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Title: **QUARTER 3 2009/10 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

8

Authors: Paul Morrison, Business Improvement & Performance Officer, Ext 568

Item for decision

Tülay Norton, Business Improvement & Performance Officer, Ext 569

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report presents a summary of performance data for Quarter 3 2009/10 (October - December) for all quarterly collected National, Corporate and Service Indicators.
- 1.2 All Quarter 3 data has been extracted from Covalent. This information has been loaded onto the system by collection officers that have direct responsibility for the performance management and reporting of relevant indicators.
- 1.3 For all indicators where the performance is below target (red and amber status), explanatory notes have been collected from relevant officers and included in this report and the accompanying spreadsheet.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The team recommend that Service level indicators such as *SI 01b* and *SI 13* be considered for amendment to Corporate indicator status if they are to be collected during 2010/11 as the indicators are dependant on a number of services providing data from across the Council and performance should not therefore be the responsibility of a single service.

3.0 Background Papers

- Business Improvement & Performance Team internal files 2008/09 and 2009/10.
- National Indicators for Local Authorities and Local Authority Partnerships: Handbook of Definitions.
- Audit Commission's 2008/09 data for National Indicators Set

4.0 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

5.0 Situation

5.1 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.

5.2 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.

5.3 The Council is statutorily required to collect indicator data, set targets for improvement and compare its performance against other councils. The above indicators are subject to annual audit by the External Auditor (Audit Commission) and the Council is expected to have in place systems to monitor performance on an ongoing basis. Covalent is our performance management system and collection officers are responsible for loading data directly onto the system.

5.4 Some indicators are only required to be monitored annually because they are based upon budget outturns or it is not meaningful to collect the information over a shorter period. Others are tracked on a quarterly or six monthly basis hence the requirement for this review.

Quarter 3 2009/10 Performance

Performance Select Committee 2 February 2010, item 8

5.5 As per an Internal Audit recommendation, random Data quality checks have been completed on 10% of indicators. These have been selected across the indicator basket based on the following criteria:

Indicator Type:	No.
National Indicators	1
Corporate Indicators	2
Service Indicators	3

6.0 Notes on Quarter 3 2009/10 Performance

6.1 There are currently 8 red PIs. This represents 16% of the total indicators collected. There are 11 amber (22%) and the remaining 31 (62%) are green.

6.2 The following table provides a summary of performance information for PIs that have not performed to target (red and amber status) in Quarter Q3. All comments have been provided by the relevant collection officer.

Status: Indicator more than 10% off of target 


PI Code & Short Name	Corporate Priority	Performance Comments
CI 02a Housing Revenue Account net variance from Original Budget (Min)	Finance	As per budgetary control report received by Community & Housing Committee on 21 January and Finance & Administration Committee on 28 January.
NI 157 (b) (BV109b) Processing of planning applications: Minor applications (Max)	Environment	The rate of decline in performance is being arrested although performance remains below target. This was due to long term sickness and staff shortages, many of which have now been resolved, although the repercussions remain to be dealt with. An anticipated compensatory reduction in the number of applications because of the recession has not materialised, although it has in many other Councils. The award of HPDG means that temporary cover can be financed in the interim and to deal with other staff absences. Recruitment to vacant posts continues. The planning service has undergone considerable restructuring and review, and there are areas of success which are not measured in terms of speed of decision. Close

