



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Chief Executive's Directorate
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Scrutiny Committee

AGENDA

CORPORATE, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Committee Room 2
Town Hall
Stockport

Meeting: Tuesday, 8 June 2010
Tea: 5.00 pm
Business: 6.00 pm

Substitutes

Councillors who require a substitute to be appointed should inform Democratic Services by 4.00 pm on Friday 4 June, 2010. Councillors who wish to arrange their own substitute should inform Democratic Services of the name of their substitute prior to the commencement of the meeting.

1. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 April, 2010
(Enclosed)

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors and officers to declare any interest which they may have in any of the items on the agenda for this meeting (including whipping declarations)

3. CALL-IN

To consider any call-in items

4. FOURTH QUARTER 2009-10 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

To consider a joint report of the Corporate Director, Business Services and Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy & Democracy) (Enclosed)

This report provides an overview of the Council's performance in delivering priority outcomes during the fourth and final quarter of the financial year (January to March). It is focused on areas within the remit of the Committee, highlighting key achievements and significant risks, and giving an early indication of the year end picture for 2009/10.

The Committee is invited to:-

Review the current levels of performance;

Highlight key areas of, and responsibility for, taking forward corrective action to address any existing or forecast performance issues; and

Identify how areas of strong performance and good practice can be shared in other services.

Officer Contact: Andrea Stewart, Tel: 0161 474 3083,
email: andrea.j.stewart@stockport.gov.uk

5. 2009/10 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING UPDATE ON PROVISIONAL OUTTURN POSITION

To consider a report of the Corporate Director, Business Services (Previously circulated)

This report provides an update on the 2009/10 revenue budget provisional outturn position. The figures presented in this report are draft at this stage and a more detailed report on the final position will be presented to the next Executive Meeting on 14 June 2010 and the subsequent cycle of Scrutiny Committees.

The Scrutiny Committee is invited to comment on the report.

Officer contact: Christine Buxton Tel: 474 4124, email: christine.buxton@stockport.gov.uk

Councillors are encouraged to submit questions on the financial and performance monitoring reports prior to the meeting in order to enable a detailed response to be available at the meeting. Questions should be submitted to either David Clee Tel: 474 3137 or email: david.clee@stockport.gov.uk or Steve Callender Tel: 474 3184 or email: steve.callender@stockport.gov.uk

6. FOURTH QUARTER 2009/10 CORPORATE COMPLAINTS REPORT

To consider a report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy and Democracy) (Enclosed)

This report provides an overview of corporate complaints, compliments and comments as at the Fourth Quarter (January – March) 2009/10. The report also provides a summary for the year comparing complaints received in 2009/10 with the complaints received in 2008/09.

The Scrutiny Committee is invited to comment on the report.

Officer contact: Anwar Majothi, Tel. 474 3182, e mail: anwar.majothi@stockport.gov.uk

7. RÉSUMÉ OF STOCKPORT PARTNERSHIP BOARD - 26 MAY 2010

To note the résumé of the meeting held on 26 May 2010 (Enclosed)

Officer contact: Steve Fox Tel: 474 3206, email: stephen.fox@stockport.gov.uk

8. AGENDA PLANNING

To consider a report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy & Democracy) (Enclosed)

The report sets out planned agenda items for the Scrutiny Committee's next two meetings, Forward Plan items that fall within the remit of the Scrutiny Committee and progress with resolutions made by the Scrutiny Committee at previous meetings.

The Scrutiny Committee is invited to consider the information in the report and put forward any agenda items for future meetings of the Scrutiny Committee.

Officer contact: Steve Callender, Tel: 474 3184, email: steve.callender@stockport.gov.uk

Agenda Contact: David Clee, Tel: 474 3137 or e-mail: david.clee@stockport.gov.uk

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W przypadku gdybyś potrzebował pomocy odnośnie tej informacji, dostępne są usługi tłumaczeniowe. Prosimy dzwonić do Interpreting Unit pod numer 0161 477 9000.

যদি এই খবরগুলি সম্পর্কে আপনার কোন সাহায্য দরকার হয় তবে বিনা খরচে আপনার জন্য দোভাষীর ব্যবস্থা করা হতে পারে। মেহেরবানী করে স্টকপোর্ট ইন্টারপ্রিটিং ইউনিটে ফোন করুন টেলিফোন নম্বর, 0161 477 9000.

اگر آپ کو ان معلومات کے بارے میں مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو مفت ترجمانی کی سروس دستیاب ہے۔ براہ مہربانی انٹرپرائٹنگ یونٹ کو 0161 477 9000 پر فون کریں۔

خدمات ترجمہ رایگان این اطلاعات در صورت نیاز موجود میباشد. لطفا با شماره تلفن 0161 477 9000 یا واحد ترجمہ (اینترپرائٹنگ یونٹ) ما تماس بگیرید.

تنوفر خدمت ترجمہ شفویة اذا تطلبت مساعدة في فهم هذا المعلومات. نرجو الاتصال اربن رینیول علی رقم الهاتف: 0161 477 9000

**CORPORATE, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

Meeting: 13 April 2010
At: 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Ben Alexander (Chair) in the chair; Councillor Lenny Grice (Vice-Chair); Councillors Peter Burns, Richard Coaton, Stuart Corris, Philip Harding, Anthony O'Neill, Paul Porgess and Iain Roberts.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes (copies of which had been circulated) of the meeting held on 23 February 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made.

3. CALL-IN

There were no call-in items to consider.

4. ESTATE STRATEGY

The Service Director (Legal and Property) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) enclosing the Estate Strategy which had been approved by the Executive at its meeting on 15 March 2010. The Executive response to the Estate Management Strategy Scrutiny Review had been considered by the Scrutiny Committee on 10 November 2009 when it had been requested that the Estate Strategy, when developed, should be submitted to the Committee for consideration.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- A request was made for a progress report on Stockport's participation in the 10:10 Climate Change Campaign and a copy of the new Carbon Management Plan, when completed.
- Comment was made to the reference in the Estate Strategy Action Plan on the possible reduction in the number of secondary schools in the borough.
- The review of spare capacity in the civic buildings and the practice of 'sweating' assets to maximise use and value for money. The cost of the maintenance backlog was requested.
- The works in the Civic Centre Phase 2 and the proposal to provide new accommodation for NHS Stockport and the police to deliver opportunities for a Total Place approach to service delivery.
- The current situation with regard to progress on the works required for the Town Hall roof.
- The review of the Stopford House canteen and the client role regarding committee teas.

- How the aim of the strategy to produce a ten year plan and annual budget would be put together, and where the annual budget would be set.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That a note on the issues considered by the Estate Strategy Group be sent to members of the Committee.

5. CUSTOMER CONTACT – STREET LIGHTING AND HIGHWAYS SCRUTINY REVIEW

The Lead Member of the Scrutiny Review Panel (Councillor Lenny Grice) submitted the final report (copies of which had been circulated) setting out the findings of the Scrutiny Review on ‘Customer Contact – Street Lighting and Highways’.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- The words ‘where appropriate’ should be deleted from the second line of Recommendation Five.
- The difference between maintenance and reactive repairs.
- Whether the computer system would have a facility whereby people who report a fault are subsequently told when it is fixed.
- Feedback to members of the public was still of paramount importance.
- The need for identification on a lamp post that a request for a repair would be attended to. A check was required to ensure that all lamp posts were numbered.
- There appeared to be a number of exceptions to the maximum fix time of up to 5.8 days.
- More details were requested on the investigation work undertaken into systems operated by other Councils which allowed online identification of fault and enquiry generation by customer.

RESOLVED – That the final report and recommendations of the Scrutiny Review Panel: Customer Contact – Street Lighting and Highways be submitted to the Executive for approval.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. PARTNERSHIP REPORTING TO SCRUTINY

A representative of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy and Democracy) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) updating the Committee on a review of existing governance arrangements and the relationship between the Stockport Partnership with associated thematic boards and Scrutiny Committees, and proposing enhanced reporting arrangements between these partnerships and the associated Scrutiny Committees.

The following comment was made/issue raised:-

- A Member expressed concern that the opposition groups on the Council were not represented on the thematic partnerships.

RESOLVED – That the scrutiny arrangements outlined in Section 3.1 of the report and the supporting appendices be endorsed.

7. COMPLETED SCRUTINY REVIEWS PROGRESS REPORT

A representative of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy and Democracy) submitted a report (copies of which had been circulated) setting out progress on recommendations made by the Committee and agreed by the Executive in previous years. This enabled the Committee to monitor progress towards implementing agreed recommendations and provided the Committee with an opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of its recommendations.

The following comments were made/issues raised:-

- Clarification was requested on how the necessary improvements to the Stockport Compact had been resourced.
- A Member requested to see all the Codes of Practice referred to in Recommendation Three of the Scrutiny Review on the Stockport Compact.
- With regard to Recommendation Four of the Scrutiny Review on Stockport Direct: A More Responsive Service, Members welcomed the separate telephone number to be available for councillors wishing to call the Contact Centre. A Member asked if a separate e mail address could also be available for councillors.
- Members asked for better feedback on queries which they raised with the Contact Centre.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

8. AGENDA PLANNING

A representative of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy and Democracy) submitted a report (copies of which have been circulated) setting out the planned agenda items for the Committee's next meeting and Forward Plan items which fell within the remit of the Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm.

