

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 NOVEMBER 2012

REPORT OF HEAD OF CHANGE & SCRUTINY

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1. QUARTER 1 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REPORT 2012/13

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 The Committee are asked to consider progress made in the first quarter of 2012/13 for the authority's key performance indicators (KPIs) at Appendix A.

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Change & Scrutiny

1.2.1 It is recommended that Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

- a) Note the progress and out-turns of the KPIs (Appendix A), definitions are included for reference at Appendix B;
- b) Note the areas where Cabinet have requested action plans to address performance concerns:

HSG PS 002 – Number of homes occupied by vulnerable people made decent – The lower level of performance is attributed to reduced take up of grant programmes targeted at vulnerable households and an increased number of service requests relating to non-vulnerable households. This target was also set prior to grant funding for 2012/13 being confirmed.

HSG 005 – The number of households prevented from becoming homeless- Lower performance levels are the result of a range of issues including, an increase in the number of homelessness decisions, parental evictions and difficulty in accessing the private rented sector.

CTC 001 – The average wait time for calls into the contact centre – after not achieving the annual target last year and requesting that the 2011/12 target be retained the quarterly target has not been achieved. The service manager has attributed the lower performance level to both the number of bank holidays in the quarter and capacity issues. As the

issue with Bank Holidays is a trend that has previously been identified it is suggested that mitigation measures are looked into.

CTC 002 – The percentage of visitors to the Gateway responded to within 20 minutes – performance in this area has declined, as with the indicator above this is being attributed to the number of Bank Holidays as well as capacity issues tied up with training needs.

- c) Note the areas where performance has declined and requires further monitoring:

PKG 007- Number of onboard P&R transactions – the number of transactions continues to decline, it is 11% down from 2009/10. Although this service is being reviewed it is recommended that this indicator is closely monitored. Cabinet considered an action plan for this indicator but concluded that action was already being taken to address performance, reported through other channels.

DCE 001- Percentage of planning enforcement cases signed off within 21 days. Although there were less cases received within the period performance has declined by more than 10% compared to quarter 1 last year. This drop is being attributed to absence of the investigation officers and clearance of backlog cases. It is recommended that this indicator is monitored as if performance does not improve it is likely that the annual target will not be achieved.

HRO 001- Working days lost to sickness absence (rolling year) – Despite an impressive end of year out-turn for 2011/12 of 6.01 days and the agreement of Cabinet to increase the target to 8.00 days, long term sickness has meant that the quarterly target has been missed. Action has been taken to address long term sickness issues and as this is a rolling indicator it is possible that it could return to an acceptable level. It is recommended that this indicator is monitored and if performance has not improved by end of quarter 2, actions to improve performance are requested.

- d) Agree any other areas where actions to improve performance would be appropriate.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The Council has set 60 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), as part of the Strategic Plan 2011-15; there are 27 indicators that can be monitored on a quarterly basis to ensure the Council is on track to meet its annual performance targets.

1.3.2 The Council's quarterly performance reporting cycle is aligned with financial reporting to enable it to effectively oversee financial performance against

corporate priorities and assess whether value for money is being achieved in the delivery of services. The financial monitoring reports for the first quarter shows an under spend of £0.38 million, with 127 out of 215 cost centres under spending. The majority of the under spend is focused on employee costs.

1.4 Context

1.4.1 The Council uses a range of information to manage performance, including various performance indicators. The Council's top-level indicators are referred to as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The Key Performance Indicators which are set in the Strategic Plan were reviewed and the number reduced last year by Cabinet. These will continue to be reviewed annually to ensure that they are aligned with the Council's priorities.

1.4.2 Maidstone Borough is Kent's County Town, it has a population of 155,200 and benefits from a high overall employment rate with relatively high wage levels, although some will commute out of the borough to achieve these. There are small areas of deprivation in the urban area, however Maidstone has a lower than average number of people claiming out of work benefits compared to other Kent authorities. Educational attainment is high with over 34% of the population being educated to NVQ level four or higher.

1.5 Performance Summary

1.5.1 The appendix shows out-turn data for all indicators that can be collected quarterly. Some indicators are collected bi-annually or annually, these indicators have not been included in this report.

1.5.2 Where an indicator is new and there is no quarterly 2011/12 data, no direction of travel can be given. The direction of travel for pre-existing indicators direction of travel compares the current out-turn for quarter 1 with the 2011/12 quarter 1 out-turn.