		performance management has been reintroduced. As a result of these actions performance is expected to start improving.
NI 157 (c) (BV109c) Processing of planning applications: Other applications (Max)	Environment	The rate of decline in performance is being arrested although performance remains below target. This was due to long term sickness and staff shortages, many of which have now been resolved, although the repercussions remain to be dealt with. An anticipated compensatory reduction in the number of applications because of the recession has not materialised, although it has in many other Councils. The award of HPDG means that temporary cover can be financed in the interim and to deal with other staff absences. Recruitment to vacant posts continues. The planning service has undergone considerable restructuring and review, and there are areas of success which are not measured in terms of speed of decision. Close performance management has been reintroduced. As a result of these actions performance is expected to start improving.
SI 12 (b) Museum users: Number of school pupils in organised groups (Max)	People	Below target because there has been no Learning Officer in post since August and very few schools want to visit unless they can book taught sessions with a learning officer. The post is expected to remain vacant for the immediate future, so this will affect targets for 2010. The target will be amended to reflect staffing levels.
SI 12 (d) Museum users: Total users of museum service (Max)	People	Under target for two reasons (1) drop in school users (visits, loan boxes and off-site visits) because no Learning Officer is in post; (2) at time target was set, it was anticipated that Heritage Quest Centre project would be further advanced and generating more interest. Website visits very slightly down on Qtr 2 - no obvious reason (seasonal variation?) but may not rise significantly until HQC programmes get underway.

Quarter 3 2009/10 Performance
 Performance Select Committee 2 February 2010, item 8

<p>SI 14 (a) Number of press releases issued by the council (Max)</p>	<p>People</p>	<p>Slightly under target due to other work requiring attention including, but not limited to, launch of new intranet, council tax book, LDF consultation</p>
<p>SI 20 * Number of days that a property is void (including major works) (Min)</p>	<p>Finance</p>	<p>A number of improvements have been made to reduce this figure. In addition Housing Services, in association with the BI&P Team have identified a number of process efficiencies that should improve the performance of this indicator further which officers are looking towards implementing.</p>
<p>SI 32 (CG6) * % of planned audits completed (Max)</p>	<p>Finance</p>	<p>Figure is below target due to combination of unexpected staff absence and additional audit field work being required on several audits. Potential adjustments to the 2009/10 audit plan are to be discussed with SMB.</p>

* Denotes that PI is reported as a cumulative figure

Status: Indicator between 0.01 and 10% off of target 

PI Code & Short Name	Corporate Priority	Performance Comments
CI 05 Average number of sickness days per employee per annum (Min)	People	There was more sickness due to flu/colds over this quarter which is why the figure was not met.
CI 08 (CS4) % of IT Help Desk calls resolved within target (Max)	People	Slightly below target this quarter due to annual leave around Christmas and the New Year. Cumulative total is achieving target.
CI 12 Cost per visit to Leisure Centres (per head) (Min)	Partnerships	Monthly invoice charges vary due to compliance or non-compliance with service provision - deductions made for non-compliance.
CI 21 (BV66b) * Rent collection and arrears recovery: No. LA tenants with >7wks arrears (Min)	Finance	The target has not been met due to: 1. The actual number of tenants being less than expected due to the number of voids still increasing; and 2. The current economic climate Expected improvement timescale: The current voids situation is impacting on the indicator as a significant amount of the Housing Officers' time is taken up by the void process and until the number of void properties is decreased it will be difficult to reach the specified target. However there has been a small improvement on the previous quarter.
CI 22 (BV204) Planning appeals allowed (Min)	Environment	Performance on appeals is below target for this quarter. Planning management team met with the planning inspector regarding the previously unusually high amount of appeals being allowed who advised us to continue applying our policies in the way we had been. We are reviewing the results of any appeals allowed, and modifying our approach when trends are identified. Officers had complained to the Planning Inspectors Quality Assurance team. These figures are draft - awaiting Planning Inspectors figures.