REPORT TO: CORPORATE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 8TH JUNE 2010

REPORT OF: CORPORATE DIRECTOR (BUSINESS SERVICES) & ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (STRATEGY & DEMOCRACY)

REPORT TITLE: 4TH QUARTER 2009/10 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the Council's performance in delivering priority outcomes during the fourth and final quarter of the financial year (January to March). It is focused on areas within the remit of the Corporate Resource Management and Governance Scrutiny Committee, highlighting key achievements and significant risks, giving an early indication of the year end picture for 2009/10.
- 1.2 The priorities, outcomes and targets contained within the 2009/12 Council Plan form the basis for this report. The reporting framework for the Stockport Partnership is closely aligned and both include progress in delivering the Local Area Agreement Targets.
- 1.3 The report provides useful context for members in considering the revenue budget monitoring update report on the provisional out-turn position for 2010/11, which appears elsewhere on the agenda.

2.1 Performance and Resources

2.1.1. Achieving excellent performance in delivering our priorities

Percentage of PIs improving	0%
Percentage of PIs where there is no change	33%
Percentage of PIs deteriorating	66%*
Percentage of PIs on target	33%

* NB – based on two measures only

The percentage of Council Plan measures improving or achieving target remain some way short of the targets set for 2009/10. This is due to a range of factors set out in the full corporate report presented to the Executive on 19th May, with the impact of much of the activity reported not being felt until 2010/11 at the earliest. Comparative data does, however, suggest that Stockport continues to perform highly when compared to other Metropolitan authorities and statistical neighbours. Having around two thirds of priority measures improving and a similar number on target and within the top quartile nationally represents a significant achievement given the current challenges faced in many of these areas. Targets for the 2010/11 Council Plan were agreed by the Council in February as part of the budget setting process, and these take into account the potential impact of financial constraints and the continued impact of the recession.

The position in relation to the Comprehensive Area Assessment is uncertain, following the commitment from the coalition government to abolish the existing framework. CAA 2010 is, however, underway and the Audit Commission have outlined their areas of focus for the assessment. These are primarily areas picked up in CAA 2009 which the Audit Commission would like to follow up, but also reflect emerging local and regional priorities. In order to collate an overview of our progress over the past year and future plans, key officers have been providing evidence to support the 2010 CAA process. Evidence will be cross-cutting and will contribute to both the Organisational and Area Assessment. The Organisational Assessment has two elements; Managing Performance and Use of Resources (see 2.1.2 below). At the time of writing, the overall Organisational Assessment score is still due to be published in December, and at this stage we anticipate that we will achieve the target of maintaining an overall score of 3 'performing well'.

2.1.2. Providing Value for Money by using resources in the most effective and efficient manner

Percentage of PIs improving <i>*this relates to 1 measure & excludes the new CAA scores as there is no comparable assessment</i>	100%*
Percentage of PIs where there is no change	0%
Percentage of PIs deteriorating	0%
Percentage of PIs on target	100%

The Council is forecasting cumulative efficiencies of £15.265m for the end of the 2009-10 Financial year (cumulative from the start of the 2008-09 financial year) which is in excess of the target set - £12.024m. The target was based on actual efficiencies achieved in 2008/09 plus the budget savings target for 2009/10, and did not include NI179 efficiencies that arise outside the budget setting process. It is recognised that this will always result in a difference between target and actuals so the approach to target setting for 2010/11 has therefore been revised to ensure a consistent basis of reporting targets and actual NI179 efficiencies in future years. The 2009/10 actual NI179 efficiencies will be reported in July 2010.

Stockport was assessed as "performing well" in the 2008-09 Use of Resources assessment which compares well to other authorities with the majority of Councils assessed at the lower level of "performing adequately". Stockport's assessment equates to an overall score of three (out of four), with a score of three under each of the themes – Managing Finances, Governing the Business and Managing Resources. Work continued throughout the fourth quarter on addressing the 14 recommendations for improvement contained within the Audit Commission's Report and other areas requiring further development. The Audit Commission started the 2009-10 assessment in January and is expected to publish the scores in August 2010. Stockport Council believes it has made good progress in addressing the recommendations from the Audit Commission's 2009 Report but this is unlikely to change the scores from the last assessment. The Council's Value for Money analysis was discussed by Corporate and Service Directors at their meeting in March. Further work will take place within Directorates including agreeing the list of services, analysing and benchmarking cost and performance, reviewing demand and assessing contributions to the Council's priorities.

The Council's Customer Strategy was approved by the Customer Strategy Board on the 7th April. The Strategy is to be discussed further with the Executive Member for Customer Focus before being signed

off by CLT and presented to Executive Council for approval. It is critically important that the Council continues to build upon previous good work in providing services to the residents of Stockport. The Customer Strategy is very much a part of the Council's mainstream activity with the aim of better understanding the needs of customers and citizens; shaping the delivery of Council services to reflect the needs of all Customers; providing customers with timely and efficient access to Council services, information and advice; and achieving a higher level of customer satisfaction.

The Information Services Team is delivering a Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Records Management refresher presentation to all teams across the Council during the summer. The presentations will raise awareness on these important processes and explain what support is available. The second phase of the programme will deliver the presentations to partner organisations. Implementation of the Council's Sharepoint project is on hold until all of the Council's PC's are brought up to the minimum specification required to run the latest version of the system. The Corporate Leadership Team have agreed in principle to a centralised 3-year rolling PC replacement programme and the funding arrangements are currently being discussed with Service Directors. The technical solution for the Council's new Wide Area Network has been agreed with Virgin Media and the contract can now be finalised and signed. The implementation is expected to take approximately eight months once started and will provide a resilient, flexible network infrastructure upon which the Council can develop innovative IT solutions.

The Council's Estate Strategy and action plan were agreed by the Executive in March 2010 and progress will be monitored by the Estate Strategy Group. The cladding has been fitted to the new civic building and breakthroughs to Stopford House will begin during June/July. In the recent Use of Resources assessment the Audit Commission recognised that the development of the Estates Strategy, the committee structure and subsequent action plans demonstrates that the management of the Council's assets and costs is now more corporately focused.

Colleagues from the AGMA Procurement Hub and Manchester Council have completed a review of the Council's procurement activity and the recommendations were presented to the Corporate Leadership Team in April. A proposal that identifies potential procurement savings in 2010/11 is being validated with budget holders. The proposal includes specific areas of spend that are due for re-tender or are areas of spend that have not previously been tendered. Further work is being undertaken with SSK to identify areas for additional savings through smarter procurement, including the procurement of vehicles.

The procurement decision on the new integrated HR/Payroll system (SwiTch) with Trafford and Wigan Councils was taken on 17th December 2009 and Midland HR was identified as the preferred supplier. The contract with Midland HR was signed by Wigan Council on behalf of the collaboration on 31st March 2010. Collaborative working groups have been established to start the implementation. Initial meetings with Midland HR are planned for early May 2010. Stockport Council is hosting the programme office and is coordinating the recruitment of the Programme Manager.

2.2 Business Processes

2.2.1. Effective Partnership Working

Percentage of PIs improving	100%
Percentage of PIs where there is no change	0%
Percentage of PIs deteriorating	0%
Percentage of PIs on target	50%

Overall performance on the Local Area Agreement covers 72 (94%) of the targets. 38 (49%) are on target, 34 (44%) are currently off target. 9% are within the 'amber' range showing some progress towards the target, giving a total of 58% forecast to fully achieve their final targets. Performance against the statutory education measures remains the same as at Quarter 3 with 4 out of 10 measures on target.

The second round of submissions for the LAA Performance Reward Grant (PRG) was concluded in February 2010 when the Stockport Partnership Board gave their approval for £2M to be allocated to 23 initiatives across the partnership.

The average level of improvement across the LAA at Quarter 4 stands at 53%, down by 3% on Quarter 3, which is still below the qualification threshold for Performance Reward Grant of 60%. This means that with performance at current levels we will not qualify for any of the potential £1.7M reward grant. 6 of the 'designated' indicators have not improved from the LAA baseline; violent crime (NI 15), re-offending (NI 30), NEETs (NI 117), smoking cessation (NI 123), worklessness (NI 153) and level 3 qualifications (NI 164).

A comprehensive annual report for the Stockport Partnership will be presented at the May meeting of the Board, and will cover key areas of progress against LAA targets and Community Strategy outcomes during 2009/10. This will also help inform delivery of priorities during 2010/11 and strategic planning for 2011 and beyond, including the likely negotiation of a new LAA later this year.

2.2.2. Effective Customer Processes

Percentage of PIs improving	75%
Percentage of PIs where there is no change	0%
Percentage of PIs deteriorating	25%
Percentage of PIs on target	66%

The percentage of official complaints progressing to Stage 2 has reduced significantly over the year from 29% to 16% - well ahead of target. There were 57 stage one complaints within the fourth quarter, with 11 (19%) progressing to stage 2, and out of 335 stage 1 complaints over the year, 54 progressed to stage 2. This is further evidence of an improvement in the quality of Stage 1 responses and of efforts to resolve matters at an early stage to the complainant's satisfaction. The Council has also invested in people by sending officers to complaints handling training courses run by external bodies such as the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO).

3 out of 10 complaints to the LGO resulted in local settlements during the quarter, but the overall figure is just 7% for the year (11/152). This has been affected by additional areas being covered by the Ombudsman service, including school admissions. There were no maladministration findings against the Council during 2009/10, and 85% of responses were provided to the Ombudsman within the agreed timescales. This is a small drop from the 92% response in 2008/09, largely due to two complex adult social care complaints which involved liaison with NHS Stockport. The average number of days taken to respond to LGO enquiries was 23, well within the timescale of 28 days.

