Min)	<p>We have only just missed our target and I feel that this due to a higher number of staff on long term sick for this quarter.</p>
<b>CI 08</b> (CS4) % of IT help Desk calls resolved within target (Max)	<p>Code of Connection work meant we have been using an agency person on the support desk. This person is a call taker not a 'resolver' which has led to the target being missed.</p>
<b>Service Indicators</b>	
<b>SI 12(c)</b> Museum users: Total visitors to the museum building and on-site events (Max)	<p>Short of target this quarter because no opportunities to run the big 'crowd-puller' events (Victorian Day and Essex Beekeepers added 1,036 in same quarter last year). As previously advised, demands of HQC project, lack of budget and external funding, and staff changes (in 2 posts this summer) reduce capacity. Despite this, basic visitor numbers for galleries holding up and programme of in-house activities continues to bring in smaller groups for high-impact activities.</p>
<b>SI 12(d)</b> Museum users: Total users of museum service (Max)	<p>Short of targets for same reasons as 12c (lack of opportunity for big crowd-pulling event this quarter) and website visits, though continuing to rise slowly since website re-launch, have not yet reached level of same Qtr last year (1158 web visits this Qtr but 3040 in 2008/09). Reasons for this unclear but hope that link to new Visit Saffron Walden (tourism) website will help raise website and actual visits. HQC project long-term will add much to website content to attract more remote users.</p>

<p><b>SI 22(b)</b> Average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation for accepted priority needs others (Min)</p>	<p>The figure includes 1 case of a 17yr old who needed to be placed solely in supported accommodation within UDC and it took this long for a vacancy to become available which is why indicators like this are very hard to predict.</p>
<p><b>SI 22(c)</b> Average length of stay in bed and breakfast accommodation for rejected (all groups) (Min)</p>	<p>We had 2 cases this quarter; 1 in for 4.5 weeks the other for 10.4 weeks. The second case appealed against original decision and was accommodated whilst the review process was carried out, which is good practice in cases of intentional homelessness but someone is in priority need. Therefore with rejected cases where you have to give a minimum of 28 days in the accommodation after the rejected decision is made there are always going to be cases that spend long periods in B&amp;B whilst we continue to use it.</p>

## Conclusion

- 25 Unverified performance data for Quarter 1 2009/10 has identified that **63 %** of all indicators that were collected performed on or above target (**20%** of National Indicators, **64 %** of Corporate Indicators and **70 %** of Service Indicators). The Audit Commission will be completing checks of the data submitted but it is not yet known when this will be.

## Proposed Deletion of Performance Indicator

### CI 09 – Satisfaction with face-to-face Customer Services

- 26 Following the PSC meeting held on 14.05.09, the BI&P Team carried out an investigation into the data that contributed towards this indicator and found that it only covers face-to-face enquiries. The name of this indicator was therefore changed to “Satisfaction with face-to-face Customer Services”. The team also looked to determine if it would be possible to achieve a larger sample size in order to improve the validity of the data collected for this indicator. According to the Head of Division for this service area the sample size is wholly reliant upon whether or not customers visiting reception are willing to complete the survey and it is therefore very difficult to control the actual size of the sample obtained.
- 27 As a result of these investigations the BI&P Team proposed to SMB that this PI be deleted. This proposal was verbally accepted on the condition that PSC agree to the deletion.
- 28 The team would therefore like PSC to consider a proposal to delete this indicator with immediate effect (as it is not proving to be very meaningful) and that a suitable alternative set of performance indicators be identified and implemented as part of the Corporate Customer Feedback project.

**Risk Analysis**

29 The following have been assessed as the potential risks associated with this issue:

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That Performance Indicators will not meet Annual Targets.	1	3	Performance is considered and commented on by SMB on a quarterly and annual basis. Performance Select Committee will focus on corporate performance issues. Benchmarking will be continually conducted against other local authorities.

- 1 = little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project