1.5.3 The following tables show the status of performance indicators in relation to target and direction of travel.

	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
KPIs	13 (50%)	9(34.6%)	4 (15.4%)	1	27

	Improved	Maintained	Declined	N/A	Total
KPIs	13 (52%)	1 (4%)	11 (44%)	2	27

1.5.4 Overall, 50% of performance indicators have been rated green (currently on target) compared to 74% at the same point in 2011/12. Although the

number of those achieving target has dropped it should be noted that the majority of these (9) only missed the target by a small margin, being no more than 10% away from target.

- 1.5.5 Of the 25 KPIs where direction of travel can be assessed, 52% have improved when comparing 2012/13 quarter 1 with that of 2011/12. This is positive as at the quarter 1 point in 2011/12 only 36% were shown to have improved and 64% were showing performance had declined.
- 1.5.6 At the same point in 2011/12 there were 14 indicators rated green, three amber and two red. For five indicators performance had improved, nine had declined and 11 indicators could not be rated as there was no previous data or they were data only performance indicators.
- 1.5.7 It should be noted that at the end of 2011/12, 63% of all KPIs achieved their annual targets and 57% of out-turns had improved since the previous year. Each year all targets are reviewed and where possible a continuous improvement approach is used to ensure that targets are challenging. At the mid-year report Managers will be asked to assess their indicators to identify if any are likely to underperform.

For Maidstone to have a growing economy

- 1.5.8 There are four indicators that can be monitored quarterly that relate to this priority, all of which have been rated amber, for three performance has declined and for one performance has been sustained.
- 1.5.9 The number of on-board Park and Ride transactions (PKG 007) was just under 5,000 transactions away from achieving the quarterly target, which has been profiled to take into account seasonal variances. There has been a steady decline in transactions over the last three years and when quarter 1 2009/10 out-turn is compared to this quarter's out-turn it shows an 11.5% decrease in performance. In terms of action being taken to address this, the financial monitoring report identifies that Park and Ride procedures and processes are under review to identify increased efficiency and further savings.
- 1.5.10 The percentage of people claiming job seekers allowance has improved since the year end by 0.2% and Maidstone currently has the 5th lowest rate in Kent for this indicator.
- 1.5.11 The percentage of commercial planning applications (DCV 001) completed within statutory timescales did not achieved the quarterly target. During quarter 1 last year only two commercial planning applications were received, this year to date 18 applications have been received, this could be a sign of an improving economic climate in Maidstone.

For Maidstone to be a decent place to live

- 1.5.12 There are 11 indicators related to this priority that can be reported quarterly. There are two indicators that are rated red and where performance has declined compared to the previous year, both relate to housing. A further two are rated amber and for both performance has declined. The remaining seven indicators are rated green.
- 1.5.13 The removal of the centralized grants relating to energy efficiency has meant that the quarterly target for number of homes occupied by vulnerable people made decent (HSG PS 002) was not achieved, only 15 were made decent during quarter 1 compared to 40 for the same period in the previous year. The target for this indicator was set when funding arrangements were uncertain and it is expected that the annual target of 180 will not be achieved.
- 1.5.14 The number of households prevented from becoming homeless (HSG 005) has not achieved the quarterly target. There has been a continued demand for homelessness services, the number of people presenting as homeless remains high, which has impacted on the team's ability to intervene in the first instance as we have a statutory duty to assist. This pressure was apparent in 2011/12 and continues into this financial year. Assisting vulnerable people is a key outcome for the borough and it is suggested that Cabinet agree actions to address performance issues at this stage. Despite these pressures the team has improved the time taken to process and notify applicants on the housing register (HSG 004).
- 1.5.15 Although the pressure on the Council's housing team in relation to homelessness is apparent the Council has been working with partners to stimulate the housing market. During quarter 1 the Council delivered 100 affordable homes (HSG 001), 50% of the target for the whole year. For the last two years quarters 2 and 3 have been the worst performing and it should be noted that the weather and the economy can impact on this indicator however, it is expected that the annual target will be achieved. In addition the percentage of residential planning applications processed within statutory timescales has improved since 2011/12 and is currently performing above the targeted level.
- 1.5.16 The percentage of planning enforcement cases signed off within 21 days (DCE 001) did not achieve the quarterly target; it is considered that absence of the investigation officers during the period coupled with the clearance of backlog cases impacted on this indicator. It should be noted that although the 21 day target was not achieved initial investigations were completed within 2 weeks of the deadline for a majority of the cases that were out of time. This indicator plays a key role in ensuring that Maidstone is an attractive place to live and visit, at present it is expected that performance will return to its previous levels during quarter 2 however, if

this does not occur actions to improve performance will need to be considered.