The Council takes very seriously any findings of maladministration and local settlements. Such findings are discussed at quarterly Complaints Officer Group meetings and any learning points are shared with staff in the areas concerned to ensure service improvement and to reduce the likelihood of similar complaints arising in future. It is anticipated that the number of local settlements will continue to rise year on year as a result of a rise in complaints referred to the LGO generally and, more specifically, the sharp rise in education appeals which often result in local settlements decisions being made. Results from the Stockport Survey show a significant improvement in satisfaction with the way in which complaints are handled, increasing from 39% in 2006 and 46% in 2008 to 58% in 2009. A more comprehensive 6-monthly report on corporate complaints is being provided to the Committee elsewhere on the meeting agenda.

Progress continues against delivering key equality and diversity objectives. In January a cross council project team was established to review and publish the Council's 2010-13 Equality Scheme, as per existing legal duties, and in anticipation of the 2010 Equality Act (enacted in April and in force by October). It is expected that Executive approval for the new Scheme will be achieved in October. Based on the most recent self assessment the Council remains at the 'Achieving' level of the Equality Framework for Local Government.

The final figure for 'avoidable contact' (NI 14) was 21.3%, with the fourth quarter reporting just 18%. This represents an improvement on the 2008/09 baseline of 26.3%, although there is a wide range of levels of low value customer contact across different services. This national indicator has been deleted from April, although monitoring systems will still capture management information on the levels of preventable demand and this will inform the BITE Programme systems thinking interventions.

Results from the Stockport Survey show that 73.5% of respondents felt they has been treated with respect and consideration all or most of the time by local public services over the last year. This represents a slight increase from the 2008 figure of 72.4%, although this is within the same range. Satisfaction with treatment tends to increase with age, whilst women, owner-occupiers and people not working are more likely to be satisfied. Residents within priority neighbourhoods were significantly less satisfied than those in Stockport overall, with an average of 63% expressing satisfaction, although those living in Brinnington were broadly in line with the borough average.

The Council's Customer Strategy was approved by the Customer Strategy Board in April, and is due to be presented to the Executive for approval. The Strategy is critically important to the Council's mainstream activity with the aim of better understanding the needs of customers and citizens, shaping the delivery of Council services to reflect the needs of all customers, providing customers with timely and efficient access to Council services, information and advice and achieving a higher level of

customer satisfaction.

2.2.3. Effective Service & Corporate Processes

Percentage of PIs improving	33%
Percentage of PIs where there is no change	11%
Percentage of PIs deteriorating	56%
Percentage of PIs on target	56%

The Council Tax Collection Index provides an overview of how the Council is performing with the collection of Council Tax over the last four years. The index was marginally ahead of the target set for 2009/10 with an outturn achievement of 100.2. A score of 100 represents overall achievement of each of the individual indicator's targets. The Council collected 96.4% of the net debt of Council Tax for 2009/10 which is marginally behind the in-year collection target (96.5%), but is in excess of the amount collected in-year during 2008-09. In monetary terms this equates to £125.491m collected with £4.564m still to collect. A number of factors affected the Council's ability to collect Council Tax. Most significantly was the Single Person Discount Review where discounts were cancelled on a large number of accounts. Whilst this increases the amount of revenue the Council collects it does have a detrimental effect on the collection rates as the overall liability increased considerably over the year, leading to an additional £0.429m to collect from when the original target was set. As discounts continued to be cancelled very late in to the year it was difficult to collect the increase in liability within the same financial year. The collection of Council tax relating to years 2006-07 to 2007-08 is also ahead of target.

The NNDR Collection Index provides an overview of how the Council is performing with the Collection of NNDR over the last four years. The index has improved compared to 2008-09 but is slightly behind the target set for 2009/10 with an outturn achievement of 97.9 (which is within the accepted target range). A score of 100 represents achieving target in each of the individual indicators that constitute the index. The Council collected 96.3% of the remaining debt for 2009/10 which is behind target (97.0%). In monetary terms this equates to £85.264m collected with £3.382m still to collect and this figure has been adjusted to take into account the £519k of instalments deferred into future years due to the recent national NNDR deferral scheme. The economic downturn has affected the Council's collection of NNDR during 2009/10, for example the Council has seen an increase in the number of special arrangements running in to March 2010 or later. Additionally the number of empty commercial properties has risen by approximately one third since January 2009 to over 1900 properties, collection on these empty properties is more difficult than on those still trading. The collection of NNDR relating to years 2006-07 to 2008-09 is behind target. NNDR arrears collection rates have been affected by the retrospective award of Small Business Rate Relief on many cases dating back to 2007 following clarification of the rules by the DCLG. This has reduced the amount of debt raised for these cases putting these accounts into credit, this leads to the outstanding debt for other cases becomes a greater proportion of the total debt raised which has a detrimental effect on the collection rate.

A number of initiatives were implemented during the year to improve collection rates for Council Tax and NNDR and will continue into 2010/11 to help the Council improve performance. These included: recruitment of 4 Local Taxation Apprentices; set up of a Tracing Team; Direct Debit Take-Up

Campaigns; restructure and integration of recovery teams along with the streamlining of processes; improved reports for measuring the effectiveness at certain recovery stages. The Council's Benefits software provider (CIVICA) has confirmed that there is currently no reporting tool available to calculate NI180 (the number of changes of circumstances which affect customers' HB/CTB entitlement within the year) so Stockport Council has been unable to report on this indicator during 2009-10. NI 180 has been removed from the national indicator set as of the 1st April 2010 in line with the Government's initiative to reduce the burdens on local authorities and their partners. The Council's proxy measures to assess performance with the speed of processing benefits claims have both exceeded their targets for 2009-10. The average time taken to process new Housing & Council Tax Benefit claims for 2009/10 was 28.7 days, which is 4.3 days ahead of the target set. This has been achieved despite the impact of the current economic climate and steadily rising caseload and as a result of a number of initiatives. The average time taken to process Housing & Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events for 2009/10 was 14.6 days, which was significantly ahead of the 24 day target set. Performance is considerably stronger than originally anticipated at the start of the year due to a number of events and despite the current economic climate and continued increase in caseload. This included a bulk recalculation of around 2500 cases to apply legislation changes and a large number of cases amended in March 2010 to apply rent increases. The bulk recalculation was a one off exercise that had significant impact on processing times.

The target of 97% of invoices paid within 30 days has not been achieved in 2009-10 (achieved 95.37%). This is largely attributable to the poor performance of the Council's Finance System (SAP) which has impacted on both the processing of invoices by the Central Invoicing Team and the authorisation of invoices across the organisation. The changes to SAP hardware have improved performance and response times for key transactions are being closely monitored. There is still concern about the hardware infrastructure for SAP and this will not be fully resolved until the system is upgraded over the coming months. Analysis has been undertaken to try and establish if there are specific reasons behind invoices not being paid within thirty days (other than SAP issues) and no patterns have been found. A review is underway to simplify the processes for purchase to pay and along with improved use of SAP reports, this is expected to improve performance over time.

NI 14 (reducing avoidable contact) was measured for the first time during 2009-10 with a view to assessing baseline performance and setting a target in 2010-11. Monitoring systems indicated that 21% of contact was avoidable over the year (according to the definitions of NI 14). NI 14 has also been removed from the national indicator set as of the 1st April 2010 and Stockport Council will no longer be measuring this indicator according to the old definition. Stockport will capture management information on the levels of preventable demand and this will inform the BITE Programme systems thinking interventions.

2.3. People

2.3.1. The Council has a diverse, motivated and well-managed workforce with the capacity and capability to meet future organisational needs

Percentage of PIs improving	45%
Percentage of PIs where there is no change	0%

Percentage of PIs deteriorating	55%
Percentage of PIs on target	82%

This year's Use of Resources assessment includes a review of the Council's workforce for the first time. The Audit Commission has commented that effective systems are in place for monitoring and managing a range of people issues within the Council. They also noted that the Council uses staff feedback to inform workforce development plans and that the Council fully involves staff in the design, implementation and delivery of change. The assessor is considering promoting Stockport's work on investing in well being as an area of notable best practice.

The three projects under the Stockport Employment Programme have progressed during the fourth quarter. 30 placements were offered to individuals under the Stockport into Work Project and the majority of these placements are now at the point where the individuals need to be redeployed. Already two individuals had been successfully redeployed as at the beginning of March. A workshop promoting the redeployment process has been delivered and this has led to high levels of interest in assisting with the redeployment of placements. The seven apprentices under the Apprenticeship Project have continued in their placements and are still pursuing their qualifications. All apprentices expressed positive experiences during a recent review. The Job Centre Plus has referred 259 individuals to attend our assessment process as at mid March under the Future Jobs Fund Project. Our initial target for placements has been achieved with 132 placement offers and 104 starting work with either the Council or its partners before the end of March. The council has provided 64% of these placements to date. Each individual placed under the Future Jobs Fund project receives a two day induction programme which is complimented by further bite size courses in money matters, assertiveness, CV & application writing and Skills for Life training. The Council has been short listed for the 'Connecting to Communities Award' from the Greater Manchester Employer Coalition (GMEC) for its work as an employer recruiting from economically disadvantaged areas of the borough.

The Council's level of sickness absence is significantly under the target set for the year with an average of 9.9 days per employee against a target of 11.2. The measures put in place to tackle the impact of swine flu may have contributed to this reduction. The Council's first time appointment rate has significantly improved from the position reported at the end of quarter three with the Council now achieving a first time appointment rate of 96% for the year, against a target of 90%. This is largely due to the economic climate with high volumes of applicants for Council vacancies and an increase in the standard of the applicants.

A list of corporate level actions on how to address the areas for improvement identified in the Employee Opinion Survey has been drafted and circulated to the Corporate Organisation Development Steering Group. Directorates have been asked to provide feedback on the proposed corporate actions and to share their own directorate actions so that a comprehensive report can be taken to the 19/Service Directors Group. The feedback from Directorates is still being pursued but in the meantime plans have been put in place for the corporate actions. The Employee Satisfaction Health Check Survey undertaken in March 2010 matches the 2008/09 results and provides further support for the plan of action in response to the full survey.