<p>SI 01 (b) % of supplier invoices paid within 30 days of receipt by the Council (Max)</p>	<p>Finance</p>	<p>Performance held up well over the first two months of the quarter but slipped badly in the third. It would appear that either disruption caused by the bad weather hampered normal processes or departments paid insufficient attention to the deadlines for invoices to be received by the Exchequer Department to ensure their prompt processing over the Christmas and New Year period.</p>
<p>SI 04 (BV79a) Accuracy of processing – HB/CTB claims (Max)</p>	<p>Finance</p>	<p>An improvement on Q2 but accuracy rate is still a cause of concern because of potential benefit subsidy implications. Strategic solution continues to be pursued.</p>
<p>SI 12 (c) Museum users: Total visitors to the museum building and on-site events (Max)</p>	<p>People</p>	<p>Performance only slightly under target - the drop in school visits (due to lack of Learning Officer) has been compensated for by increase in general visits. This is mainly due to the popularity of the Henry Moore Sheep exhibition, and also the Big Draw event in October.</p>
<p>SI 13 (CG3) % of minutes from meetings made available to the public within 10 days (Max)</p>	<p>People</p>	<p>The target was missed in two instances because, in the light of other work pressures, it did not prove possible to co-ordinate the input of all of the officers concerned within the time allowed.</p>

<p>SI 18 (BV66a) * Rent Collection and Arrears Recovery: rent collected as proportion of rents owed on HRA (Max)</p>	<p>Finance</p>	<p>There are various factors as to why this PI has not performed to target: 1. The current economic climate has had a major impact over the last 4 quarters (the first 3 quarters of last year were on target) and the rent collected has significantly reduced 2. The restructuring in Housing has not released the expected time for Housing Officers to go out on their patches chasing arrears. How to improve: 1. Once the economy improves this will slowly filter through to tenants rent accounts 2. A further review of Housing Officer duties has been carried out to free them up to chase arrears. Expected improvement timescale: Depending on the above factors it would be expected that the figure will be slightly short of the target by the end of the financial year.</p>
<p>SI 19 * Current tenant rent arrears as a percentage of the gross dwelling debit</p>	<p>Finance</p>	<p>The rent decrease implemented in quarter 3 has reduced the rent debit by 3% which in turn increased the cumulative percentage rate and at the time the targets were set this was not taken into account. With the original rent debit quarters 1 and 2 were on target.</p>

**Denotes that PI is reported as a cumulative figure*

7.0 Benchmarking Data

7.1 It should be noted that benchmarking data has been provided for some indicators (see spreadsheet). This figure is based on the average reported performance from other authorities in the Essex Policy and Performance Network (EPPN). This data is only available where indicators are commonly used by these authorities. The benchmark figure provided relates to Quarter 2.

8.0 Summary of Estimated Outturn Data for 2009-10

8.1 An Estimated Outturn data exercise has been conducted. Collecting estimated outturn data gives the council the ability to understand the perceived performance of all indicators for the current year. It identifies potential areas of weakness where improvement actions can be proactively identified as well as giving an understanding of the better performing services.

8.2 The estimated outturn performance data collected for 2009/10 has identified that **64%** of all indicators that were collected will perform on or above target (**16%** of National Indicators, **34%** of Corporate Indicators and **50%** of Service Indicators). The following indicators have been excluded from the analysis;

- Status for 7 Performance Indicators couldn't be calculated because no target was set for them.
- The levels of achievement for **SI 10** (Equality standard for local government) have been changed from 5 levels to 3 (Developing, Achieving, and Excellent).

9.0 SMB Summary

9.1 SMB found overall performance in Quarter 3 satisfactory and in many areas improving. However it was agreed that there are still some areas such as planning applications where closer monitoring at Director level has been introduced.

9.2 The SI 20 recommendations report has been approved by Housing Services senior managers and will be presented to SMB on 27th January. The review has identified that there appears to be no direct relationship between the Choice Based Letting scheme and the time a property remains void and that void performance indicators can be improved by reassigning tasks amongst the Housing Officers. The data currently collects from two streams: both major and minor works are reflected together. From April this will be separated to evidence that performance is indeed closer to target than the current indicator suggests.

9.3 A number of indicators are reliant on data being supplied by other areas of the authority for performance to be at an acceptable level. SMB have approved the review of such indicators to monitor them at a corporate level if relevant next year as recommended by the BI&P team.

10.0 Risk Analysis

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

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
That Performance Indicators will not meet Quarterly/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