Corporate & Customer Excellence

- 1.5.17 There are 12 KPIs that relate to this outcome that can be reported quarterly, one of these is rated red, five amber and six green. Overall performance has improved for six KPIs, declined for five and been sustained for one.
- 1.5.18 The average wait time for calls into the contact centre (CTC 001) did not achieve the quarter target, it should be noted that this indicator did not achieve the annual target set last year, however performance continues to improve each quarter. Reasons behind the non achievement of the target relate to the extra bank holiday during quarter one, which always increase the number of calls to the contact centre. In addition it should be noted that the contact centre was not running at full capacity due to losing a senior team member and staff training. It is suggested that this continue to be monitored but no action be taken at this time and this indicator is looked at again as part of the Quarter 2 KPI report. The percentage of visitors to the gateway responded to within 20 minutes (CTC 002) missed the quarterly target for the same reasons as outlined above (CTC 001). Bank Holiday weeks are always extremely busy and as above there was a lot of training completed during the quarter. In addition a senior member of the team is on long term sick leave. In the week following the bank holidays all available resources are being utilised.
- 1.5.19 The percentage of council tax (R&B 006) and non-domestic rates (R&B 005) collected have both achieved the quarterly target and are on track to achieve the annual targets. This is really positive as many councils have been struggling with their tax collection rates since the downturn in the economic climate.
- 1.5.20 Sickness absence (HRO 001) has increased mainly due to long term sickness. Action has been taken to address this and in the last two months there have been two ill health retirements and in the last year one capacity dismissal based on ill health. As this indicator is reported as a 12 month rolling figure some of these should drop off throughout the year. Human Resources continue to highlight sickness trends and frequencies to unit managers and advise when intervention should take place.
- 1.5.21 The percentage of planning decisions taken under delegation has dropped; there were 14.2% fewer decisions taken under delegation in quarter 1 2012/13 compared to the same period for last year. The main cause of this was the Council's own applications for marketing sites in the borough which all had to go to planning committee. This type of application would normally be taken under delegation. It is expected that performance will return to

expected level for quarter 2, if this does not happen actions to improve performance will be investigated.

1.5.22 The number of missed bins per 100,000 collections has improved dramatically since quarter 1 last year, with almost half the number of missed collections being reported. This is really positive as it shows how well the new collections and changes to collections have been rolled out and embedded.

1.6 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.6.1 KPIs reflect local priorities and measure progress towards the Council's key objectives. They are the Council's top level indicators and are linked to the Council's Strategic Plan.

1.6.2 Not monitoring progress against the KPIs could mean that the Council fails to deliver its priorities and would also mean that action could not be taken effectively to address performance during the year.

1.7 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.7.1 The Key Performance Indicators are part of the Council's overarching Strategic Plan 2011-15 and play an important role in the achievement of our corporate objectives as well as covering a wide range of service and priority areas; for example, waste and recycling.

1.8 Risk Management

1.8.1 The production of robust performance reports contributes to ensuring that the view of the authority's approach to the management of risk and use of resources is not undermined and allows early action to be taken in order to mitigate the risk of not achieving targets and outcomes.

1.9 Other Implications

1.9.1

1.	Financial	X
2.	Staffing	X
3.	Legal	
4.	Equality Impact Needs Assessment	
5.	Environmental/Sustainable Development	X
6.	Community Safety	
7.	Human Rights Act	

- 8. Procurement
- 9. Asset Management

Financial

- 1.9.2 Performance indicators and targets are closely linked to the allocation of resources and determining good value for money.
- 1.9.3 The financial implications of any proposed changes are also identified and taken into account in the Council’s Medium Term Financial Plan and associated annual budget setting process with performance issues highlighted as part of the budget monitoring reporting process.

Staffing

- 1.9.4 Having a clear set of targets enables staff outcomes/objectives to be set and effective action plans to be put in place.

Environmental

- 1.9.5 The performance indicators cover and are used to monitor a number of priority areas.

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?

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This is a Key Decision because:

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Wards/Parishes affected:

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