3. Recommendations

Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- a) Review the current levels of performance.
- b) Highlight key areas of and responsibility for taking forward corrective action to address any existing or forecast performance issues.
- c) Identify how areas of strong performance and good practice can be shared in other services.

Background Papers:

- Detailed 4th Quarter information in respect of each goal.
- Previous Quarterly Reports and detailed appendices to Executive and Scrutiny
- Council Plan 2009/12

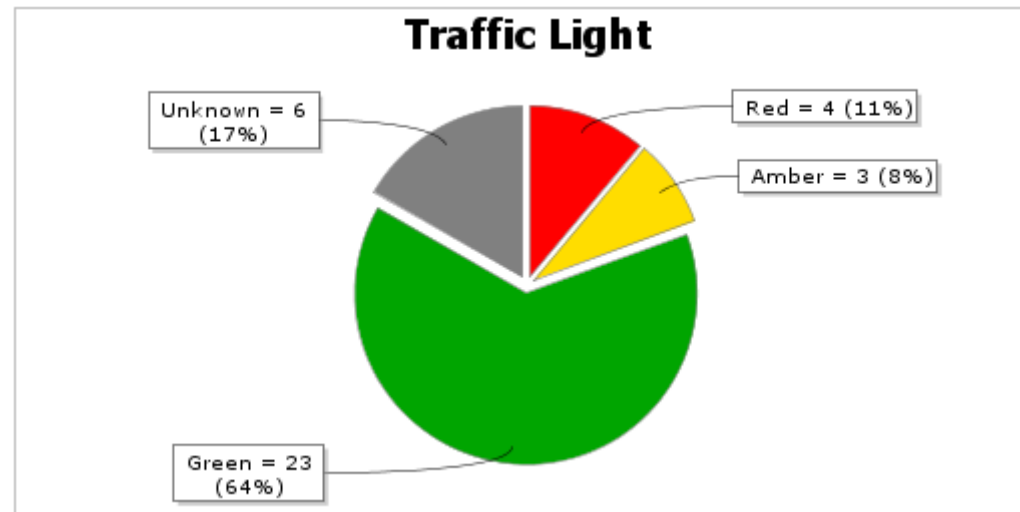
Contact person for accessing background papers and discussing the report; Andrea Stewart (Acting Head of Policy & Performance) 474 3083

Council Plan Values and Goals: Quarter 4 2009/10



Generated on: 29 April 2010

PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving		Improving
	Warning		No Change		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse		Getting Worse
	Unknown				
	Data Only				



Theme 4. Values and Goals - Monitoring and Managing Our Performance
Outcomes 1. Performance and Resources
Objective 1. Achieving excellent performance in delivering our priorities

PI Code	Description	Portfolio Owners	Aim is to...	2008/09 Quartile	2008/09	Quarters	Annual Performance			
					2008/09	Q4 2009/10	2009/10			
					Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Long Trend
EPM2	Percentage of Council Plan measures on or ahead of target	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	77%	62%	62%	80%		
EPM3	Managing Performance Theme	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	3	3	3	3		
VFM3	Percentage of Council Plan PIs improving or maintaining high performance	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	80%	64%	64%	85%		

Theme 4. Values and Goals - Monitoring and Managing Our Performance
Outcomes 1. Performance and Resources
Objective 2. Providing Value for Money by using resources in the most effective and efficient manner

PI Code	Description	Portfolio Owners	Aim is to...	2008/09 Quartile	2008/09	Quarters	Annual Performance			
					2008/09	Q4 2009/10	2009/10			
					Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Long Trend
NI 179	Value for money – total net value of ongoing cash-releasing value for money gains that have impacted since the start of the 2008-09 financial year.	Finance Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	£7.508m	£15.265m	£15.265m	£12.024m		
VFM4	CAA Use of Resources Assessment overall score (for previous financial year)	Finance Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	N/A	3	3	3		
VFM5	CAA Use of Resources score for Managing Finance theme (for previous financial year)	Finance Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	N/A	3	3	3		
VFM6	CAA Use of Resources score for Governing the Business theme (for previous financial year)	Finance Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	N/A	3	3	3		
VFM7	CAA Use of Resources score for Managing Resources theme (for previous financial year)	Finance Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	N/A	3	3	2		

Theme 4. Values and Goals - Monitoring and Managing Our Performance

Outcomes 2. Business Processes

Objective 1. Effective Partnership Working

PI Code	Description	Portfolio Owners	Aim is to...	2008/09 Quartile	2008/09	Quarters	Annual Performance			
					2008/09	Q4 2009/10	2009/10			
					Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Long Trend
EPW1	Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement - % of Indicators improving	Communities Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	51%	61%	61%	60%		
EPW2	Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement - % of Indicator targets achieved	Communities Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	48%	58%	58%	60%		

Theme 4. Values and Goals - Monitoring and Managing Our Performance

Outcomes 2. Business Processes

Objective 2. Effective Customer Processes

PI Code	Description	Portfolio Owners	Aim is to...	2008/09 Quartile	2008/09	Quarters	Annual Performance			
					2008/09	Q4 2009/10	2009/10			
					Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Long Trend
ECP1	Percentage of complaints progressing to Stage 2	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Minimise	N/A	29%	19%	16%	30%		
ECP2	Level of Equality Framework for Local Government achieved (on a scale of emerging / achieving / excellent)	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	N/A	2	2	2		
NI 14	Reducing avoidable contact: Minimising the proportion of customer contact that is of low or no value to the customer	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Minimise	N/A	26.3%	18.0%	21.3%	N/A		
NI 140	Fair treatment by local services	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	2	72.4%	N/A	73.5%	N/A		
RC1	Number of local settlements agreed by the authority and accepted by the Local Government Ombudsman as a percentage of complaints referred to the Ombudsman.	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Minimise	N/A	5%	30%	7%	6%		

Theme 4. Values and Goals - Monitoring and Managing Our Performance
Outcomes 2. Business Processes
Objective 3. Effective Service and Corporate Processes

PI Code	Description	Portfolio Owners	Aim is to...	2008/09 Quartile	2008/09	Quarters	Annual Performance			
					2008/09	Q4 2009/10	2009/10			
					Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Long Trend
BV8 (i)	% of invoices paid within 30 days	Finance Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	95.82%	95.71%	95.37%	97.00%		
BV78a	Speed of processing - new HB/CTB claims	Finance Portfolio	Aim to Minimise	2	26.2	28.7	28.7	33.0		
BV78b	Speed of processing - changes of circumstances for HB/CTB claims	Finance Portfolio	Aim to Minimise	3	13.5	11.5	11.5	20.0		
ESP1	Council Tax Collected Index (to incorporate in year collection rates and overall collection rates for the previous 3 years)	Finance Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	95.7	100.2	100.2	100		
ESP2	Non-domestic rates collected index (to incorporate in year collection rates and overall collection rates for the previous 3 years)	Finance Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	96.1	97.9	97.9	100		
NI 59	Percentage of initial assessments for children's social care carried out within 7 working days of referral	Children & Young People Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	1	80.1%	77.7%	77.7%	80.0%		
NI 60	Percentage of core assessments for children's social care that were carried out within 35 working days of their commencement	Children & Young People Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	2	85.0%	80.1%	80.1%	85.0%		
NI 103a	Special Educational Needs – statements issued within 26 weeks (excluding exceptions)	Children & Young People Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	1	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	90.0%		
NI 132 BV195	Timeliness of social care assessment (all adults)	Adult & Health Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	3	78.5%	77.5%	77.5%	81.0%		
NI 180	The number of changes of circumstances which affect customers' HB/CTB entitlement within the year.	Finance Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	4	622	N/A	N/A	631.7		

Theme 4. Values and Goals - Monitoring and Managing Our Performance
Outcomes 3. People
Objective 1. A diverse, motivated and well managed workforce with the capacity and capability to meet present and future organisational needs.

PI Code	Description	Portfolio Owners	Aim is to...	2008/09 Quartile	2008/09	Quarters	Annual Performance			
					2008/09	Q4 2009/10	2009/10			
					Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Long Trend
BV12(ii)	The number of working days lost due to sickness absence	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Minimise	N/A	11.1	9.9	9.9	11.2		
BV16	Percentage of Council employees with a disability.	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	1	7.1%	6.8%	6.8%	7.3%		
BV17	Percentage of Council employees from ethnic minority backgrounds.	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	3	4.6%	4.8%	4.8%	4.8%		
CCC3	First time appointment rate	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	94%	96%	96%	90%		
CMW4a	Employee Satisfaction Survey Index: a) Bi-ennial Survey	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	N/A	N/A	101.4	100		
CMW4b	Employee Satisfaction Survey Index: b) Half Yearly Health Checks	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	97.2	96.8	96.8	100		
CMW6	Percentage of employees with a documented PDR and PDP within the last 12 months.	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	68%	N/A	75%	75%		
CMW7	Labour turnover rate	Customer Focus Portfolio	Goldilocks	N/A	7%	9%	9%	8%		
CMW8	Percentage of workforce aged 18-25 compared to the percentage of overall population aged 18-25 years old.	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	36.6%	40%	40%	36.6%		
CMW9	Percentage of new starters that are still in post after 12 months.	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	92%	93%	91%	92%		
CMW10	Employee satisfaction with the induction process.	Customer Focus Portfolio	Aim to Maximise	N/A	84.5%	N/A	74%	85%		

**2009/10 Revenue Budget Monitoring
Update on Provisional Outturn Position**

Report of the Corporate Director, Business Services

1 Introduction

This report provides an update on the 2009/10 revenue budget provisional outturn position. The figures presented in this report are draft at this stage and a more detailed report on the final position will be presented to the next Executive Meeting on 14 June 2010.

2 2009/10 Revenue Budget

2.1 The following table summarises the changes to the revenue budget that have arisen during the fourth quarter of 2009/10.

	Budget as at 31/12/09 £000	Revised Budget 31/03/10 £000	Increase (Reduction) £000
Cash Limits	179,982	180,249	267
Non-Cash Limits	47,822	47,555	(267)
Total	227,804	227,804	0

2.2 As stated in paragraph one above, the figures/adjustments are draft at this stage and it may be necessary to present further adjustments for noting and/or approval in the forthcoming June report.

2.3 The revenue budget total remained unchanged during the final quarter of 2009/10 with resources totalling £0.267m transferring from non-cash limits to cash limits. This transfer comprises:

- Support for the Transportation Portfolio for the bulk of the cost of Winter Maintenance (£0.190m), as approved by the Executive;
- Support for costs incurred on the SEMMMS A6/A555 Link Road Project (£0.072m);
- Minor adjustments relating to the pay review (£0.005m);

2.4 A breakdown of the revised budget by Portfolio is shown at Appendix One and a list of virements which took place during the quarter is included at Appendix Two.

3 2009/10 Forecast Outturn

- 3.1 The provisional outturn forecast for cash limited budgets at this stage shows a surplus of £0.030m. At the end of quarter three the forecast surplus was £0.145m (after taking account of the agreed £0.190m (net) virement to cash limits for Winter Maintenance).
- 3.2 Figures for non-cash limits are still being compiled but are not expected to show any overall deterioration against the quarter three position which anticipated a surplus of £0.164m (when taking account of the agreed £0.190m virement for Winter Maintenance).
- 3.3 The main changes which have occurred since the quarter three report are as follows:
- Communities Portfolio - additional £0.058m surplus due mainly to action being taken to mitigate anticipated reductions in grant funding during 2010/11;
 - Transportation Portfolio - further £0.122m deficit due to the severe winter weather which continued into January. Once the outturn is finalised it is suggested that consideration should be given to meeting this deficit from balances rather than being carried forward within the Transportation Portfolio cash limit;
 - Licensing - £0.036m deficit due primarily to a decline in the income received from Health Education Fees;
 - Minor surpluses and deficits across other Portfolios (£0.015m deficit)
- 3.4 The Adults and Health Portfolio is forecasting a £0.003m surplus against Adult Education. However, the remainder of the Portfolio continues to forecast a balanced position which takes account of the re-profiling of pooled budget contributions between the Council and NHS Stockport for 2009/10 and 2010/11.
- 3.5 The Children and Young People Portfolio continues to report a break even position after the use of earmarked reserves and general balances totalling £0.416m. During the final quarter of 2009/10, projected deficits in the areas of Looked After Children, Children with Disabilities, and Services for Young People are not as large as were anticipated at quarter three, reducing the call on earmarked reserves by some £0.350m.
- 3.6 A breakdown of the change in forecast since quarter three is shown at Appendix Three and the provisional estimated outturn position for cash limits is included at Appendix Four.

4 Conclusions

- 4.1 At the end of the second quarter the Council took action to deal with significant spending pressures which emerged during the first half of

the year. The position in relation to most of those issues has either stabilised or improved but there continue to be significant pressures on the budget, particularly within the Children and Young People Portfolio. Action is being taken to ensure those spending pressures are contained within cash limits for 2010/11.

- 4.2 Work is continuing to finalise the year end position and a further, more detailed, report will be presented to the Executive on 14 June 2010 providing a full breakdown of all material variations against cash and non-cash limits together with details of significant movements on Earmarked Reserves and General Fund Balances during 2009/10. The Executive may be asked to make final adjustments to the outturn, particularly in relation to reserves and balances.

5 Recommendations

The Executive is recommended to:

- approve the virements and budget adjustments set out in Appendix Two of the report;
- note the forecast cash limit outturn position for 2009/10; and
- agree to give further consideration to the financing of the residual winter maintenance deficit once the final outturn position is known

2009/10 Revenue Budget (Revised)

Key	Portfolio/Item	Approved Budget £000	Increase/ (Reduction) £000	Revised Budget £000
	<u>Cash Limits</u>			
	<u>Executive Functions</u>			
A&H	Adults and Health	66,327	(162)	66,165
CHYP	Children and Young People	38,676	(78)	38,598
COM	Communities	9,174	(22)	9,152
CUF	Customer Focus	9,870	(18)	9,852
ENV	Environment	11,855	(59)	11,796
FIN	Finance	14,939	28	14,967
LEI	Leisure	11,578	7	11,585
REG	Regeneration	2,960	2	2,962
TRN	Transportation	11,299	565	11,864
	Sub Total	176,678	263	176,941
	<u>Non-Executive Functions</u>			
LIC	Licensing, Environment and Safety Committee	1,849	2	1,851
PLA	Planning and Highways Committee	1,455	2	1,457
	Sub Total	3,304	4	3,308
	Total (Cash Limits)	179,982	267	180,249
	<u>Non-Cash Limits</u>			
NCL	Total (Non-Cash Limits)	47,822	(267)	47,555
	GRAND TOTAL	227,804	0	227,804

Virements and Other Budget Adjustments

Previously Approved by Executive

Item	Type*	Amount £000	From	To	P/T**
Single Status/Job Evaluation	V	5	NCL	LEI	P
Winter Maintenance (Q3 FMR)	V	250	ENV/NCL	TRN	T

Presented for Approval by Executive

Item	Type*	Amount £000	From	To	P/T**
Social Care Strategy and Performance Team	V	15	A&H	CHYP	P
Re-alignment of Insurance Budgets	BR	286	Various	Various	P
SEMMMS Project	V	72	NCL	FIN/TRN	T

* V=Virement and BR = Budget Re-alignment

** P = Permanent and T = Temporary

Appendix Three

2009/10 Provisional Outturn - Change in Forecast

Key	Portfolio/Item	Quarter 3 (Surplus)/ Deficit £000	Change in Forecast £000	Estimated (Surplus)/ Deficit £000
	<u>Cash Limits</u>			
	<u>Executive Functions</u>			
A&H	Adults and Health	0	(3)	(3)
CHYP	Children and Young People	0	0	0
COM	Communities	(121)	(58)	(179)
CUF	Customer Focus	42	(7)	35
ENV	Environment *	0	0	0
FIN	Finance	(91)	0	(91)
LEI	Leisure	(25)	14	(11)
REG	Regeneration	50	11	61
TRN	Transportation *	0	122	122
		(145)	79	(66)
	<u>Non-Executive Functions</u>			
LIC	Licensing, Environment and Safety Committee	0	36	36
PLA	Planning and Highways Committee	0	0	0
		0	36	36
	Total (Cash Limits)	(145)	115	(30)

* After taking account of approved virements to finance the cost of Q3 Winter Maintenance (£0.060m from Environment Portfolio and £0.190m from Non-Cash Limits).

2009/10 Provisional Outturn As At 31/03/2010

Key	Portfolio/Item	Revised Budget £000	Forecast Outturn £000	(Surplus)/ Deficit £000	Var- iance* %
	<u>Cash Limits</u>				
	<u>Executive Functions</u>				
A&H	Adults and Health	66,165	66,162	(3)	0.0
CHYP	Children and Young People	38,598	38,598	0	0.0
COM	Communities	9,152	8,973	(179)	(2.0)
CUF	Customer Focus	9,852	9,887	35	0.4
ENV	Environment	11,796	11,796	0	0.0
FIN	Finance	14,967	14,876	(91)	(0.6)
LEI	Leisure	11,585	11,574	(11)	(0.1)
REG	Regeneration	2,962	3,023	61	2.1
TRN	Transportation	11,864	11,986	122	1.0
		176,941	176,875	(66)	0.0
	<u>Non-Executive Functions</u>				
LIC	Licensing, Environment and Safety Committee	1,851	1,887	36	1.9
PLA	Planning and Highways Committee	1,457	1,457	0	0.0
		3,308	3,344	36	1.1
	Total (Cash Limits)	180,249	180,219	(30)	0.0

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

Cash Limits

The Council operates a system under which each portfolio is only held responsible for those areas of income and expenditure over which they can exert control. Cash Limits are approved before the financial year commences and each Portfolio is responsible for ensuring that their net expenditure does not exceed their cash limit for that year.

Non-Cash Limits

Items which are largely outside of the direct control and influence of the Council are managed outside of Portfolio Cash Limits. This includes items such as levies and precepts determined by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities and joint authorities, together with demands on services which the Council cannot avoid meeting (such as Housing Benefit payments and Capital Financing Costs).

Forecast Outturn

This is the forecast of the net income or expenditure for the financial year on each budget heading.

Virement

The switching of budget provision from one budget head to another. Virements must be properly authorised by the appropriate committee or by officers under delegated powers.

Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

The minimum amount which must be charged to an authority's revenue account each year and set aside to repay debt, as required by the Local Government Housing Act 1989.

Abbreviations usedPortfolios - Executive Functions

A&H	Adults and Health
CHYP	Children and Young People
COM	Communities
CUF	Customer Focus
ENV	Environment
FIN	Finance
LEI	Leisure
REG	Regeneration
TRN	Transportation

Portfolios – Non-Executive Functions

PLA	Planning and Highways Committee
LIC	Licencing, Environment and Safety Committee

Directorates

AC	Adults and Communities
BSD	Business Services
CE	Chief Executive's
CYP	Children and Young People
EED	Environment and Economy Directorate

AGENDA ITEM 6

REPORT TO: CORPORATE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 8TH JUNE 2010

REPORT OF: ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (STRATEGY & DEMOCRACY)

REPORT TITLE: 4TH QUARTER 2009/10 CORPORATE COMPLAINTS REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of corporate complaints, compliments and comments as at the 4th quarter (January - March) 2009/10. The report also provides a summary for the year comparing complaints received in 2009/10 with the complaints received in 2008/09.

This report is structured as follows:

- Performance overview
- Overview of Stage 1 complaints, compliments and comments
- Overview of Stage 2 complaints
- Overview of complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)
- Lessons learnt as a result of complaints
- Future developments for 2010/11

Within each section, complaints information is provided in relation to:

- Numbers of complaints received during 2009/10
- Percentage of complaints upheld
- Percentage of complaints dealt with within agreed timescales
- Numbers of compliments and comments received

It should be noted that only corporate complaints are included in this report. Social care and education complaints are dealt with via different complaints procedures.

2. PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW (4TH QUARTER AND 2008/09)

Stage 1

Performance at the 4th quarter 2009/10 indicates a decrease in complaints received at Stage 1 (57) compared with the 3rd quarter of 2009/10 (91).

However, the total number of Stage 1 complaints received in 2009/10 (335) has increased compared with 2008/09 (279).

Stage 2

A slight decrease is also reported in the number of complaints that escalated to Stage 2 at the 4th quarter 2009/10 (11) compared with the 3rd quarter 2009/10 (15).

The total number of Stage 2 complaints received in 2009/10 (54) has reduced significantly compared with the number of complaints received in 2008/09 (81).

LGO

10 complaints were reviewed by the LGO during the 4th quarter 2009/10, which represents a reduction to the number of complaints reviewed in the 3rd quarter (14 complaints).

There were no adverse findings against the Council (i.e. maladministration), although 4 local settlement decisions were made.

A total of 50 complaints were investigated by the LGO during 2009/10, compared with 47 in 2008/09. It should be noted that the total number of complaints about Stockport Council referred to the LGO's Advice Team in relation to this year is 152, compared with 100 in 2008/09. There have been no findings of maladministration during 2009/10. A total of 11 local settlements were made this year, compared with 8 local settlements and no maladministration findings in 2008/09.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of complaints received by directorate at each stage of the Council's process.

TABLE 1: Numbers of complaints reviewed 2009/10

Directorate	Stage 1					Stage 2					LGO				
	Q1 09/10	Q2 09/10	Q3 09/10	Q4 09/10	Total YTD	Q1 09/10	Q2 09/10	Q3 09/10	Q4 09/10	Total YTD	Q1 09/10	Q2 09/10	Q3 09/10	Q4 09/10	Total YTD
Adult Social Care	14	6	4	0	24*	3	4	2	0	9	3	2	2	1	8
Children & Young People	18	17	9	8	44	1	2	4	1	7	4	8	5	1	18
Communities, Regeneration & Environment	15	37	36	17	88	4	5	5	6	14	4	4	5	4	17
Business Services	24	31	18	14	73	1	4	2	3	7	1	0	1	1	3
Chief Executive's	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1
Solutions SK	13	12	24	18	49	0	3	2	1	5	0	2	1	2	5
Total	84	103	91	57	335	10	18	15	11	54	13	16	14	9	52**

N.B. LGO figures include non-corporate complaints such as Adult and Children's social care.

* Following transfer of the Communities function to the CRE directorate, there are expected to be no future corporate complaints to report for Adult Social Care as it will solely deal with complaints under its own statutory procedure.

** It should be noted that, as not all LGO complaints are referred to the Council when a decision has been made, the total number of complaints actually received by the LGO in 2009/10 is 152.

TABLE 2: An overview of complaints received by Stockport Homes

Stockport Homes	Q1 2009/10	Q2 2009/10	Q3 2009/10	Q4 2009/10	Total YTD
Stage 1	165	193	177	251	786
Stage2	26	22	27	31	106
Stage 3	1	1	0	0	2
LGO	2	0	1	1	4
Total	194	216	205	283	898*

*This compares with 895 complaints received in 2008/09.

2.1 Complaints Upheld

47% of complaints investigated at Stage 1 were upheld or partially upheld during the 4th quarter 2009/10, compared with 31% of complaints either upheld or partially upheld during the 3rd quarter 2009/10.

38% of complaints investigated at Stage 2 during the 4th quarter 2009/10 were either upheld or partially upheld, compared with 20% of complaints either upheld or partially upheld during the 3rd quarter 2009/10.

The LGO categories which are used to reflect whether or not a complaint is upheld (fully or partially) are indicated by findings of 'maladministration' and 'local settlements' respectively. During the 4th quarter there were no findings of maladministration and 4 local settlements, compared with the 3rd quarter 2009/10 when there were no findings of maladministration and 2 local settlements.

TABLE 3: Percentage of Complaints Upheld or Partially Upheld during the 4th quarter

4th quarter	Stage 1	Stage 2	LGO
Adult Social Care	0%	100%*	100%**
Children & Young People	60%	0	0%
Community, Regeneration & Environment	29%	25%	0%
Business Services	57%	0%	100%***
Chief Executive's	0%	0%	0%
Solutions SK	50%	100%****	0%
Stockport Homes	58%	68% & 100%*****	100%
Total	47%	38%	33%

* Reflects 1 complaint investigated, which was upheld

** Reflects 2 complaints investigated

*** Reflects 1 complaint investigated

**** Reflects 1 complaint investigated, which was partially upheld

***** The figures relate to percentage of complaints upheld or partially upheld at Stage 2 and Stage 3 respectively

2.2 Timeliness of Complaints handling

The Council's complaints procedure acknowledges the need for complaints to be dealt with in a timely manner but most importantly that complaints are dealt with fairly and thoroughly. In line with best practice, a timescale of 20 working days is identified at both Stages 1 and 2.

At Stage 1 during the 4th quarter, 98% of complaints were responded to within the agreed timescale, compared with 93% in the 3rd quarter.

Complaints at Stage 2 of the Council's process tend to be more complex and as such take longer to investigate. Complainants are always kept advised of progress and provided with an indication of when a response will be received.

The timescale to respond to LGO complaints is 28 calendar days. 75% of complaints were dealt with within the agreed timescale during the 4th quarter 2009/10, compared with 67% in the 3rd quarter.

The Council's overall performance for 2009/10 is very positive as it took an average of 23.1 days to respond to LGO enquiries this year. This is in line with the same average of 23.1 days taken to respond in 2008/09.

2.3 Compliments and Comments

The Council values feedback from its customers and while it obviously focuses on resolving problems and issues raised as complaints, it is also important to recognise the positive feedback that is received from customers.

The following table provides a summary of compliments and comments received in the 3rd quarter. The number of compliments and comments has significantly increased to 471 during the 4th quarter 2009/10, compared with 145 during the 3rd quarter 2009/10. The rise is partly down to new compliments being reported from areas such as Community Safety and Home Repairs and Adaptations. Of particular note, a number of compliments have been received in relation to:

- Libraries (CRE)
- Advice provided by Contact Centre staff (BS)
- General satisfaction with Environmental Services (refuse collection, recycling, street cleansing)

TABLE 4: Compliments & Comments received during the 3rd quarter

Directorate	Number received
Adult Social Care	0
Children & Young People	0
Community, Regeneration & Environment	374
Business Services	33
Chief Executive's	0
Solutions SK	64
Total	471*

* Figure does not include the hundreds of general compliments and comments received for Stockport Advice and places of attraction such Bramhall Hall and the Hat Works Museum (CRE), and transportation services provided by SSK.

3 OVERVIEW OF STAGE 1 COMPLAINTS

3.1 Stage 1 Summary

The 4th quarter 2009/10 results (57 complaints received) indicates a 37% decrease in complaints compared with the 3rd quarter (91 complaints received). The significant reduction from the 3rd quarter is not unusual as complaints regarding issues such as Council Tax and Education complaints tend to decrease this time of the year (see graph overleaf which details a similar pattern for complaints received in 2008/09).

However, overall the total number of Stage 1 complaints received in 2009/10 (335) has increased compared with 2008/09 (279). A number of factors have contributed to the rise this year, which include the following:

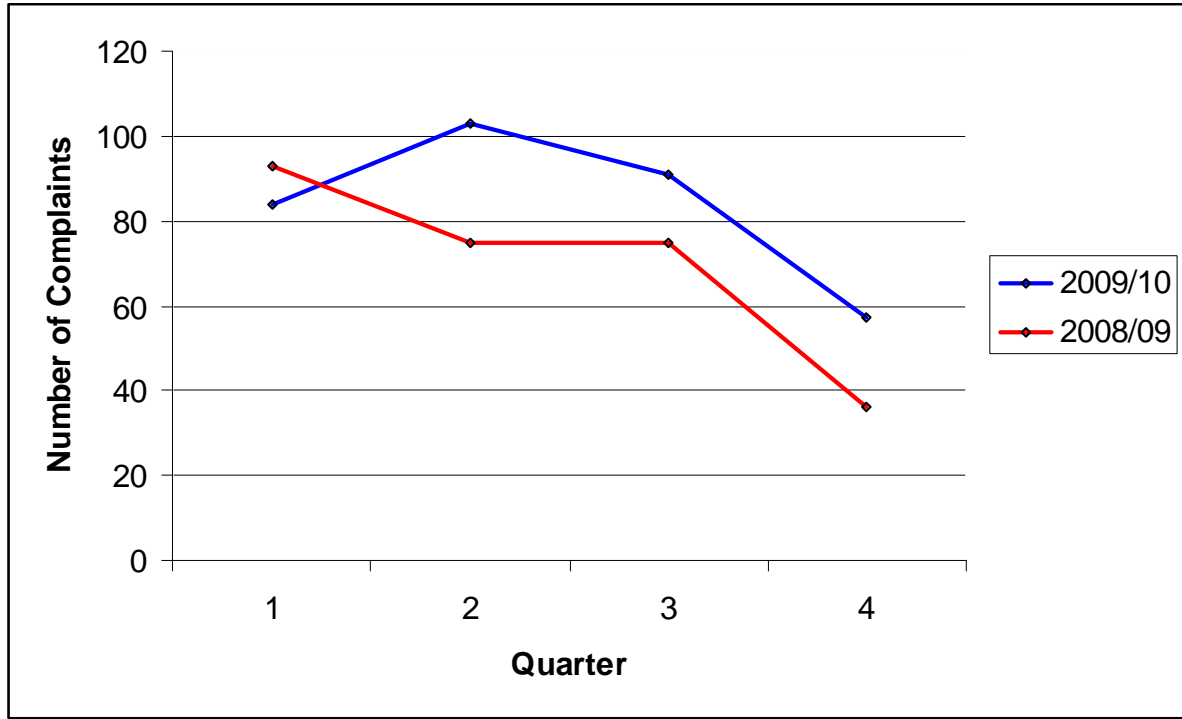
- The effects of the economic recession leading to an increase in complaints about Housing Benefits, Council Tax and Business Rates (BS).
- Roll out of the new blue/brown wheelie bins (CRE).
- Gritting of roads (CRE).
- Unprecedented number of complaints about school admissions as competition for places continues to increase year by year (C&YP).

It is not considered that the rise in complaints is indicative of serious service failures occurring. Some customers use the complaints procedure to voice dissatisfaction about a change in policy, guidance or level of service they expect. For example:

- The authority collecting Council Tax sooner, in line with other local authorities'.
- Parents complaining about the change in the Code affecting school admissions.

- The Council experiencing difficulty gritting the roads due to the adverse weather conditions earlier this year.

Number of Stage 1 complaints received in 2009/10 compared with 2008/09



	Number of Stage 1 Complaints			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2009/10	84	103	91	57
2008/09	93	75	75	36

4 OVERVIEW OF STAGE 2 COMPLAINTS

The 4th quarter 2009/10 results (11 complaints received) indicate a 27% decrease in complaints received, compared with the 3rd quarter (15 complaints received).

During 2009/10, 16% of Stage 1 complaints progressed to Stage 2. This is a reduction compared to the percentage of complaints that progressed to Stage 2 in 2008/09 (29%). (Please refer to graph overleaf for similar pattern reported in 2008/09). A number of factors could account for less complaints progressing to Stage 2. These include the following:

- More staff undertaking complaints handling training provided by the LGO has contributed to an improvement in responses to complaints.
- Staff are encouraged to apologise when errors have occurred and promising to put things right.
- There is greater staff awareness of the complaints procedure and the help directorate complaints officers' can provide when handling

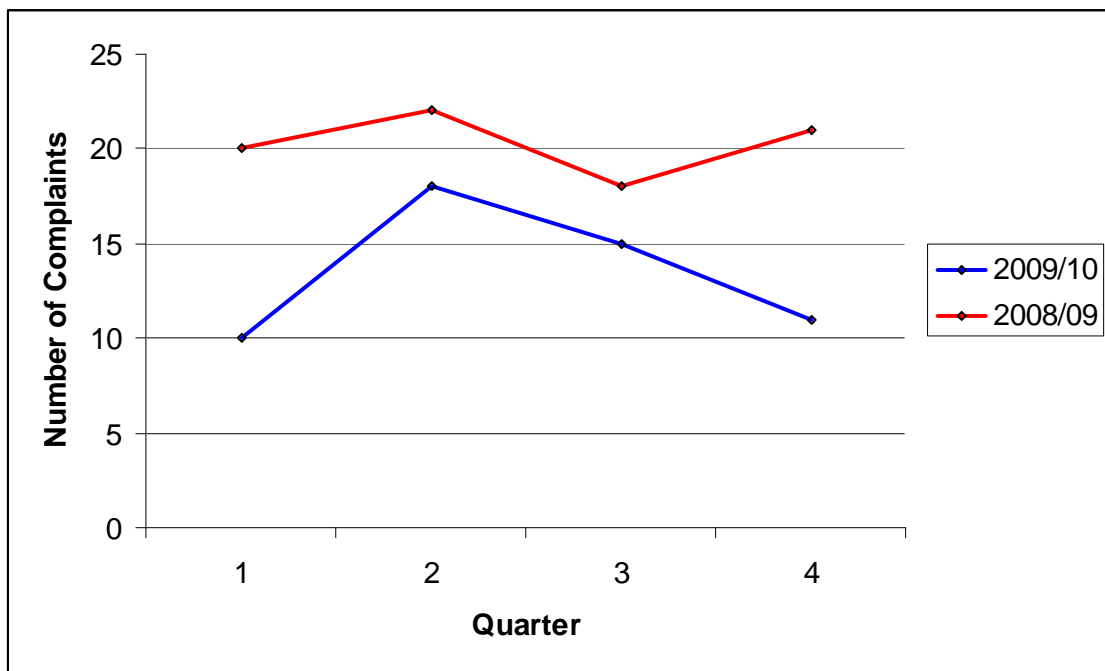
complaints. This has helped to improve the quality and timeliness of responses being issued.

- The setting up of a central team within Business Services responsible for handling complaints about Housing Benefit, Council Tax, Business Rates etc, has led to an improvement in responding to complaints.

During the 4th quarter, 8 complaints were investigated and closed. Of these:

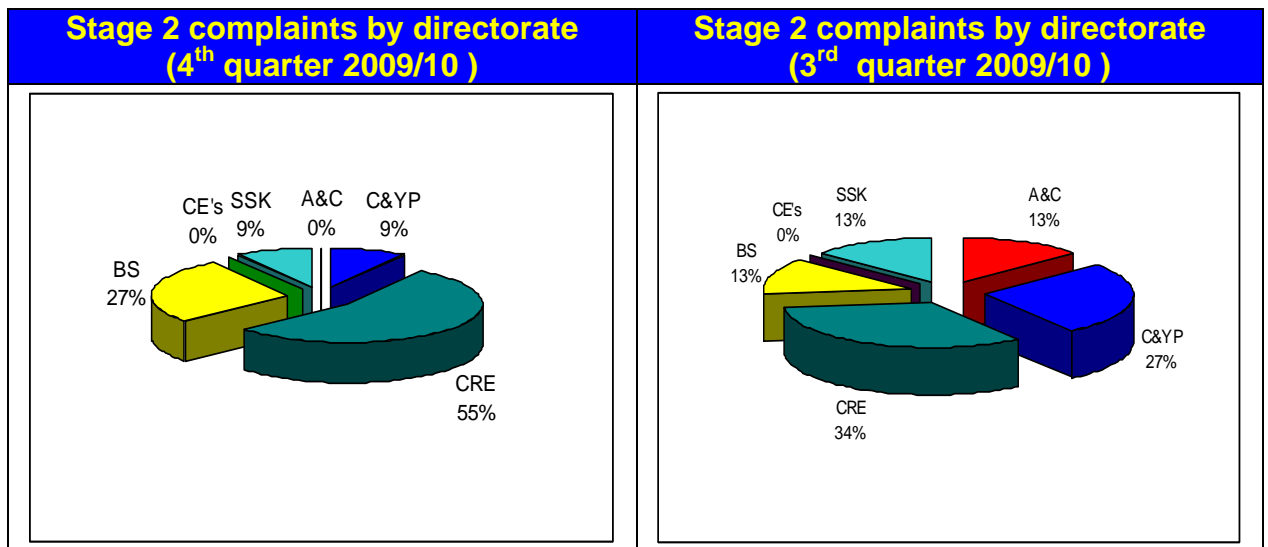
- 3 complaints were upheld or partially upheld
- 5 complaints were not upheld

Number of Stage 2 complaints received in 2009/10 compared with 2008/09



	Number of Stage 2 Complaints			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2009/10	10	18	15	11
2008/09	20	22	18	21

The following charts provide an overview of the percentage of Stage 2 complaints received by directorate this quarter compared with the previous quarter.



There are no significant trends to report during the quarter.

5 OVERVIEW OF LGO COMPLAINTS

10 complaints were reviewed by the LGO during the 4th quarter 2009/10, which reflects a reduction compared to the number of complaints reviewed in the 3rd quarter (14 complaints). There were no adverse findings of maladministration, although 4 local settlement decisions made. These are broken down as follows:

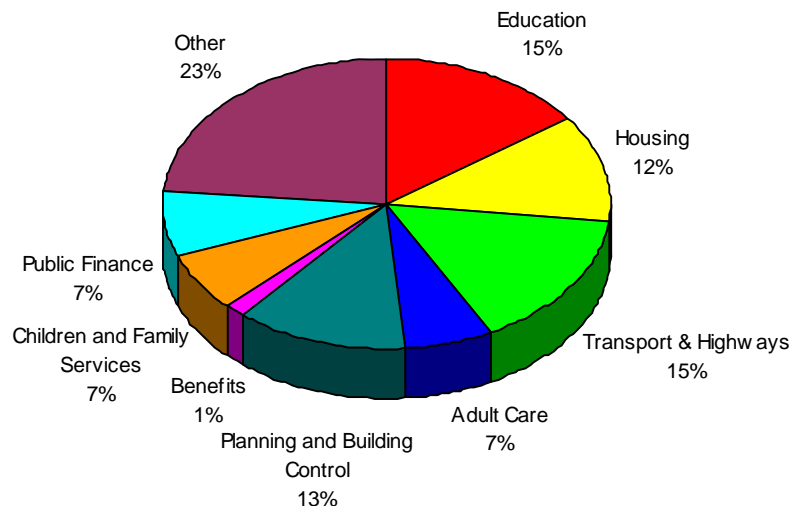
- 1 complaint about direct payments scheme (ASC)
- 1 complaint about Easy Go transport (ASC)
- 1 complaint about grassing cutting contractor's standard of work (SH)
- 1 complaint about Council Tax (BS)

There have been no findings of maladministration during 2009/10. A total of 11 local settlements were made this year, compared with 8 local settlements and no maladministration findings in 2008/09. These are broken down as follows:

- 2 Adult social care complaints (ASC)
- 4 education complaints (C&YP)
- 1 children's social care complaint (C&YP)
- 2 transport and highways complaints (CRE)
- 1 Council Tax complaint (BS)
- 1 Housing complaint (SH)

Table 5: Total number of complaints by subject which the LGO has reported in its review letter to the Council

Education	Housing	Transport & Highways	Adult Care	Planning and Building Control	Benefits	Children and Family Services	Public Finance	Other	Total
23	18	23	10	19	2	10	11	36	152



6. LESSONS LEARNT

The Council is keen to learn from complaints in order that we can improve our services. The Council is already committed to ensure staff are trained in handling complaints. This year, further training for managers on effective complaints handling was provided by the LGO in November 2009 and attended by 13 managers.

The following are examples of lessons learnt as a result of Stage 1 complaints during 2009/10:

Quarter 1:

- As a result of a delay in dealing with a noise complaint, the Environmental Health department and the Planning department met to discuss the complaint and to improve communication between the two departments to ensure such oversights do not occur in future.

Quarter 2:

- A series of missed bin collections resulted in the supervisor subsequently monitoring collections in the specified area (CRE) .
- The wording on automated letters checked to ensure they are clear and understandable to the general public (BS).

Quarter 3:

- Further in-house refresher training has been provided for staff about changes in legislation and regulations (BS).
- In order to minimise the number of complaints relating to street lighting, there is a rigorous monitoring and maintenance schedule in place which sees operatives checking the functioning of street lights across Stockport on a regular basis (SSK).
- Arboricultural teams work hard to mitigate against the effects of the winter months by a monitoring schedule covering all the trees in Stockport throughout the year (SSK).

Quarter 4:

- A complaint made by a landlord not receiving housing benefit payments for a tenant in arrears was flagged up and staff dealing with Housing Benefit claims were briefed on following correct guidance.
- As a result of a complaint about an email not being responded to, the Public Rights of Way Team set up an automatic email response when officers are not available.
- A complaint was raised after a refuse collection team did not collect refuse sacks missed during collection when asked by the customer. This issue will be addressed by Environmental Services at the next client contractor meeting to ensure this does not happen in the future.

7. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS FOR 2010/11

- Systems Thinking review of the complaints process.
- Establishing a Customer Focus Group.
- Updating the corporate complaints policy and procedure document.
- Continued staff training on effective complaints handling.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- a) Review performance information contained in this report, and
- b) Comment on the performance measures reported and suggest additional performance measures that might be collected in future.

Corporate, Resource Management & Governance Date: 8 June 2010
Scrutiny Committee

RESUME OF THE STOCKPORT PARTNERSHIP BOARD – 26 May 2010

Report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Strategy & Democracy)

1. MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

To consider the proceedings of the meeting of the Stockport Partnership Board on 26 May 2010. The following representatives of the organisations identified were in attendance:-

Councillor Dave Goddard - Leader of Stockport Council (Chair)
Jane Ball - Stockport NHS Trust
Eamonn Boylan - Chief Executive, Stockport Council
Councillor Stuart Bodsworth - Environment Partnership
Steve Fisher - Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Authority/Safer Stockport Partnership
Councillor Helen Foster - Grime - Stronger Communities Partnership
Mike Greenwood - Stockport Primary Care Trust
Councillor John Pantall - Health & Well Being Partnership
Sally Pearson - Government Office North West
Chief Superintendent Rebekah Sutcliffe - Greater Manchester Police
Andrew Webb - Children's Trust

Also in attendance

Laureen Donnan - Assistant Chief Executive, Stockport Council
Joanna Foskett, - Partnership Manager, Stockport Council
Steve Fox - Principal Democratic Services Officer, Stockport Council
Steve Houston - Corporate Director, Business Services, Stockport Council
Carol Morrison - Service Director (Communities) Stockport Council
Vicki Packman - Head of Integrated Prevention Services, Stockport Council

2. INFORMATION

2.1 The Stockport Partnership Board considered the following items:-

Public Services Resources Board Update

*Steve Houston, Corporate Director - Business Services, Stockport Council
474 4000*

Steve Houston submitted a report updating the Partnership Board on the activities of the Public Services Resources Board including the proposed establishment of an Estates Group, clarification of the membership of the

Resources Board and proposals to recruit a Partnership Resources Manager. The Partnership Board approved the proposals contained in the report.

Partnership Performance, Quarter 4 - Annual Performance

Jo Foskett, Partnership Manager, Chief Executive's Directorate - Stockport Council – 474 3174

Jo Foskett submitted a report and made a presentation in respect of the Stockport Partnership Annual Report 2009/2010. In respect of the LAA Performance Indicators, she identified those areas where targets were currently being exceeded as well as those areas where targets were not being met.

Partnership Development

(i) Use of Resources

Steve Houston, Corporate Director - Business Services, Stockport Council 474 4000

Steve Houston submitted a report outlining areas of work which were emerging as part of the development of a more coherent approach to use of resources in Stockport. The Partnership Board agreed that the Public Services Resources Board investigate how a Strategic Commissioning model could be implemented on behalf of the Partnership, to recruit a Resource Manager and to develop a Local Information System, including the use of the Partnership Support Budget.

(ii) Neighbourhood Management Update

Carol Morrison, Service Director (Communities) Stockport Council, 474 4501

Carol Morrison submitted a report providing an overview of the Partnership's commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal, explaining the concept of Neighbourhood Management and summarising progress made to date by the Place Board which oversees the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy across the Priority 1 areas in Stockport. The Partnership Board agreed that a performance report for the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy should be submitted to a future meeting of the Partnership Board once the Place Board has reviewed performance in August 2010.

(iii) Partnership Event

Laureen Donnan, Asst Chief Executive, Strategy & Democracy, 474 3180

Laureen Donnan submitted a report detailing a proposal to hold a Partnership Event in September 2010, the purpose of which was to bring together members of the Partnership Board and the seven Thematic Partnerships to

discuss the changing national picture, the emerging financial challenges to local area and the implications for the borough as a whole.

Partnership Strategies - Child Poverty Strategy

Vicki Packman, Head of Integrated Prevention Services, Stockport Council, 474 4509

Vicki Packman submitted the draft Child Poverty Strategy 2010-13 for the Partnership Board to consider. The Strategy had been developed in accordance with the duty placed on Local Authorities by the Child Poverty Act. Comments made during the three month consultation period would be collated and considered in August 2010 and used to inform the work of the strategy group.

Partnership Engagement

(i) Stockport Survey

Laureen Donnan, Asst Chief Executive, Strategy & Democracy, 474 3180

Laureen Donnan submitted a report summarising the results from the 2009 Stockport Survey which revealed that overall satisfaction with the borough remained at over 80% and that priorities for improvement remained the same as 2008 but that there were a number of further emerging issues. The Partnership Board agreed that work be undertaken with the Thematic Partnerships to direct and support actions that address those issues.

(ii) Partnership Forum

Jo Foskett reported that the Partnership Forum would be held on Friday 17 June 2010 and the theme was 'Building a Society for all Ages.'

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Reports and Minutes of the Stockport Partnership Board – 26 May 2010

Anyone wishing to inspect the above background papers or requiring further information should contact Steve Fox on telephone number 0161 474 3206 or alternatively e-mail stephen.fox@stockport.gov.uk

COMMITTEE: CORPORATE, RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

DATE: 8TH JUNE 2010

REPORT OF: ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (STRATEGY AND DEMOCRACY)

REPORT TITLE: AGENDA PLANNING

1) PLANNED AGENDA ITEMS

(Committee Members are asked to note that agenda items are indicative at this stage and will be subject to change and added to following this meeting)

27th July 2010

Item	Type/Purpose
4 th Quarter Revenue Budget Monitoring Report	Performance report
4 th Quarter Capital Programme Monitoring Report	Performance report
4 th Quarter Treasury Management performance	Performance report

28th September 2010

Item	Type/Purpose
1 st Quarter Corporate Performance Report	Performance report
1 st Quarter Revenue Budget Monitoring Report	Performance report
1 st Quarter Capital Programme Monitoring Report	Performance report
1 st Quarter Treasury Management performance	Performance report

2) RELEVANT ENTRIES IN JUNE 2010 FORWARD PLAN

Decision Reference	Subject Area for Decision	Expected Date of Decision	Decision Maker
FIN 80	Treasury Management Annual Report 2009/10 and Treasury Management Policy Statement and Practices	August 2010	Executive recommendation to Council Meeting

3) PROGRESS ON SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS

Date/ Minute No.	Resolution	Progress	Person Responsible
23 rd February 2010 Minute 8 refers	That an update report be submitted to a future meeting detailing progress on the delivery of the Disability Equality Action Plan 2010 - 12	To be included in the Committee's Work Programme for 2010/11	Steven Longden